

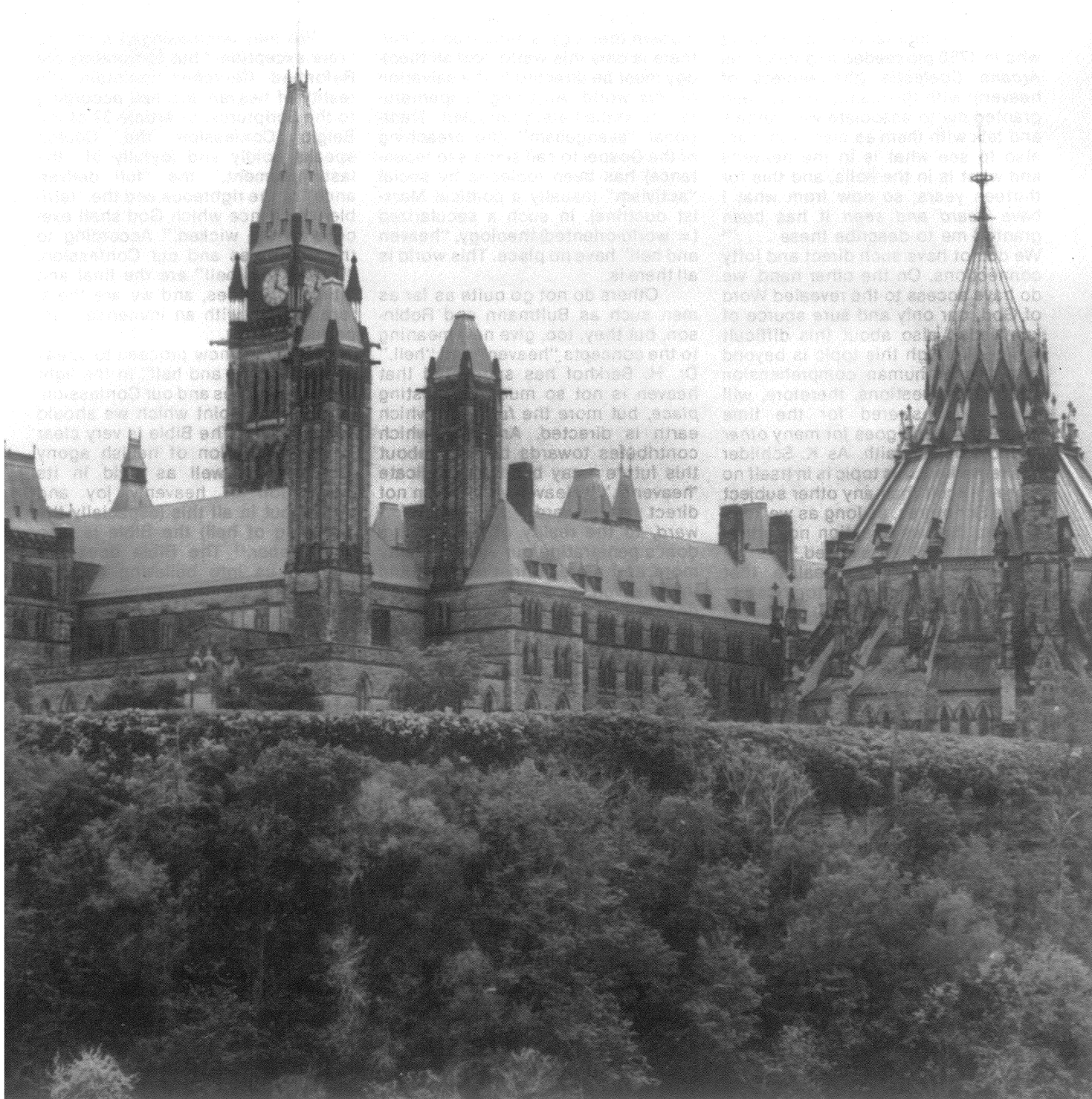


Clarion

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HEAVEN & HELL₁

When we concern ourselves with the subject of heaven and hell,¹ we might first ask ourselves if we are not being entangled in an impossible undertaking.² After all, none of us knows anything about heaven or hell from experience. We cannot take the line of one Emmanuel Swedenborg who in 1758 proceeded to publish his *Arcana Coelestia* (the secrets of heaven)³ with the claim, “it has been granted me to associate with angels and talk with them as man with man, also to see what is in the heavens and what is in the hells, and this for thirteen years; so now from what I have *heard and seen* it has been granted me to describe these . . .”⁴ We do not have such direct and lofty connections. On the other hand, we do have access to the revealed Word of God, our only and sure source of knowledge also about this difficult topic. Although this topic is beyond our present human comprehension and many questions, therefore, will remain unanswered for the time being, the same goes for many *other* aspects of our faith. As K. Schilder has remarked, this topic is in itself no more difficult than any other subject in the Scriptures, as long as we keep in mind that we question no further than what God has revealed.⁵

We should also realize that many today consider our topic rather outmoded and futile. If the subject of heaven and hell for centuries past has captivated the minds of millions of Christians, such is today no longer the case. The subject presently finds little interest and hardly any mention. Leslie Woodson has remarked, “With rare exception, the church-goer can attend worship for years without ever hearing a word about hell.”⁶ The same might be said about heaven.

The reason is not hard to surmise. With the advance of modern science, Bible scholars have done away with the traditional concepts of heaven and hell. Some have spoken radically: “No one who is old enough to think for himself supposes that God lives in a local heaven. There is no longer any heaven in the traditional sense of the word. The same ap-

plies to hell in the sense of a mythical underworld beneath our feet . . .”⁷ Theologians like Rudolph Bultmann, Harvey Cox, and (“Honest”) John A.T. Robinson have scoffed at the idea of a heaven “up there” and a hell “down there.” The trend of modern theology is simple and clear: there is only this world, and all theology must be directed to the salvation of *this* world. Anything “supernatural” is immediately ridiculed. Traditional “evangelism” (the preaching of the Gospel to call sinners to repentance) has been replaced by social “activism” (usually a political Marxist doctrine). In such a secularized (= world-oriented) theology, “heaven and hell” have no place. This world is all there is.

Others do not go quite as far as men such as Bultmann and Robinson, but they, too, give new meaning to the concepts “heaven” and “hell.” Dr. H. Berkhof has suggested that heaven is not so much an existing *place*, but more the *future* to which earth is directed. Anything which contributes towards bringing about this future “may bear the predicate ‘heavenly.’”⁸ Heaven would then not direct us “upwards” but rather *forward*, to the reality of God’s Kingdom’s penetrating our earthly reality more and more. Christ’s ascending into heaven, according to Berkhof, does not mean that He entered into a certain *place*, but into a glorified *existence*.⁹ On the subject of the *hell*, Berkhof is quite unsure. The “Hell” is a situation of being condemned, and Berkhof does not dare suggest that this might be an eternal situation. He hopes that the hell will be a “road of purification.”¹⁰ So, heaven is a future reality of complete harmony (for all?) and hell hopefully a passing stage of condemnation (for some?), but certainly not specific places which remain throughout time and eternity. The concepts of heaven and hell have thus either been done away with completely or robbed of all true Scriptural content.

When Bible scholars deny the existence of heaven and hell, and preachers conveniently forget to

speaking of heaven and hell, churchgoers tend to forget about heaven and hell. In such a time we confront ourselves anew with these matters, with the decisive question, “What does the Bible reveal about heaven and hell?”

We may (increasingly) form the “rare exception,” but fortunately the Reformed Churches maintain the reality of heaven and hell according to the Scriptures. In Article 37 of the Belgic Confession the Church speaks boldly and joyfully of “the last judgment,” the “full deliverance” of the righteous and the “terrible vengeance which God shall execute on the wicked.” According to the Scriptures and our Confession, “heaven and hell” are the final and ultimate realities, and we are therefore dealing with an immensely important subject.

When we now proceed to speak about “heaven and hell” in the light of the Scriptures and our Confession, there is one point which we should keep in mind. The Bible is very clear in its description of hellish agony and pain as well as vivid in its description of heavenly joy and peace, but in all this (especially the depicting of hell) the Bible is also quite *sober*.¹¹ The Bible does not frighten us into believing by confronting us with the terrible realities of hell. Reformed preachers should not follow the style of the famous Jonathan Edwards who through “fire-and-brimstone preaching” tried to instill faith in his hearers through *fear of hell*.¹² Nor does the Bible coax us into believing by enticing us with the sweet rewards of heaven. It is the preaching of the *cross* which leads to faith, and this cross alone stands between heaven and hell! We are not to frighten or entice, but to demonstrate the love of God in Jesus Christ. We are never to speak in abstractions,¹³ but must keep in mind the *unity* of God’s works, never speaking about hell and sin apart from heaven and grace. Only in this way do we receive and retain a correct insight into the Biblical revelation on these matters.

Heaven and Hell: Specific Places

A main starting point must be that both heaven and hell are specific *places*: heaven for the righteous, hell for the ungodly. Heaven and hell do not exist *from* eternity, for they were, at one time, created by God. As far as heaven is concerned, this is clear from Genesis 1:1, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth" (KJV). Although the Bible does not elaborate, we get the impression that God first created heaven and the angels, and then proceeded to create earth and its inhabitants.¹⁴ When the Bible speaks of heaven, it is always in clear and graphic terms, as a place, or as an address (the throne of God). One can "go" to heaven, as e.g. our Lord Jesus Christ did who went *bodily*. A "body" is finite and restricted to a certain place, and so Christ today is physically not with us, but in heaven, seated at the right hand of God.¹⁵

Similarly, hell is also a place. But the hell was not created at the same time as heaven was created! The hell dates from the fall of the rebellious angels, was therefore created after sin entered heaven. So if heaven and hell date back to the early beginning, they are not equally old. Heaven came first; the history of the hell begins with the reality of *sin*.¹⁶ We also note that in the Scriptures the concept of hell (especially in the Old Testament) is always connected to the concept of *death*. As sin and death are related, so also hell and death are connected. This is illustrated e.g. in the use of the Hebrew word *Sheol*, translated in the New Testament by *Hades* (or hell). *Sheol* is the place where the dead are gathered, presented as "the depths of the earth" (Psalm 63:9), a city through whose "gates" one enters (Isaiah 38:10). The word *Sheol* implies "destruction," and while it is true that *all* dead enter the *Sheol* and are separated from this earth, there is a *difference* in *Sheol*.¹⁷ For the ungodly there is in *Sheol* a beginning of what we call "hell"; it is in a sense a "prison," where they are kept till the day of judgment.

The New Testament uses for "hell" the word *Gehenna*, a reference to the "valley of Hinnom," where children were offered to the idol Moloch by Kings Ahaz and Manasseh. This place was utterly desecrated and destroyed by King Josiah and it became in essence a *garbage heap* where fire burned continually and the stench was nauseating. *Gehenna*, once the place of

idolatry, now the dump of Jerusalem! Our Lord Jesus Christ uses this word to describe "hell," quoting Isaiah 66:24, a place "where their worm does not die and the fire is not quenched" (Mark 9:48). I will return to these words in a moment; be it sufficient for the time being to conclude that also hell is a specific place.

