

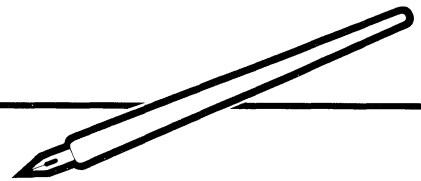


Clarion

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Oh government, oh government, are you a servant of God?

I *Divorce Made Easier*

On January 19, 1984, Bill C-10 was presented to Parliament. Bill C-10 is "An Act to amend the Divorce Act." Presently the law defines "misconduct" as ground for divorce. Misconduct can be, e.g. adultery, desertion, and mental or physical cruelty. One of the spouses is required to take the blame for a marriage failure and admit to one of the forms of such misconduct. Currently the law also requires that all divorces go through a formal trial. Bill C-10 would do away with this requirement and allow uncontested applications to be handled out of court.

As for misconduct as ground for divorce, also this is not required anymore. Explanatory Note, Clause 2, reads: "This amendment would abolish misconduct presently specified in sections 3 and 4, and substitute marriage breakdown only, as a ground for divorce, would render joint petitions permissible and would add the sidelined subsections to section 3." The proposed substitution for section 3 reads:

1. Subject to section 5, a petition for divorce may be presented to a court by
 - a. a husband or wife, or
 - b. a husband and wife, if permitted by any rules of court or regulations made under section 19 to present the petition jointly,on the ground that there has been a breakdown of their marriage.
2. On a petition for divorce, a breakdown of the marriage is established if, and only if,
 - a. the husband and wife assert, in the manner prescribed by any rules of court or regulations made under section 19, that the marriage has broken down; or
 - b. the husband and wife have lived separate and apart for a period of one year or more that immediately precedes, includes or immediately follows the date of presentation of the petition.
3. On a petition for divorce, no decree of divorce shall be granted before the expiration of one year after the date of presentation of the petition unless the condition specified in paragraph 2, b. is fulfilled.

It is clear from Bill C-10 that Justice Minister Mark MacGuigan proposes only one single legal ground for divorce, namely: marriage breakdown. He has introduced a clause whereby the husband and wife can jointly request a divorce solely on the basis of marriage breakdown, thereby effectively eliminating the need of either partner to take blame. The only thing is that there has to be a period of one year between the petition for a divorce and the granting of a decree of divorce. However, if the separation between the two has lasted for a year or more, this period of separation can be included. Furthermore, a separation of three years was previously necessary to get a "no-fault" divorce, but this period has been shortened to one year in the bill.

Divorce is here made easier, indeed.

From the Roman Catholic side, negative reactions have

been voiced. Andre Vallee, secretary-general of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops said that the government is attacking the basic elements of society (the institution of marriage and the family) by easing the way for divorce. It was also reported that James MacDonald, Roman Catholic Bishop of Charlottetown, argued against the proposed bill, saying that it removes an essential element of many reconciliations — time.

More examples of protest could be given. I like to add mine here.

As Christian believers, we should protest against this bill. God hates divorce (Mal. 2:16). Christ Jesus maintained God's will expressed in Genesis 2:24, "a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." He added: "What therefore God has joined together, let not man put asunder."

The present *Divorce Act* still maintains God's law to some extent when it allows as basis for a divorce misconduct such as adultery, desertion, physical or mental cruelty. This Bill C-10 does away with any reference to God's law. The only law that remains is man. When husband and wife agree that their marriage has broken down and do not want to continue the marriage, they can receive a divorce. Common modern thinking says that this is correct. Modern man wants it this way.

Those who believe in God should fight against the passing of this bill. God's law is good. His commandments seek man's well-being. Those who transgress and neglect the commandments of God bring ruin and disaster upon themselves. When a government does not maintain God's law, it brings disaster upon the nation. Instead of solving problems, more problems will be created. More families will break down. More children will suffer, and become frustrated. It will add greatly to the instability of Canadian society. There will be more violence and, more crime.

In Romans 13:4 the apostle Paul teaches us that the government is servant of God for our good when we do good, but also has to "execute His wrath on the wrongdoer." However, in this bill the government makes it easy on the wrongdoer, while the innocent party, the child, will receive "punishment."

Please, Parliament of Canada, House of Commons, Senate, Governor-General, do not let this bill pass, for the sake of your nation! Please, Christians, contend this Bill C-10 and write your disapproval to those concerned in Ottawa. Let not the will of the people