While it is clear that heaven and hell are specific places, we cannot answer the question exactly *where* these places are. In the Biblical way of speaking heaven is indeed "upwards" and hell is "downwards," but it is hard to determine if this manner of speaking really directs us to the location of heaven and hell. We should stay away from any fantastic speculation in this respect, as, for instance, of Gregory the Great who taught that volcanoes were the entrances to hell. K. Schilder has written, "Let us fully admit that the place of hell is completely unknown to us."¹⁸ At one time there was an extensive "uranology," a detailed study on how heaven was structured and built, but we should shy away from this. When the Scriptures speak of "the third heaven," we should not think of layers or various "floors" as in an apartment building. The "first heaven" denotes the immediate sky and clouds; the "second heaven," the farther situated stars and planets. The "third heaven" speaks of paradise, what is beyond our ability to see and perceive.¹⁹ We simply do not know where heaven is.

Both heaven and hell are created places. As such they both fall under the sovereign power and government of God! They do not develop beyond His divine will. It is not so that hell is ruled by Satan in a way that he sees fit, as popular feeling would have it. The dominion of God reaches from the very heights of heaven to the utter depths of hell. *Sheol*, *Gehenna*, and *Hades* are as much in His hand as the throne of heaven!

Heaven and Hell: A History

Everything that is created undergoes a certain development and evolution and therefore has a *history*. So it is also with heaven and hell. In his books on these subjects, K. Schilder has strongly emphasized this fact. Heaven and hell are not abstractions, but they know of movement and history. Furthermore, the history of both heaven and hell are not to be seen *loose* from the history of earth and mankind. The history of heaven and hell unfold with the history of

this world. The great facts of salvation influence both heaven and hell, are even decisive for the history of heaven and hell. With this in mind, we can even say that heaven and hell both in time undergo a *change*: their place is not always the same.

Schilder has spoken of the fact, for example, that hell *before* Judgment Day is to be characterized as a "prison" (I Peter 3:19) where the ungodly are kept till the Day of Judgment, while hell *after* the Day of Judgment is to be characterized as "a lake of fire" (Revelation 20:14). Then those who have been kept for judgment experience the extremity and severity of this judgment.²⁰ Also, there is knowledge in hell of what is going on upon the earth, for the devil "knows that his time is short" (Revelation 12:12) and therefore has great wrath. As the history of salvation comes to its close, the tension mounts in hell.

Heaven, too, is inseparably connected to the history of this world. God created heaven to be His own dwelling place, and the earth He gave to man (Psalm 115:16). Although God and man were one in the covenant, God did not live *with* man. Although not separate, God and man, from the beginning, were *distinct*. There is always the motif of distance between heaven and earth. And after the fall, this distance even became *antithesis*, separation. Through Jesus Christ this antithesis and separation is overcome, so that the final word about heaven may be: "And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband . . . the dwelling of God is *with men* . . . God Himself will be *with them*" (Revelation 21:2, 3). So the conclusion of the history of heaven is even more glorious than its beginning: God's dwelling place is with man. And the conclusion of the history of hell is even more terrible than its beginning: from prison-of-the-spirits to lake of fire.

The heavens are also involved with what is happening on earth. They open to receive the souls of the godly (Revelation 6:9ff.). There is tension in heaven as well, as history speeds on to its conclusion: ". . . how long before Thou wilt judge and avenge . . ." (Revelation 9:10). And it is only after the final catastrophe (the casting of Satan, death, and Hades into the lake of fire) and after the necessary change "in the twinkling of an eye" (I Corinthians 15:51ff.), when the perishable has put on the

The WARC Meeting — TWO DIFFERENT REACTIONS

A Suspension

The World Alliance of Reformed Churches met in Ottawa during the latter part of August. WARC is an organization of more than 150 churches from about 80 countries. Four hundred delegates came to the conference. The main issue was an anti-apartheid decision. By an almost unanimous decision, the membership of two churches in South Africa was suspended: the white Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk (NGK) and the white Nederduitsch Hervormde Kerk (NHK). The ground for this decision was the support of these two churches for the apartheid policy of the South African government, and the fact that they are also practicing it themselves. Apartheid is the idea of separate development. The objection was that the churches practice segregation in worship: a black person cannot worship and sit at the Lord's Supper table in a white church and a white cannot do so in a black church. I quote part of the decision as I found it in *Calvinist Contact*, September 10:

The general council declared "with the Black Reformed Christians of South Africa that apartheid is a sin, and that the moral and theological justification

of it is a travesty of the Gospel, and in its persistent disobedience to the Word of God, a theological heresy.

"The general council expresses its profound disappointment that, despite earlier appeals by WARC general councils, and despite continued dialogue between several Reformed Churches and the white Dutch Reformed churches over 20 years, the Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk (in the Republic of South Africa) and the Nederduitse Hervormde Kerk van Afrika have still not found the courage to realize that apartheid (separate development) contradicts the very nature of the Church and obscures the Gospel before the world; the council, therefore, pleads afresh with these churches to respond to the promises and demands of the Gospel.

"The general council, reluctantly and painfully, is compelled to suspend the NGK and NHK from the privileges of membership in the WARC until such time as the WARC executive committee has determined that these two churches in their utterances and practice have given evidence of a change of heart.

"They will be warmly welcomed once more only when the following changes have taken place:

- a. Black Christians are no longer excluded from church services, especially from holy communion;
- b. Concrete support in word and deed

imperishable, that the history of heaven comes to its consummation and eternal rest. Thus God Himself "concludes" the histories of heaven and hell.²¹

(To be continued.)

CL. STAM

¹ Topic presented at the Women's League Day in Vineland, Ontario; October 13, 1982. It was requested that I would especially pass on what the late Dr. Klaas Schilder had written about this subject in his two publications, *Wat is de Hel?* (Kok, Kampen, 1932, 3rd and revised ed.) and *Wat is de Hemel?* (Kok, Kampen, 1935). Brief references will be made under *Hel* and *Hemel*, *op. cit.*, with page(s) following.

² Schilder, *Hemel*, chapter 1, begins with discussing "de moeilijkheid van ons onderwerp."

³ Emmanuel Swedenborg, *Heaven and its Wonders and Hell*, Standard English Edition, New York, 1941.

⁴ Swedenborg, *op. cit.*, p. 3.

⁵ Schilder, *Hemel*, *op. cit.*, pp. 16-18.

⁶ Leslie Woodson, *What the Bible Says About Hell*, Grand Rapids, 1973, p. 104.

⁷ Rudolph Bultmann *et al*, *Kerugma and Myth*, New York, 1961, p. 4ff.

⁸ H. Berkhof, *Christelijk Geloof*, Nijkerk, 1973, p. 187.

⁹ Berkhof, *op. cit.*, p. 334, "geen plaatsbepaling, maar zijnsbepaling."

¹⁰ Berkhof, *op. cit.*, p. 554, "een louteringsweg," a phrase reminiscent of the Roman Catholic concept of purgatory.

¹¹ Schilder, *Hel*, *op. cit.*, p. 27

¹² See Edward's famous sermon, "Sinners in the hands of an angry God."

¹³ Schilder, *Hel*, *op. cit.*, p. 30

¹⁴ cf. my *Everything in Christ*, p. 38.

¹⁵ Schilder, *Hemel*, *op. cit.* pp. 99ff.

¹⁶ Schilder, *Hel*, *op. cit.*, p. 48.

¹⁷ *Ibid*, p. 54.

¹⁸ *Ibid*, p. 67.

¹⁹ Schilder, *Hemel*, *op. cit.*, pp. 102ff.

²⁰ Schilder, *Hel*, *op. cit.*, p. 56.

²¹ About this "change" ("verandering in een punt des tijds") see *Hemel*, *op. cit.*, p. 122ff.

is given to those who suffer under the system of apartheid;

c. Unequivocal synod resolutions are made which reject apartheid and commit the church to dismantle apartheid, both in the church and in politics."

To me it seems quite difficult to fulfil these conditions, if these churches do not want to fight against the South-African government in opposing communist rebellion. In the same article in *Calvinist Contact* we read:

The reaction of the two suspended white churches [this must be: their delegates, J.G.] was logically reserved. In conversations that evening with the president of the synod of the Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk, Rev. J. Potgieter, he said that his denomination can now forget about ecclesiastical ties for a while and concentrate on creating a unified Christian church in South Africa "to fight marxism which is threatening us along our borders."

And in *The Banner*, September 20, which also gives a report of the WARC meetings, we read the following reaction of Professor Johan Heyns of the NGK. He

had pleaded that the assembly not close the door on them, and had welcomed the assembly's criticism, [and] said afterward that the Alliance had yielded to *radical forces* in its ranks [Italics added!]. This is not a Christian approach but discrimination against a member church that is trying to apply the gospel to its circumstances.

It seems that the general council of WARC in Ottawa did not do much more than deal with apartheid in South Africa, the suspension of the two white churches from its membership list, and the appointment of Dr. Allan Boesak, a minister of the Dutch Reformed Mission Church (coloured) in South Africa (who belongs to the black population) as the new president of WARC. He was appointed the day after the suspension had become a fact. I have not read about much else that was dealt with. Dr. Boesak is very outspoken against apartheid and gave lectures at the Free University in Amsterdam and Calvin College in Grand Rapids, recently.

I would also like to pass on the last paragraph of the article in *Calvinist Contact* from which I quoted. It reads:

Somehow it just doesn't seem possible that the racist climate in that country will change that quickly. And yet, if it doesn't, the Blacks and Coloureds could become sorely tempted to engage in their own form of retaliation. Whispers of civil war could become reality if the apartheid policy is not changed soon.

Earlier in the article we read that one of the young ministers at the WARC meeting had told Keith Knight, the writer of the article, editor of *Calvinist Contact* and observer to the meeting for the Christian Reformed Church:

We have held out our hands to the whites for too many years. If and when the whites decide to offer us their hand, we just might not be ready to accept it.

Recommendation

Two Canadian church groups are members in WARC: the Presbyterian Church of Canada and the United Church of Canada. And the two delegated observers of the Christian Reformed Church were quite impressed and in favour of membership. Editor Keith Knight writes in the same issue of *Calvinist Contact*:

Talking with Reformed brothers and sisters from Czechoslovakia, or Sudan, or Romania puts Christ's church into perspective. Reciting the Apostle's Creed in the four official languages of the World Alliance — English, French, German, and Spanish — makes you realize that it is not only your denomination which has an intimate relationship with a creed or a doctrine.

And:

Should the Christian Reformed Church in North America join the World Alliance of Reformed Churches? That question faces the Interchurch Relations Committee of the Christian Reformed Church and will also face synod when it meets next June.

The Interchurch Relations Committee sent two of its members as ecumenical delegates to the World Alliance with the mandate to report back to the committee with a recommendation on whether or not to join this world-wide group

Both men were impressed by what they saw and heard. They were impressed, not by the *structure* of the World Alliance, but by the men and women and the denominations which they represent. The Reformed faith is alive and well and vibrant in many of the member denominations, especially among the younger churches

What further impressed the delegates was the fact that there are a number of uniting and united churches which are members of the WARC, the results of various ecclesiastical marriages of Presbyterian families The Christian Reformed Church in North America has historically been frugal in its ecclesiastical relationships with large bodies

When the recommendation comes to synod next summer (and it probably will), delegates will undoubtedly ask: "What is in it for us?" The answer will hopefully be given: "Membership in the

World Alliance will be one small step towards the realization of one unified body of Christ worldwide."

Our Dutch, Calvinistic denominations must break out of the self-centered parochial molds in which the focus of discussions centres around the reasons for secession. There must be a move towards a union of denominations, rather than creating yet one more appendage on the body of Christ.

The remark was also made that

For all of our ecclesiastical expertise, the Christian Reformed Church and those others which were born out of the secessionist movements are hopelessly ignorant when it comes to ecumenism.

I doubt, or rather, I do not doubt whether we must speak here of ignorance. And I do not like the word "secessionist movement." This immediately places the Secession (from which also the Christian Reformed Church came forth) in a bad light and stamps it as wrong, in my ears at least. However, the people of the Secession (and of the Orthodox Presbyterian Secession) were convinced that their "Act of Secession and Return" was a deed of obedience to the King of the Church and to His Word, and was fully according to the Reformed Confession in Art. 28 and 29 of the Belgic Confession. Could it be that there are still churches (forming a federation together) that do not participate in broad ecumenical movements, *because* they want to abide by the obedience to God's Word according to what they confess? Also in WARC there are members which have joined the WCC. Is that Reformed? And some of the member churches seem to be quite liberal, or tolerate liberalism. Is that Reformed? Is not this Reformed: to have, *and adhere to*, the Reformed Creeds? Let us listen to another voice.

A Different Sound

The *Christian Beacon* of August 19/26, 1982, also pays special attention to WARC and its meeting in Ottawa. It has the speech of Edmond Perret, the General Secretary of WARC, on the opening day, as well as the speech of bishop Dr. Karoly Toth of the Reformed Church in Hungary, entitled, "World Peace." From the speech of Edmond Perret, who dealt with "The Responsibility of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches in the World Today," I quote:

The study document "Reformed Witness Today" speaks of and underlines this responsibility. "The Reformed churches have a strong tradition of constructive social theology and ac-

tion. They have always confessed the lordship of Christ over the whole of common life and have sought to bear witness to this lordship in the discipline of their own communities and in responsible engagement with the political, economic and social powers of the world."

It is true that the Reformed churches have confessed the lordship of Christ over all of life. However, the question is: How do you work this out? If it is in the direction of true social and economic help, yes. But if it means the teaching and practice of a liberal social gospel, I must say: that is not Reformed. So very much that calls itself Reformed today and claims to teach the lordship of Christ over the whole of life, is nothing but liberalism. I may remind the reader of the slogan "we must redeem the social dance," which is a cover-up for world conformity. And much of what was said at WARC, as it is reported in the *Christian Beacon*, shows the same picture: the name "Reformed Witness Today" covers modern socialist humanism.

The speech mentions "four major problems which keep emerg-



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ing in the preparatory documents of this Council or in the express concerns of the churches." These four problems are: "apartheid and racism," "human rights," "justice," and "peace."

The reader understands that apartheid is condemned. Member churches asked for it. Under the heading "human rights," torture is to be abolished in our world as violation of human rights. Under the heading "justice" we read:

It takes extremely practical forms in countless demonstrations and programmes of solidarity with the oppressed, the marginalized . . .

This is the common message today, which we can hear also from the WCC. For the matter of "peace" the speech refers to this worldwide organization. Then we read under the heading "A Clear, Faithful and Effective Witness":

The study document on "Reformed Witness Today," after having singled out three "social attitudes that are contrary to the Gospel of Jesus Christ and to the best insights of Reformed theology" — namely, apartheid, the so-called "Calvinist work ethic," and Protestant individualism — goes on to say:

"Reformed churches carry these attitudes as a burden which we must throw off, both by clarifying the true witness to Christ in society, to which we are called, and by purging their influence from the life of our churches."

I do not have to say more here on apartheid. For further clarification the following may serve: many liberals see the so-called "Calvinistic work ethic" as a root of capitalism: work, work; become rich; exploit the poor; let them work and work and work for you. Of course, everything can be misused, also this work ethic. But the Lord our God works, and so does our Saviour. And we are also called to work faithfully and fulfil our task in our daily life, in love for God and the neighbour. We must hold on to the truly "Calvinistic work ethic" to honour our heavenly Father. Protestant individualism means the emphasis on personal salvation, personal regeneration, whereby the accusation arises that the social calling is neglected. And again, there has been and still is an emphasis on the salvation of the soul to the neglect of the social needs of the neighbour. But, in rejecting this individualism also the truth of the Reformed confession about the need for personal conversion to God and personal salvation through the blood of Christ as payment for sin, is

neglected, if not rejected.

Socialist Sound

We also get a good impression of the spirit of the WARC meetings from the speech on "World Peace" of Dr. Karoly Toth, the bishop of the Reformed Church in communist Hungary. He said, among other things:

Peace has become a magic word by which any conception you like can be conjured.

This is true. The communist definition of peace is quite different from ours. He continues:

The difficulty is further increased by cruel wars raging in many parts of the world: in Lebanon, in Iraq and Iran, in Central America, in Southern Africa, etc.

Why did he not mention Afghanistan and Poland? In a "Statement by Carl McIntire, President International Council of Christian Churches — August 25, 1982," printed in the same issue of the *Christian Beacon*, we read:

Karoly Toth, president of the Christian Peace Conference, . . . promotes the communist cause throughout the world. . .

A statement in the Hungarian Church Press, February 1-15, 1980, issued by the leadership of the Communist Peace Conference with the names of Karoly Toth and Metropolitan Filaret from the Soviet Union was entitled "THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE APRIL REVOLUTION IN THE DR (= democratic republic, J.G.] OF AFGHANISTAN NEED OUR INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY."

The invasion and repression by the Soviet Union of Afghanistan gave them "liberation" and "social and cultural progress."

So, Afghanistan received "peace" from the Soviet armies.

Dr. Toth points at the great danger, according to him, for peace. It is the arms race, costing billions of dollars which should have been used for relief of hunger and poverty. According to him, this arms race also causes inflation and unemployment. He then says that there must be

a theological re-thinking of the whole problem of war and peace. . . .

Theological re-thinking starts from the axiom that the existence of modern weapons of mass destruction has invalidated the theological conception of war which has prevailed so far, i.e. the theory of a just war.

He then speaks about the Biblical word for peace, which originally means welfare, prosperous conditions for, and ordered circumstances of, life. Having pointed out the fact that the word reconciliation plays a

key-role in the letters of Paul, Dr. Toth said:

Peace is our human reconciliation with God through the redemption achieved by Christ. In consequence of sin, our humanity was at war with God, but the peace obtained through Christ pervades our whole existence.

This sounds good. But what does Dr. Toth mean? One can explain these words in a good, Reformed way, but just as easily in a liberal, modernistic way. And I am strongly inclined to think that these words must be taken in a modernistic, un-Reformed way because of what follows:

There are, of course, even further projections of the theological re-thinking of the peace message in the course of which the image of God as a powerful and revenging Lord of hosts, as "a man of war" (Exodus 15:3), is to be completed with the New Testament image of God as a loving and merciful Father. The pessimistic Christian anthropology which sees only the reality of sin must be supplemented by the teaching about *humanity as redeemed* [Italics mine, J.G.]. All our theological thinking must be freed from an individualistic, spiritualistic and one-sidedly eschatological conception of peace.

This little part gives us a lot of clarification. The gist of it is that the Old Testament shows us that the Israelites had an image of God as "a man of war." Notice: it does not say that God revealed Himself in Word and deed as the mighty Redeemer for Israel. No, Israel had that image of God. The Bible does not give us God's Self-revelation, but Israel's religious ideas about God, according to Dr. Toth's view.

And this Old Testament image must be supplemented with the image that the New Testament church had: God is a gracious, merciful Father in Christ. Again, here the New Testament is not the Self-revelation of God in Christ, but the thinking of the early church. In this view the Bible is a (fallible, errant) human book; it is not the absolute, divine authority, the infallible and inerrant Word of God.

Further, a contrast is created here between the image of God in the Old Testament and the image of God in the New Testament. And also this is a false idea. The God of the Old Covenant is exactly the same as the God and Father of Christ. He who came with His judgments on the enemies of His people, and also against Israel itself when it lived in sin, is the same God who will judge the world through Jesus Christ on Judgment

Day. He showed His mercy to Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, to His people in early days, and did the same in the New Covenant.

Another false teaching is that a whole humanity will be redeemed. It is not so that the "pessimistic Christian anthropology which sees only the reality of sin" must be supplemented by the teaching about "humanity as redeemed." In the first place, all men are conceived and born in sin, and therefore are by nature incapable of doing any good and inclined to all evil. And they remain this way, unless they are regenerated by the Holy Spirit. This is very personal and very spiritual. But this truth must not be supplemented by a more optimistic view of the whole mankind, as if the whole mankind becomes good, or at least rather good through redemption. This is the false optimism of a socialist humanism.

I shall give one more quotation from Dr. Toth's speech, although much more could be quoted and commented on. But this is enough. We read:

Psychologically, the policy of deterrence [have a strong army with better and more weapons than the enemy to deter him from attacking you, J.G.] is rooted in the existence of a real menace and real distrust both of them ideologically motivated, by anticommunism on the one hand, and the military character of capitalist imperialism on the other.

Also this remark speaks a clear (communist) language. Both the anti-communism and the capitalist imperialism in the Western world are to blame for the arms race. Russia, of course, wants peace.

That was the WARC meeting in Ottawa. And they suspended the two white South African churches. It is not such a great wonder that Dr. Carl McIntire finds the infiltration and penetration of communist (church) agents and communist philosophies at the WARC.

And must a recommendation to join this ecumenical organization go to the synod of the Christian Reformed Church? I hope that they will speak a plain "NO." For what have true prophecy and false prophecy in common? May we allow the lie to have equal rights with the truth? When the truth of God's Word and the lie of false teachings that deviate from that Word are allowed to stand side by side, the lie wins, because of the disobedience in placing them besides each other. See II Thess. 2.

J. GEERTSEMA

PARALIPOMENA₃

"Welcome . . .!"

From what I have noticed here and there lately, I conclude that a growing number of bulletins "welcome" visitors. The way in which it is done is not always all that glorious. Instead of saying, in the terms of the Catechism, "We are happy to see you coming to church to learn God's Word," it is often something like "Welcome, that you worship with us today," whatever that may mean. But the intention is good.

I wouldn't mind putting up a sign in front of the church building, with big neon lights: "Welcome!" After all, there will be something like that in front of the "eternal tabernacle," if I may believe what the Lord said in Luke 16:9. At the entrance of that tabernacle "friends" will welcome people. Our ushers could learn from them.

Lukewarm welcome

But before we welcome strangers we should welcome fellow-members of the body of Christ. If I am not mistaken, gradually an old custom is disappearing. It was always the custom to announce from the pulpit that a person or family has come over to us from a sister church with an *attestation*. Or even more impersonal: "An attestation was announced from the pulpit." It looks as though the "welcome to 'outsiders'" (see below) has kind of replaced this public announcement. Consistories or ministers do not like to have so many announcements, so . . . , let's put it in the bulletin; then everyone can read that a new family has arrived.

And that's all. And that's miserable, isn't it? Did you ever move? Break up, pull up roots, say farewell . . . , then, arriving in a strange town, surrounded by strange faces, have to get accustomed to a different house, a different neighbourhood, a different job? Then, at least, you expect to find a warm welcome in the bosom (!) of the brotherhood . . . , and all you get is your name in the bulletin, more often than not without address, telephone.

Real welcome

I suggest that we replace that cold formality by a real warm-blooded and

loving welcome. How? Learn from others, if you are not conceited. Introduce the new person or family to the congregation, especially if that congregation is not small in number. Introduce. How? Very simply by having the new family sit in front the first time, reading their names, asking them to rise so that everyone can see them; the minister welcomes them and arranges some closer contact after the service. Then they may be expected to be "in" right from the start. Anything less is *not* a welcome.

Welcoming "outsiders"

If fellow believers from elsewhere need a welcome, how much more "outsiders," as we so easily call them. Hopefully, we only mean that they are outside our little, closed circle, and not that they are outside the kingdom or outside Christ, or something like that. Okay, then, "outsiders."

Do you realize that it takes courage to enter a Canadian Reformed Church building, when you are an "outsider"? Everything is quite strange; take only our singing to Genevan tunes; however beautiful, they are strange to most "outsiders."

It is, of course, nonsense to say, "We need not welcome them; let the sermon do it." If a stranger does not feel the warmth of a cordial welcome, like that of Psalm 116, "Come join with me . . .," he may never come back.

Let alone (this is a true story!) that he has ventured inside, looked around, saw an open place, and (a bit jittery) sits down, only to be told two minutes later, "Please get up. This is my place . . ."

We had better be careful too. I remember, and I found it again in Hebrews 13:2, "Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares"! Maybe the LORD sometimes sends a couple of angels down, to find out how good we are in welcoming strangers.

Imagine that angels get a cold reception or no reception at all When will we get an A for welcoming?

Chronicler

Books

R.B. Kuiper, *For Whom did Christ Die? A Study of the Divine Design of the Atonement*, Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Mich., 1959, 104 pp., price: US \$3.95.
Neal Punt, *Unconditional Good News: Toward an Understanding of Biblical Universalism*, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, Grand Rapids, Mich., 1980, 169 pp. \$8.75.
Reviewed by J. DeJong.

These two books deal with the same topic and thus may be treated together. As the titles indicate, both of them focus on the age-old question concerning the extent of the atoning work of Jesus Christ. While Kuiper's book is a paperback reprint of a work written in 1959, Punt's is a new book offering what he himself views as a fresh approach to the question. Since the latter book presents us with some strange and startling conclusions, it might be beneficial to consider its contents briefly.

Punt, a Christian Reformed minister in Illinois, offers us his attempt to resolve the 400-year-old debate between Arminians and Reformed people concerning the extent of the atonement. That debate, in Punt's view, has continually run into problems because of faulty starting-points on both sides. Both sides have always operated with the implicit assumption that all persons are lost except those whom the Bible declares will be saved. Punt asserts that we must radically break with this traditional mind-set and begin with an entirely different thesis, namely, that *all* persons are *elect in Christ* except those whom the Bible declares will be lost.

Exactly why this purely tautological statement is supposed to be so revolutionary and progressive is never made clear by the author — at least not to me. For example, we never actually learn whether Punt believes that people who have never heard the gospel are *de facto* elect, or even whether they may in some cases be considered in this way. According to Punt, original sin is in itself an insufficient reason for condemnation; one is always condemned by God in the Scriptures because of a personal, individualized refusal to walk in the ways of the Lord. Punt here introduces several Scriptural passages which say that men are judged according to their works, and that their works are the standard by which the penalty is carried out. This only makes one wonder whether Punt considers original sin to be worthy of punishment in itself.

Having thus toned down the results of our original sin in Adam, Punt is free to take a new look at the so-called universalistic texts of the Bible. These are the texts containing the expression "all" or "all men," which in most cases have been ex-

plained by Reformed exegetes as referring to all types or classes of men, as, for example, in John 12:32, Tit. 2:11. In other cases like Rom. 12 and I Cor. 15, for example, the words are normally taken as a collective: *mankind*. Punt rejects the traditional explanations on both counts; in fact, he rejects most of the "older" explanations.

So Punt advances his arguments one by one: the word *mankind* is a nonexistent abstraction, *all* means just that and nothing else, Saviour refers strictly to Christ, and thus Paul unequivocally states that all men are saved in I Tim. 4:10. This is the rule; but, since any rule has exceptions, it does not mean that all will definitely be saved. Those who willfully reject the good news will be lost.

Now it would take us much too far afield to consider all the implications that Punt makes because of this rather novel approach. One might question whether such a lengthy discussion of Punt's argument is worthwhile, particularly in the context of a book review. It may be beneficial, however, to point out that Punt's arguments cannot but get him into trouble with the Reformed confessions. So he says, for example,

"... one may well question the biblical validity of the claim made in the Canons of Dordt that the reason some do not receive the gift of faith 'proceeds from God's eternal decree' or that 'it is the express testimony of sacred Scripture' that 'others are passed by in the eternal decree' (I, 6, 15)."

We can see another example of the same thing in the way Punt speaks about the covenant. Since in a sense all persons are "under grace," they are all in the covenant, too. All share the same grace. What, then, makes the Church any different from the world? According to Punt, the difference lies only in the fact that the world does not know its status and grace, whereas the church does; cf. p. 116.

Hopefully, the above points make clear that we are dealing with a book which *attacks* rather than *respects* the authority of our confessions. As far as I know, there have been no official reactions, and so far we can only conclude that the book is indicative of the growing doctrinal laxity which unfortunately appears to be accepted in Christian Reformed circles more and more. It is sad to see how the confessions can be openly undermined in this way with little or no protest among the members of that church.

All this makes the reprint of the Kuiper booklet very welcome for us today. For, in contrast to Punt's book, we find in this book a very clear and concise presen-

tation of the Reformed position on the atonement. And, in case anyone might be interested, one can find here a wealth of arguments which expose the errors of Punt's whole approach. For example, in presenting the arguments of Scriptural particularism (as Kuiper calls limited atonement), the author refers to the many passages of Scripture which speak of the *church*, *Christ's flock*, *His people*, and so on. All these passages — and there are simply too many to mention — clearly indicate that Christ's saving work incorporates a limited number of people.

Kuiper discusses three types of un-Biblical universalism: Unrestricted Universalism, Arminian Universalism, and Barthian Universalism. After studying these chapters the reader does not have much difficulty in seeing where Punt fits in. Next, under the heading of Scriptural Particularism, Kuiper gives a succinct summary of the Reformed position, the classical Calvinist doctrine of limited atonement, as we also confess it in the Canons of Dordt. Then follows a chapter on Scriptural Universalism, in which the universal effects of the saving work of Christ are dealt with.

On the whole, Kuiper gives us a good treatment of this ancient question. Many of us would have some objections at various points, but, in the thrust of the argument, Kuiper seeks to be faithful to the Reformed confessions. That is also what marks off this book from Punt's. One may question, for example, the way in which Kuiper speaks about common grace, and one may wonder whether the Arminians can be called more Scriptural than Barth, p. 77; but we may be thankful for this well-written summary of the various arguments on this issue.

In his exposition of the doctrine of predestination, Calvin writes that the human mind has a natural aversion to this doctrine, and almost cannot restrain its petulance against it. The attacks on this doctrine still continue today. That alone is reason for us to purchase this book, and so equip ourselves in the spiritual warfare that still continues today. As for Punt's book, I can recommend it only to those who are aware of the issues and wish to see and learn how easily the teachings of the Word of God can be misrepresented with faulty and one-sided arguments.



OUR COVER

East block Parliament buildings and library seen from the back, Ottawa. Taken by Toni van Weerden.

PATRIMONY PROFILE₂

By Rev. W.W.J. VanOene

The Churches would have done well to follow the Church Order of Dordrecht now, free from interference from the side of the civil authorities. However, after so many years and even after centuries of tutelage the Churches had to become used to the new situation and the changed financial condition.

Evidently the attitude of the Churches in general was a luke-warm one. Perhaps they were even somewhat indifferent to all this change. Nothing was said or done in reaction to the National Assembly's decision. Besides, ministers were now considered to be civil servants and had to swear allegiance to the new statutes. Most of them did so. Many more modernistic ministers had even taken a large part in preparing their congregations for the revolution. And it is amazing how some, by political maneuvering, succeeded in surviving and even keeping their prominent place.

Take, for instance, Johannes Henricus van der Palm. He was minister in Maartensdijk in the province of Utrecht, and, although he was a minister, he even took part in the exercises of the militia which was under control of the "patriots." When the Prussians came in 1787, he suddenly disappeared from his charge, because he was afraid of revenge by the Orangist fishermen of Bunschoten. This did not prevent him from conducting a "Thanksgiving Service" in Middelburg in 1795, because the French liberators had come to cause "the rights of man" to triumph. God Himself, he said, had caused the rivers to freeze over so that a way was paved for our benefactors.

Van der Palm became professor in Leiden and "Agent for National Education" (Minister of Education). In many orations he sang the praise of the new age. But when the tide began to turn, van der Palm's tune changed as well. In 1813 he wrote that a golden age was dawning and that there was again a future for The Netherlands. A favoured speaker, he was knighted by Napoleon as well as by King William I!

Not all ministers followed that course. In Haarlem three Orangist ministers refused to make the required oath, although they gave in later. In Amsterdam no fewer than fifteen ministers refused and were replaced by others. In Leiden it was Nicolaas Schotsman who refused. We shall hear of him again later.

A New Constitution

On May 30, 1797, a new Constitution was ready. Although it did not become law, since the "sovereign people" rejected it, it is important to know what effect it would have had on the Church had it been adopted. Besides, it paved the way for the Constitution of 1798, which was even more unfavourable in that respect.

What did the proposed Constitution of 1797 provide regarding the Church? It provided for a complete separation between Church and State: Church affiliation brings neither advantages nor disadvantages; Sundays were not holier than the other days; synods

would no longer be held at public expense but must be paid for by the Church itself; all institutions for the promotion of religion (Churches) are under equal protection of the law.

The partial payment of ministers' salaries by the government ceased. Only those ministers who were serving at the moment the Constitution was adopted were to receive their promised salaries as a *pension*. The ecclesiastical properties or funds from which the ministers' salaries had been paid up till then were nationalized. Church buildings and parsonages dating from before 1581 — the year in which The Netherlands abjured King Philip II of Spain — were declared the possession of the combined citizens of a village or city, irrespective of their ecclesiastical affiliation.

No instruction in Christian religion was to be given at school. At the five universities, the theological faculties were abolished, although they were gradually restored after the year 1800.

As mentioned already, the "sovereign people" rejected the proposed Constitution. Thus a new one was designed, not much different from its example.

Meanwhile some action could be noticed now that the material interests of the Church were at stake. Seventeen Reformed ministers and one Walloonian minister met and consulted together in Utrecht. They drew up a declaration regarding the proposed measures, as did many others. For the 1797 Constitution they came too late: it was rejected. On the adoption of the 1798 Constitution those declarations and petitions did not have any influence: the National Assembly did not heed them and adopted the Constitution. There was no basic difference between it and its predecessor.

One difference is noteworthy. The date 1581 was deleted. All Church buildings which had not been built from a Congregation's own funds were to be surrendered to the local government within six months. The basis for dividing the ecclesiastical buildings was to be the number of persons in every place. Especially the Roman Catholics gained from that provision, as we can see from the fact that in the region of Classis 's Hertogenbosch eleven of the fifty-one Church buildings came into their possession. In Classis Peel it was even worse: there forty-eight of the sixty Church buildings fell into their hands.

* * *

In the meantime, the situation changed in France. The turmoil caused by the French Revolution gave way to a more orderly society and to political stability with the emergence of Napoleon Bonaparte as First Consul in 1799.

The French ambassador to The Netherlands was ordered by Napoleon to open discussions with the authorities about a new constitution, because Napoleon did not like the 1798 one at all. A draft was sent to Napoleon for his approval; it was amended by him, but rejected. A new draft, brought along by a new French ambassador, was adopted.

Thus The Netherlands received another Constitution in 1801. What remained of the old condition was equality with respect to the law, freedom of religion, and the one-nation concept. What was practically eliminated was influence by the people.

For the Church the Constitution of 1801 meant another change. It was more moderate than the previous one. The ecclesiastical possessions, nationalized before, were again to be used for the payment of ministers' salaries. This applied not only to the salaries of ministers of the Reformed Church but to those of ministers of other ecclesiastical communities as well. Again the Roman Catholics benefited most of all from it. As for ecclesiastical properties and possessions, each local Church was confirmed in the irrevocable possession of what it had at the beginning of the century.

Article 12 of the Constitution ordered the registration of all members over fourteen years of age of any denomination, in order that a yearly donation might be demanded of them for the maintenance of ministers and properties belonging to their particular denomination. Until the matter would be legally arranged, ministers, professors, etc., were to have their salaries paid by the government.

Napoleon Bonaparte

In 1804 Napoleon became emperor of France. He wished to see a one-man rule in The Netherlands, called Rutger Jan Schimmelpenninck to Paris, and instructed him to draw up a new Constitution. A proclamation invited the people to approve the new set-up; a small number cast their ballot and gave approval to the proposals. Schimmelpenninck was to be Pensionary for a period of five years. That was in 1805.

However, within a year Schimmelpenninck was pushed aside by Napoleon who replaced him by his own brother Louis Napoleon, making the latter king of The Netherlands. Louis Napoleon did his best to be a good king and he was received with benevolence by the large majority of the people. He even tried to learn Dutch, but does not seem to have made all that much progress.

Louis Napoleon's brief rule is of importance for the development in ecclesiastical respect. The king entrusted the matters and interests of the Church to the minister of public worship, Mollerus. This minister secured from the king permission for a new and better organization of the Reformed Church. A committee of nine persons was appointed, which in due time received a memorandum for the organization of the Reformed Church, drawn up by order of the minister by the head clerk or deputy minister of that department, J.D. Janssen. The memorandum was ready in 1809, and presented to the king in the fall of that year.

But, Louis Napoleon was forced to abdicate. The Netherlands were annexed by France. "La Hollande est réunie à l'Empire." The whole plan for the reorganization of the Reformed Church was shelved. It would be dusted off and revived when the time

was considered ripe. And Mr. J.D. Janssen was again to play an important part in the proceedings.

A few more particulars about the condition of the Church in the period under Louis Napoleon. Being Roman Catholic himself, the king favoured his fellow believers. In his official documents he mentions them first. On their part, the Roman Catholics tried to obtain decisions which would be to their advantage. Thus, under their influence, a plan was conceived to sell all properties belonging to the parsonages, to deposit the yield into the national treasury, and to pay from this the salaries of all the clergy. It is to be said to Mollerus' credit that he succeeded in preventing execution of that plan.

In order to economize, various incumbencies were abolished and smaller Congregations combined. And, although Louis Napoleon decreed in 1808 that the salaries of the ministers of the Reformed Church were to be paid as their rightful dues and that also the salaries of the clergy of other groups were to be paid from the national treasury, he was so wise as to add, "insofar as the condition of the treasury permits." It was to become evident very soon that that permission did not reach very far. During the next four years many ministers, especially in the Province of Friesland, would be plunged into great financial difficulties, some even being reduced to the state of beggars.

Napoleon's Ideas on the Church

For the time being Napoleon left things alone, and it was not until 1812 that he appointed a committee to prepare for a new organization of Church life in The Netherlands.

Napoleon had his own ideas about religion and about denominations. Everything should be under the domination of the state. Thus he regulated the position of Churches and religious organizations to fix by law their rights and their obligations towards the State. The result of this, however, was that, especially in France, Reformed Churches, Lutherans, and Jews received a legal status which they had not possessed before. There the Church benefited from his measures in this respect.

It was obviously not Napoleon's endeavour to let the Churches find their own way and course. He strove for unity, because then everything could be controlled much more easily. Actually, he wished to see one Roman Catholic Church (and so a union between Roman Catholics and Jansenists), one Reformed Church (and so a merger between the Reformed Churches and the Remonstrants) and one Lutheran Church (and so a union between the Lutherans and the Restored Lutherans). "As emperor of France," he said to some Jansenists at an audience in Utrecht in 1811, "I have promised protection to the existing denominations, but as a Christian sovereign I have a higher calling than maintaining the existing ones. Jesus Christ wanted them all to become one flock. It is the calling of all Christian princes to promote that unity, and I shall act accordingly."

To be continued.



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.

MAASMECHELEN (ANP)

A copy of the Madonna of the Northern Italian town of Montichiari, at present on a tour of the Belgian province of Limburg, suddenly started to cry. At least, this is what the citizens of the village Mariaheide claim. They started to pray around it in the home of the 60-year old teacher C. Linden. The family tried to keep it a secret, but the message spread like wildfire. Daily the street is filled with people who themselves wish to see the "miracle of Maasmechelen." (ND)

*Quis non fletet?
Who would not cry? VO*

BUSAN, KOREA

One hundred and fifty congregations which separated from the Korean Presbyterian Church, the Kosin-Church, in 1974, rejoined this Church. The definitive decision to reunion came from the Kosin-Church which expressed itself regarding the return of the separated group at its general synod, which was held in the place Nasan from September 23-28.

Great joy prevailed at the synod after the decision had been made. The reason for the split was not a matter of doctrine but a series of personal conflicts. A special committee has been formed to study the further details of the reunion.

In response to a letter from the Free Reformed Churches in South Africa, the synod decided to offer these Churches the relation of "ecclesiastical contact," and thus refrained from full correspondence.

One delegate from the Kosin-Church will attend the Reformed International Conference in Groningen,

which is scheduled to start on October 26. (ND)

ZEIST, THE NETHERLANDS (RES NE)

Prominent Calvinist scholars emphasized the need for Christian philosophers to speak prophetically to our times at an international conference of philosophers here. The conference was organized by the Association for Calvinistic Philosophy.

In his opening address Professor Egbert Schuurman (Delft, Eindhoven) voiced concern about the direction our culture is taking. Our culture has become hard. Everywhere the problem of poverty and aggression, alienation and pollution, depletion of energy sources and the exploitation of people are surfacing. To speak to these problems one must first of all listen to biblical revelation.

Prof. H. Evan Runner (Calvin College, Grand Rapids) agreed. In a stirring address he observed that in the last few decades a number of things have disappeared from Christian circles: the public profession of God's sovereignty; His subjection of all things to His law; the recognition that Jesus Christ is the risen Lord; the vision that the kingdom of God comes in and through struggle. Needed in this situation is a prophetic vision of reality. Runner defined a prophet as one who has a burden in his heart that the Creator be worshipped and honoured above the creature. A prophet exposes man's sin and alienation and points the way back to God.

Dr. Henk Geertsema warned against overappraising the scientific method for its results in a feeling of the absence of God. God speaks to man in Scripture and in nature and man must respond to it in all he does including his scientific endeavours. Dr. James Skillen (Dordt College, Sioux Center, Iowa) related the prophetic vision to the societal and political activity. Our acts must be more than what people might call realistic. Noah built his ark when it seemed absurd.

About one hundred persons, half of them not from The Netherlands, attended the conference. Begun in The Netherlands, and from there spreading to Canada, America, Australia, and South Africa, the Calvinist philosophy movement now has also gained a foothold in countries without a strong reformational tradition such as France, Spain, Italy, Japan, Korea, Taiwan and Malawi.

GRAND RAPIDS (RES NE)

In the wake of the Ottawa assembly of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC) which called the support of apartheid a heresy and suspended the Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk (NGK) and the Nederduitsch Hervormde Kerk (NHK) of South Africa, the moderamen of the West Cape Synod of the NGK has approached the Dutch Reformed Mission Church in South Africa (NGSK) for talks. The NGSK has its headquarters near Cape Town. *Die Burger*, an Afrikaans language newspaper, speaks of the "fast action" of the West Cape Synod and praises that church for its readiness to take the lead. The paper also expresses appreciation for the sensitivity displayed by the NGSK in agreeing to the talks.

The Moors may have been driven out of Spain, but mosques are making a comeback. A new mosque was dedicated in the village of Pedro Abad, near Cordoba, last month. It was built by the Ahmadiya sect of Islam. Last year, wealthy Arab sheiks, who have built summer residences along the Coasta del Sol, erected a mosque at Marbella. They are the first mosques built since the Spanish Inquisition in the fifteenth century. (CT)

A successor has been chosen for rebel Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre. The Priestly Society of St. Pius X, which Lefebvre founded to oppose reforms of the Catholic Church by Vatican Council II, elected a 36-year old German priest to succeed the 77-year old French prelate as superior general in the event of his death, resignation, or incapacitation. He is Franz Schmidberger, a native of Saarbrücken, West Germany. (CT)

While ships were evacuating PLO forces through Beirut harbour in August, another ship was in nearby Jounieh harbour dispensing gospel literature. The Operation Mobilization ship *Logos* anchored here after having been refused entry at Egypt's port of Alexandria. The substitute stop was arranged in six days. The war situation actually simplified the permission process that normally takes several weeks. One key contact with the ruling Phalangist party cleared the way. Five thousand, including Maronite bishops and priests, visited the ship, and OM teams travelled for meetings to Beirut churches. (CT)

VO

news medley

One of my colleagues was so kind as to draw our attention to the fact that, on September 12, the Rev. A.B. Roukema celebrated the forty-fifth anniversary of his ordination. I am sorry that we did not mention this earlier, but this is the first opportunity I have, after having been told about it, to offer our heartfelt congratulations to our brother. Although Rev. Roukema does not conduct services any more, his interest in things is still lively, although the drawbacks of getting older are not withheld from him either. I do not see him too often nowadays, but what I hear about him shows that he occupies an important place in the Maranatha Home in Burlington and is a support to others. Living together in such a home also prevents a feeling of loneliness, although, when night is there, every one withdraws into his or her own quarters. Then, however, the LORD abides with us and continues to surround us with His mercies and grace. May this continue to be given to our brother, and may the light of God's countenance lighten his pathway further as well.

On October 29th, brother and sister A.J. Ytsma of Chatham celebrated their fortieth wedding anniversary. It is many years ago that brother Ytsma wrote in *Canadian Reformed Magazine* about social and political topics. I am certain that his interest in these matters has not diminished. Anyway, I wish them the Lord's blessing in their further life. May many years be added to those they have already received, and may they be blessed in their generation.

Then comes November 3rd. On that day brother and sister W. Vanderpol of Surrey will celebrate their forty-fifth wedding anniversary. Although during the last years they did have to struggle with illness and hospitalization, yet the Lord grants them this day and they may celebrate it in the midst of children and grandchildren. There will also be many brothers and sisters who will come with their congratulations. Although we cannot be there, we do join the crowd of wellwishers, and express the wish that in the future, too, they may experience the same care and blessing which was their share so richly in the years that passed by.

Let us, at the same time, visit the Surrey Church. Recently, a few ladies from outside attended a service. One of the ladies was staying with her daughter for a few weeks, and they went to the church that was closest and most convenient. This happened to be the Maranatha Church. Back in Victoria, the elderly lady wrote a letter which the Rev. Geertsema published in the *Church News*. I will quote a few passages from this letter.

"And I was surprised to see several children around me sitting with their parents not shipped off to Sunday school as so many churches do. In front of me were a family of five: a boy of — I'd say — 12 or 13, and 2 girls, I'd give the age of 8-6 approximately. Then the mother and then the dad, holding a little girl who was four they told me later. These children were models of decorum as were all other children around about. Not so much as one cough or sneeze or one squirm was heard by me for the balance of the service.

"I told this couple how well behaved their children were and what a relief from how my great-grandchildren are. I told them when we got back (how) lovely it all was.

So, not alone the pew ahead of us, but to *all* parents who brought their children I offer very hearty congratulations.

"I would like if you as the minister read this letter to the congregation and ask all parents and children to stand. I am sure they will get a big hand (from) all others present. Your church was so well filled."

Rev. Geertsema writes that he did not read this letter from the pulpit. We are not used to having people stand up and receiving a big hand. Yet it is good to hear such testimony. I would almost say, "Fortunately this lady did not sit behind some of the older 'children' who sit away from their parents and sometimes are busy with things they should not be busy with." Let it be an incentive to be even more attentive and to show to others the riches which we possess.

Our next stop is in Alberta.

Barrhead is still busy with completing the parsonage. Workparties are organized, and everything is done to have all things completed before the deadline in November.

The Barrhead Consistory received a letter from the Barrhead "Church of the Nazarene." The latter are "interested in renting our church building for a late afternoon service on a regular basis. The consistory decided to answer them that we are not in favour of renting out our church building, but in case they do not find another reasonable possibility, they can come back with a request for using our building."

The roles have been reversed. Many years ago we had to go to others to ask them whether we could rent their premises for conducting worship services. Now we are receiving requests from others. It is only when a new Church is instituted that there may be difficulties in finding a suitable place. Such is the case in Burlington South. "As far as a meeting place is concerned, only the Aldershot Presbyterian Church has indicated the possibility to accommodate us. They have in principle decided in favour, but it still has to go to the congregation for final approval."

Another Church that received a request to rent out their premises is the Orangeville Church. "A request from a group of people from the Seventh Day Adventists to rent the church facilities is tabled and briefly discussed." The Consistory decided that some further information was necessary before a definite decision could be made.

However, let us first return to Alberta. No news from Edmonton's building front can be mentioned. There is, however, some other news.

The City Guide contains a convocation for a Workshop for Players of Small Instruments. Their aim? "To develop the talents which the Lord has given us. To eventually play in the form of a band and/or several smaller groups for old age homes, weddings, musical evenings, etc." Who would not acclaim such an initiative! There are so many talents hidden in practically every Congregation that it is a shame if they are not "hunted" and put to work. Much success!

In the part filled by the Providence Church I read a little message which filled me with sadness. There we go again, I thought: another Church instituted, and, of course, another bulletin. There seems to be no cooperation possible as the Churches in the Fraser Valley have had it for more than twenty-five years: there the five Churches have a combined bulletin, the *Church News*, and I am sure that it is read by all members of all five Churches and that they rejoice because of the

possibility to keep up with the news concerning each other. That seems to be the only region where such an enterprise can exist and flourish. The Providence Consistory of Edmonton decided to have one of their own.

"A committee . . . present their recommendations regarding *The City Guide*. Council adopts the following recommendation:

"To have a separate bulletin by January 1, 1983.

Grounds: a. The travelling to get material to the typist and in turn to have it printed should be shortened. b. The deadline for handing in material could possibly be extended."

I do not think that the travelling time is longer in Edmonton than it is in the Fraser Valley or that the deadline as it is right now in Alberta's capital city is much earlier — if any — than in Southern British Columbia. It may be that in the discussion other — and better — arguments came to the fore or that there are reasons which escape my observation, but I cannot but deplore this duplication of services which, unavoidably, also brings unnecessary expenditures.

Be it said that this "separatist" inclination becomes evident in other places as well. When Burlington split into East and West, it was deemed necessary to come with a separate bulletin. The division continues: Burlington South will be instituted in January, and now already we are told that a sister has "committed herself to do the bulletin for the initial few months." Of course, I thought, it was impossible to continue together.

Going south, we come to Coaldale. Apparently quite some damage was caused by a hailstorm. Now the Committee of Administration came with the final figures. "Total hail damage to church approximately \$8,592.00, parsonage \$5,320.00." Who can stand when the Lord throws around His chunks of ice?

Moving on to Ontario, I pass on for the benefit of colleagues who have to go to Ottawa once in a while for pulpit supply the following wish expressed by the Consistory. "In the future the consistory would like to see the *Credo* sung periodically." We'll bear it in mind. Tell us if it becomes too frequent!

The Committee of Administration in Brampton "recommends to look for a parsonage at this time, now that the economic and market conditions are favourable. This is approved."

When I read this, I had to think of our College too. Several General Synods urged the Board of Governors to look for other property and facilities. I did not consult the Acts prior to the Synod of Toronto 1974; there, however, I read in art. 171 that the Boards (that is the former Board of Governors and the former Board of Trustees) have declared themselves in favour of purchasing property for future development. They were authorized by the Synod to do so. That was eight years ago, and I find it hard to believe that in all these eight years there was no opportunity to make such a purchase. It is my conviction that the present building is no longer suitable, and it is my heartfelt wish that the forthcoming Synod of Coaldale will order the Board of Governors to purchase such property within the shortest possible time. Brampton's conviction is also mine: Now it is a buyer's market. When interest rates drop further, the prices of homes will go up again. We don't have to worry about the cost of a library building and equipment. Our sisters, through their Savings Action, have been preparing for this for years. Even if it were only for the library that we need a decent building, we should go ahead; but there is more as everyone who is acquainted with the situation knows.



Two times four makes . . . seven

The riddle caused by the heading will be solved soon enough when you look at the picture.

It shows two times four generations, the fourth generation being the same person, young Karl Vanderlinde, born August 1982.

On the father's side we see all men, on the mother's side all women.

Mr. Harm Vanderlinde was born in December 1897, Mr. Klaas Vanderlinde was born in April 1927, Mr. Harm Vanderlinde Jr. was born in February 1955.

Mrs. P. Huisman, nee Valkenburg (formerly married to Mr. M. Gouwelaar) was born in 1899.

Mrs. J. Nieuwlaat, nee Gouweloos, was born in 1920.

(Mrs.) Magdelene Vanderlinde, nee Nieuwlaat, was born in 1957.

The parents and grandmother of Mrs. Vanderlinde came from The Netherlands on August 13, 1982, and the picture was taken on the day when they left again.

Because of the age of the two great-grandparents of the youngest member of the family and because of the distances involved, it may be impossible to make another picture like this one in the future.

We gladly publish this picture, as it won't happen very often that an opportunity similar to the above one is received.

Funny, how a little remark in a Consistory report can touch off something else.

Brampton, meanwhile, is continuing the remodelling of the Church basement and they are making good progress, according to the reports. Perhaps when, in due time, I have seen it for myself, I can tell you more about it. The last time I saw the work quite some improvements were visible even at that stage.

And a third thing from Brampton: "Everyone is asked to please bring his own books to church on Sundays, because the ushers will stop handing them out on a regular basis to individual members. These are to be for guests and those who may occasionally have forgotten a book." The remark made here applies not only to Brampton; at regular intervals I read the same reminder in other bulletins as well. Hopefully we shall have our new *Book of Praise* in the beginning of 1984,

A Ray of Sunshine



*Sometimes a poem has the same effect as an article written for edification. I found such a poem in **SOMEONE CARES** by Helen Steiner Rice. I will quote it and hope you will enjoy it.*

THE WORLD WOULD BE A NICE PLACE IF WE TRAVELLED AT A SLOWER PACE

Amid stresses and strains
 Much too many to mention,
 And pressure-packed days
 filled with turmoil and tension,
 We seldom have time
 to be "FRIENDLY or KIND"
 For we're harassed and hurried
 and always behind—
 And while we've more "gadgets"
 and "buttons to press"
 Making leisure hours greater
 and labouring hours less,
 And our standards of living
 they claim have improved
 And "repressed inhibitions"
 have been freed and removed,
 It seems all this PROGRESS
 and GROWTH are for naught,
 For daily we see
 a WORLD MORE DISTRAUGHT—
 So what does it matter
 if man reaches his goal
 "And gains the whole world
 but loses his soul"—
 For what have we won
 if in gaining this end,
 We've been much too busy
 to be KIND TO A FRIEND.
 And what is there left
 to make the heart sing
 When life is a COLD
 and MECHANICAL THING.
 And we are but puppets
 of controlled automation
 Instead of "joint heirs"
 to "GOD'S GIFT OF CREATION."

Send your requests to:

Mrs. J. K. Riemersma
 380 St. Andrew Street East
 Fergus, Ontario N1M 1R1

and then there won't be any excuse for not having one when coming to Church.

As for the institution of a Church in Burlington South, this is scheduled for the beginning of January, a month which is approaching fast. I already told you about the meeting place which is sought. Further, a meeting was planned where the whole Congregation of Burlington West would be informed about the progress and where also suggestions would be received and discussed regarding the financial arrangement.

Speaking about a meeting which — as I understood it — was only for those who wish to belong to the new Church, I must express the wish that the language be improved upon. This is what I read, "At the meeting there will be a letter addressed to Burlington West requesting our attestations to be transferred to Burlington South come January 3, 1983."

When are we going to learn that "our attestations" do not exist? An attestation is a testimony which is given about a certain person at a certain moment, not something which rests in the archives of a Church until the "owner" requests the Consistory to dig it up and to give it to him as a sort of permanent proof of membership. When I leave a Congregation, I ask for "an" attestation; after I have received it it is mine; then I give it to the Consistory of the Church to which I am going to belong. From that moment on it is the property of that Church, to be kept in the archives. When a new Church is instituted and I wish to belong to it, I can ask to pass my "vital statistics" on to the new Church or even to transfer my membership to the new Church; I have no attestation which I can request to be returned to me to serve with the new Church. Besides, what would an attestation be worth today if it was given ten or fifteen years ago?

An encouraging note in the Burlington West Consistory report was this: "It was decided that, in 1983, we will celebrate the Lord's Supper six times again."

Rests me to mention that London's Church is busy acquiring a building permit for expansion, that the Guelph Ladies Aid has succeeded in securing a table at the Guelph Market on Saturday mornings on a regular basis, and that I have to conclude this medley because I have to attend a meeting.

Some forty years ago I knew the terms used by radio amateurs for signing off. It was something with QSO, I think. Now I simply say, "Till next time, the Lord willing."

VO

Church News

DECLINED to Ottawa, Ontario:

REV. J. DEJONG
 of London, ON

DECLINED to Carman, MB
 and Smithers, BC

REV. M. WERKMAN
 of Lincoln, ON



Evening Hymn

*The day is done;
The lamps are lit;
Woods-ward the birds are flown.
Shadows draw close, —
Peace be unto this house.*

*The cloth is fair;
The food is set.
God's night draw near.
Quiet and love and peace
Be to this, our rest, our place.*

"Evening Hymn," from *Song in the Meadow*
by Elizabeth Madox Roberts.

school crossing

A. Professionalism

"The conduct, aims or qualities that characterize a certain job or profession" (Webster's dictionary).

This topic is worthy of discussion during any part of the school year and by any group of individuals. It reflects the way teachers speak about their students in the staffroom, how a school board deals with a particular teacher, how a parent reacts towards an unpopular decision made by a principal, — the list could go on and on.

Despite the Biblical direction which we have as a fundamental basis in our school communities, professionalism, sad to say, is often lacking. In a very practical way, the following points are listed for your consideration.

- (a) Deal with all behaviour calmly — wait, analyze, count to 10 (as many times as you have to . . .)
- (b) Do not be evasive, but strive to be open.
- (c) "Know yourself" — recognize your strengths and weaknesses.
- (d) "Know each other" — be mutually supportive.

Above all, remember that the "strange" thing about people is the fact that they have a habit of acting human.



Otto Selles delivering Ben Faber's valedictory address.

In our dealings with others, let us show:

- respect
- honesty
- the ability to listen well
- the power of discretion
- accessibility

There is really nothing new in this brief overview. We've heard it all before; yet the fact remains that it is not always practised consistently.

B. Graduation — Guido de Brès High School

Congratulations are in order to the students and staff of this high school. Another group of students received a secondary school graduation diploma. The following is an account of the evening's activities, provided by Mr. H.D. Nienhuis, a teacher at the high school.

GUIDO DE BRÈS HIGH SCHOOL COMMENCEMENT September 24, 1982

The programme for the sixth graduation held at Guido de Brès High School officially began at 8:30 p.m. with the singing of "God Save the Queen." The ceremonies were held in the Cornerstone Canadian Reformed Church of Hamilton, Ontario. The evening was opened by Mr. H. Aasman, Chairman of the Board.

The principal, Dr. Oosterhoff, spoke a few words of welcome and mentioned that the commencement exercise was again a milestone in the history of Guido de Brès High School. The fact that the event could be held was truly a manifestation of the steadfast faithfulness of our Covenant Lord.

After singing from Psalm 73 the students were presented with a Secondary School Graduation Diploma or a Certificate of Training (see below).

Then the guest speaker was appropriately introduced by Norman Kampen, the 1982-83 President of the Student Council. Professor L. Selles delivered his speech, which centered on the text found in II Tim. 3:17, "that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work." Prof. Selles showed that the name "man of God" extends to all those who in Christ Jesus partake of His anointing and therefore are prophets, priests,

and kings. The responsibility given to man in faithfully carrying out the duties given within this three-fold office was explained. Particular emphasis was placed on the contrast between the man of the world and the man of God, between "punks" and prophets. Prof. Selles was thanked for the making and delivery of the speech by Ann Bethlehem.

Thereafter the Grade 12 Awards for Proficiency in the various subject areas were presented to the following recipients:

SHORTHAND

Deanna VanAndel

TYPING

Tracey Haarsma

SCIENCE

Rick Postma

MATHEMATICS

Rick Postma

TECHNICAL SUBJECTS

Fred Pilon

LAW

Carl Mulder

FRENCH

Clarence VanderVelde

LATIN

Clarence VanderVelde

ENGLISH

Ben Faber,

Clarence VanderVelde

HISTORY

Clarence VanderVelde,

Otto Selles

GEOGRAPHY

Clarence VanderVelde

After the presentation of the awards, Otto Selles read the Valedictory Address prepared by Ben Faber. The speech frequently referred to the analogy of a wheel with bent spokes. The object of education at Guido de Brès apparently had been to straighten them out. Although a few spokes may have broken or "dropped out," the wheel remained intact because it was held together by the hub: the Word of God. This analogy and the many anecdotes and memories were well received by the listeners.

The evening programme officially closed with the singing of "O Canada." After the programme the graduates, parents, and guests went to the school gymnasium which was beautifully decorated by the present grade twelvers and still smelling



The graduates getting ready to have their picture taken by the school photographer.

deliciously of the dinner offered by the Ladies' Auxiliary to graduates and guests earlier in the evening. During the social hour, coffee and cake were served, and an opportunity was given for extending congratulations to the graduates.

To our Heavenly Father be all praise and thanks for giving us this memorable evening.

C. News from the Schools

(a) From John Calvin School, Smithville:

POEM

Although most children are happy to be back at school, not all are. Some, although they have nothing better to do, still dread the return of school.

The Line-Up

Its lonely at the end of the line.
No one stands close to me.
Don't worry, I won't be long there.
Soon I'll be put else where.
But still I will be lonely.
The other students don't like me.

The school may open it's wooden doors.

Open doors for young hearts to go through.

Young hearts of which some may have gone cold.

Thus the melting process begins again.

The children are going back to school.

Yes, at the end of the line He truly was.

But His Father called Him up and out.
Thus the end of the line He took for us.

SECONDARY SCHOOL
GRADUATION DIPLOMA

Sophie Bartels
William Bartels
Ann Bethlehem
Debbie Buist
Simone Buist
Douglas DeBoer
Lorraine DeBoer
Nancy DeBoer
Melanie DeGelder
John Denbok
Paul Denbok
Joanne DenButter
Henry DeVries
Ben Faber
James Feenstra
Tracey Haarsma
Susan Heeringa
Jean Hofsink
Sylvia Jans
Catherine Jelsma
Joanne Koning
Lorraine Linde
John Ludwig
Wendy Mans
Carl Mulder
Harold Oly
Frederick Pilon

Richard Postma
Arthur Salomons
Edward Salomons
Alice Sandink
Wendy Schoeman
Otto Selles
Susan Selles
Theo Selles
Chris Sikkema
Gerald Smink
Bryan Stieva
Marlene Stoffels
Sandra Strating
Gordon Tenhage
Larry Tenhage
David VanAmerongen
Deanna VanAndel
George Vanderberg
Richard Vandenbos
Carolyn Vandenhaak
Margaret Vandenhaak
Jack Vanderee
Jean Vandergriendt
Harold Vandermaarl
Clarence VanderVelde
Frits Werkman
Jack Wieske

CERTIFICATE OF TRAINING

Robert Feenstra

Listen, the children are again singing
at school.
"All Glory be to God in the Highest."

P. WITTEN

(b) From a newsletter of Ebenezer
Canadian Reformed School,
Chatham:

Thoughts about a PTA

The School is a reflection of the school society. Its curriculum reflects what its members desire for their children. A PTA can function as a forum of informing, rallying support, and developing awareness of the importance of this education, thereby at the same time also correcting misunderstandings.

The above-mentioned comments were stated to make us more aware of the purpose and role of the PTA. Its purpose, if accomplished, can be very rewarding. It has little *direct* power; direct power is with the Board. However, if operated properly and efficiently, its greatest power lies in *influencing*. Thus, if we are serious about having a PTA, then let's have a concerted effort, for the benefit of our children. A PTA is as good as we *all* make it:

To be sure, the PTA activities, such as baking, Field Day, and other fund-raising events, have been much appreciated. This appreciation has been expressed many times via past *Newsletters*. But, even though fund-raising is an important function of the PTA, we must not lose sight of the main goal of the PTA: informing and presenting for the sake of better understanding and relationship between parents and teachers for the benefit of the children.

In closing, allow me to list a few areas that might warrant our attention at PTA meetings. Having glossed over this list, you might be able to come up with more specifics.

- aspects of the instructional program
- health/guidance service
- attendance, discipline, control
- general student activities
- needs of/for the school
- demonstrations by teachers and students that can present school program and/or activities in a positive light
- forums/discussions on promoting community-school concept, school spirit

J. ROUKEMA

(c) From *Link*, in Fergus/Guelph
Canadian Reformed School Society:



Wendy Schoeman and Susan Heeringa ceremonially cutting the huge scroll-shaped cake prepared for the graduation dinner by members of this year's Grade 12 class.

Language in our Schools

The purpose of this brief survey paper is to look at the place language arts instruction occupies in our schools. In order to make correct comments about "Language Across the Grades" or "Language Across the Curriculum," we should consider Language Arts as it stands on a class timetable. Even a quick glance will show that generally Language Arts occupies the lion's share of an instructional timetable. In the primary grades almost 50% of the time in class is spent in Language Arts while in Grades 9 and 10 this level has dropped to 20%. Parents will know from the report card also that the section on Language Arts has quite a few categories.

Language Arts are not confined to the large place that they have on the timetable. This central subject cannot be avoided in any subject. We just could not teach and learn without the medium of language. A careful study of how we use language is a good practice for us.

"Language is a wonder from God. Through it we can get to know God and love Him as well as curse Him. By means of some sounds we can give expression to much of what lives in us. Through language we can exchange thoughts with each other; also through language a nation, a civilization is made. Through language a nation distinguishes itself from other nations. (The best way to know the soul of a people is through their language — "Touchstones"). Through language a nation possesses the means to carry out its particular cultural mandate. Through language

a nation can be enriched by the spiritual and cultural life of other nations." — *Richtlijnen*

We can benefit others with language when we comfort and encourage our neighbour, but we can also abuse and grieve our neighbour through it.

When we have learned to read and thus can understand the written language of others, we can broaden and enrich our lives thereby. But if it is bad literature we can seriously disadvantage ourselves and lay ourselves open for great dangers. We can use language as a gift of God to his honour, but we can also, as James 2:9 says, "curse man who is created in the image of God."

The aim that we focus on is none other than this: to have the child learn to use language to the honour of God and to the benefit (salvation) of his neighbour. This aim, however, can only be achieved when we teach this child out of God's Word, teach him to read that Word and study it, try to bring him to obedience and subjection to it, and develop in him a taste for good and wholesome literature.

A good Language Arts program is of benefit to the entire curriculum because it facilitates the learning process by the skills requirement of decoding and hence conceptualization. Besides the skills emphasis, the high interest reading material that we employ brings with it a considerable amount of incidental or by-product learning. Think of the aid novels such as historical fiction give to the development of the knowledge of history. The basal reader series which we employ to varying degrees from Grades

1-10 are designed specifically to appeal to a broad range of interests. Our most knowledgeable pupils are usually the good readers and the good listeners.

Integration is one of our goals. Even if it were not our goal, it would be impossible to totally segregate Language Arts, History and Church History, with their wealth of stories, lend themselves well to being carried out together at times.

In a future issue of *Link* more will be said about this topic in the specifics of the standards and procedures in our schools.

P. SMID

D. Why??

In a board press release of one of our schools in Ontario, I read the following statement: "The committee for setting teacher's salaries and determining credentials would again be at work. It was requested to stay

within the government's 6% and 5% guidelines." This request baffles me. The League sets up a salary committee with input from the Canadian Reformed Teachers' Association. This committee does a tremendous amount of work in the fall and during the winter in order to come up with a fair and equitable salary grid. I am sure that the members of this committee are well aware of government guidelines, the economic situation, and the needs of the teachers. *Why* must we set restrictions before the committee has completed its work? After all, even the salary grid which is produced is to be used as a *guideline* by the local schools!

D. Summary

A few weeks ago I was asked why so few schools were mentioned in School Crossing. The reply was simple. This column gets most of its food for thought from the various bul-

letins of our schools. If I don't receive bulletins from a certain school, it is difficult to report on its activities. In other cases bulletins are received, but the content is so clearly designed for local consumption, that it would be inappropriate for this column.

Please do not forget that, besides school bulletins, input from parents and interested persons is also very welcome. Last year, salaries of teachers had the attention of a number of letter writers after it had been dealt with in *Clarion*. It shouldn't always be a controversial issue which starts a flow of letters. Your thoughts and comments about *any* relevant school issue are very much appreciated!

NICK VANDOOREN
John Calvin School
607 Dynes Road
Burlington, Ontario

The Certainty of Faith

As long as we aren't certain and firm in our faith and we still doubt, we will continue to experience anxiety and fear and will not have the boldness and trust of children of God. We will still be far too much concerned with ourselves to be able to devote our attention to works of love toward God and our neighbor. The eye of the soul remains turned inward and does not have a broad liberated vision of the world. We are still more or less subject to the spirit of fear. We still feel far from God and do not live out of fellowship with Him. Secretly we still harbor the thoughts that we must please Him with our stature and virtues, and we still act out of legalistic principles; we remain servants, not children.

But if in faith we fasten immediately onto the promises of God and take our stand in His rich grace, then we are His children and receive the Spirit of adoption. This Spirit is appropriate to our sonship; it testifies with our spirit that we are children of God. Then we feel like children; we have the stature and experience of children and as a matter of course also do good works, not for wages like servants, but out of thankfulness.

If we are children, we are also heirs, heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ.

The Certainty of Faith

by Herman Bavinck, Paideia / Premier

Labour Board Decision Upholds Freedom of Association

A recent ruling by the Ontario Labour Relations Board unequivocally confirmed that construction workers are free to join the independent Christian Labour Association of Canada and to exercise their rights under the Ontario Labour Relations Act.

This decision, handed down on September 29, 1982, clearly establishes that the Board will not allow the large international construction trade unions to exploit the jurisdictional dispute section of the Ontario Labour Relations Act for the purpose of establishing a monopoly position in the construction industry.

The OLRB decision is the outcome of a request by Local 46 of the Plumbers union, supported by the Toronto-Central Ontario Building and Construction Trades Council, that CLAC members on a certain construction project be sent home and be replaced by members of Local 46. The company involved was the Orillia-based Simcoe Mechanical Contracting Ltd., which had been awarded the plumbing and heating work on a major addition to the municipal office complex of the Town of Vaughan. The application by Local 46 amounted to an attempt to annul the collective agreement between CLAC and Simcoe Mechanical as well as the contract arrived at between this company and the Town of Vaughan.

The Local 46 claim was based on the argument that historically its members had performed most of this type of work in the industry, that its members were more qualified than the CLAC members, and that CLAC's presence on this jobsite was a threat to the stability of the industry.

During the lengthy hearings before the OLRB, which concluded in December 1981, counsel for CLAC and Simcoe Mechanical argued that the Simcoe employees were competent and were entitled to the protection of the collective agreement freely arrived at by negotiations between the employer and the employees. It was argued that Local 46's application did not entail a usual jurisdictional dispute but was a bold move to accomplish by compulsion what it had not been able to do by persuasion. Evidence showed that in three representation votes during the last ten years the Simcoe workers chose the CLAC over the international Plumbers union.

In giving reasons for rejecting Local 46's application, the Board stated:

With respect to skill and training, it is quite clear that Simcoe's employees at the project have the necessary skills and training to perform the work to the satisfaction of the Town of Vaughan, its project co-ordinator, its architect, and its consulting engineer . . .

. . . In this complaint the Board is

dealing with competing claims for the work in dispute based not upon a trade or test of useful skill, but rather on the basis of union membership. The employees of Simcoe have selected the CLAC more than a decade ago as their bargaining agent, and have on two occasions rejected an attempt by the locals of the United Association to displace the CLAC as their bargaining agent in secret ballots conducted by the Board . . .

. . . The essential question of the skills involved underlines the fact that this complaint is essentially representational in nature rather than jurisdictional . . .

. . . While the Board agrees that harmonious labour relations ought to be maintained in the construction industry, the Board does not agree that this ought to be achieved at the expense of a trade union which has been recognized as such by the Board, and which has been successful in freely establishing collective bargaining rights and collective agreements in various areas of this province . . .

. . . Section 144(5) of the Act clearly provides a place for the existence of the CLAC and its bargaining rights in the scheme of industrial relations in the construction industry in this province.

The Board's decision in this instance is a clear signal that the freedom of association and the right of existence of an independent union are protected by the law and its administration. This amounts to a victory for all who cherish democracy and are convinced that freedom is worth defending.

BOOK NEWS

KISTEMAKER TO COMPLETE HENDRIKSEN NEW TESTAMENT COMMENTARY

Dr. Simon Kistemaker of Jackson, Mississippi, has been appointed by Herman Baker of Baker Book House to author the remaining volumes in the well-known *New Testament Commentary* series started by William Hendriksen in 1954, which were left unfinished when Dr. Hendriksen died in January of 1982. Dr. Kistemaker, the new author, is chairman of the New Testament Department at Reformed Theological Seminary in Jackson, Mississippi, and is the author of six books, including *The Parables of Jesus* and *The Gospels in Current Study*. Dr. Kistemaker is permanent secretary-treasurer for the Evangelical Theological Society, and was president of that organization in 1976.

**Consulaat-Generaal
Der Nederlanden
CONSULATE GENERAL
OF THE NETHERLANDS**
10 Kingstreet East,
Toronto, Ontario M5C 1C3
Phone: (416) 364-5443

OPSPORING ADRESSEN:

BUITENOM-EEKEN, Catharina Maria, geboren 30 juni 1906, laatstbekende adres in Canada: Bond Street E. Apt. 20 te Oshawa, Ontario.

DIJKSTRA, G., geboren op 26 augustus 1919. Laatstbekende adres in Nederland: Drieboomlaan 157, Hoorn. Naar Canada vertrokken op 18 juli 1955.

de GRAAF, Harm Tonnis, geboren op 26 augustus 1919. Laatstbekende adres in Nederland: Koninginnelaan 68, Groningen. Naar Canada vertrokken op 30 oktober 1953.

van MIERLO, Fransiscus, geboren op 30 juni 1907 te Veghel. Laatstbekende adres in Nederland: Zandveld 2, Zijtaart, Gem. Veghel. Naar Canada vertrokken op 29 januari 1930.

REITSMA, H., geboren op 30 augustus 1919. Laatstbekende adres in Nederland: 25b, Wieringerwerf. Naar Canada vertrokken op 15 april 1953.

SCHOONBERG, Adrianus Hendricus, geboren op 2 mei 1917 te Amsterdam. Laatstbekende adres in Nederland: Holendrechstraat 18 II, Amsterdam en naar Canada vertrokken op 26 juni 1962.

SCHUURMANS, Antoon P., geboren op 31 december 1917. Laatstbekende adres in Nederland: v. Coothstraat 20, Bostel. Naar Canada vertrokken op 21 oktober 1952.

THIJS, Johannes, geboren op 26 december 1917. Laatstbekende adres in Nederland: Watertorenstraat 124, Tilburg. Naar Canada vertrokken op 7 juni 1957.

VLEEMING, Jan. C., geboren op 17 november 1917. Laatstbekende adres in Nederland: Spankerseweg 34C, Dieren. Naar Canada vertrokken op 9 maart 1954.

"In writing this, I am not aiming directly for the scholar," Rather, Dr. Kistemaker says, the *New Testament Commentary* will be useful to "pastors and lay people all over the English-speaking world."

Simon Kistemaker was born in The Netherlands and studied at Calvin College and Seminary, in Grand Rapids, Michigan, and also studied at the Free University of Amsterdam, where he obtained his doctor's degree in 1961. He served as Home Missionary for the Christian Reformed Church, Professor of Bible at Dordt College, and has been in his present position since 1971.

In accepting this assignment from Baker Book House, Dr. Kistemaker indicated that his first volume to expand the series will be *Hebrews* (release in 1984). Subsequent volumes will include Acts, I and II Corinthians, James, the Epistles of Peter and John, Jude, and Revelation.

our little magazine

Hello Busy Beavers,

Birthdays are fun!
 Just look at the cake below!
 Maybe yours isn't THAT big.
 But maybe you get to choose your favourite kind!
 And then the presents!
 And the party.
 And the food.
 Maybe your favourite supper, too!
 And how about the games!
 Lots of Busy Beavers write me after their birthday
 what a fun time they had.

No wonder!

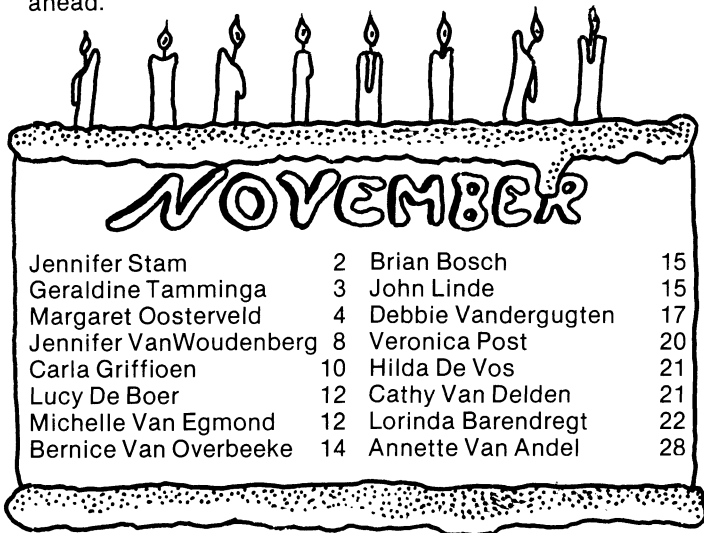
What happy and thankful days they are.

And so we wish our Busy Beavers celebrating their birthday in November a very, very happy and thankful day.

We hope you'll really enjoy yourself with your family and friends.

"You shall rejoice in your feast" the Bible says in Deut. 16:14.

And may the Lord bless and keep you in the year ahead.



From the Mailbox

Welcome to the Busy Beaver Club, *Pearl Vandeburgt*. We are very happy to have you join us! Thank you for a nice chatty letter. I think you had lots and lots of fun this summer! Bye for now, Pearl. Write again soon.

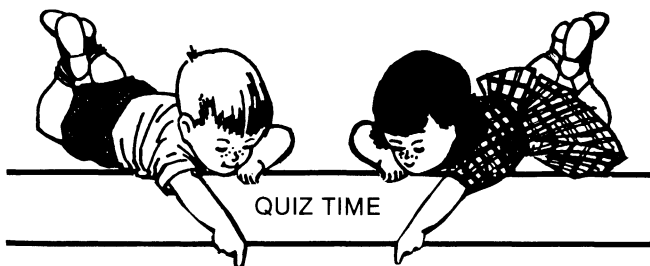
And a big welcome to you, too *Dennis Flokstra*. We hope you'll really enjoy being a Busy Beaver and joining in all our Busy Beaver activities. I see you know about being a Busy Beaver already Dennis! Thank you very much for your contribution to the Birthday Fund.

RIDDLES FOR YOU!

Thanks for sending in these riddles to share with us, Busy Beaver *Joyce Broersma*.

1. If I had two hamburgers, and you have two hamburgers. What would we have?
2. What is a liquid that can never freeze?
3. What works better when it has something in its eye?
4. What kind of train chews bubble-gum?
5. How many peas are there in a pint?

Answers: 1. lunch 2. hot water 3. a needle 4. a chew
 chew train 5. one P.



Do you like animals?

Then you'll enjoy this quiz about:

MISSING ANIMALS

What animal names are needed to fill the blanks?

1. "Behold thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an _____ .
2. The high hills are a refuge for the wild _____ ; and the rocks for the _____ .
3. And bring hither the fatted _____ , and kill it; let us eat and be merry.
4. It is easier for a _____ to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.
5. The _____ have holes and the birds of the air have nests: but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his head.
6. Give not that which is holy unto the _____ , neither cast ye your pearls before _____ .
7. Be ye not as the _____ , or as the _____ , which have no understanding.
8. Thy servant kept his father's _____ and there came a _____ , and a _____ , and took a _____ out of the flock Thy servant slew both the _____ and the _____ .
9. And they took the _____ which was given them, and they dressed it, and called on the name of Baal from morning even until noon.
10. Barley also and straw for the _____ and _____ brought they unto the place where the officers were, every man according to his charge.
11. . . . in the habitation of _____ , where each lay, shall be grass with reeds and rushes!
12. The _____ also shall dwell with the _____ , and the _____ shall lie down with the _____ ; and the _____ and the young _____ and the _____ together; and a little child shall lead them. And the _____ and the _____ shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the _____ shall eat straw like the _____ .

Answers: 1. ass (donkey) 2. goats, conies (badger) 3. calf
 calf, lion, fattling, cow, bear, lion, ox.
 dromedaries 11. dragons 12. wolf, lamb, leopard, kid,
 lion, bear, lion, bear 9. bullock 10. horses,
 lion, bear, lion, bear 9. bullock 10. horses,
 4. camel 5. foxes 6. dogs, swine 7. horse, mule 8. sheep,
 lion, bear, lion, bear 9. bullock 10. horses,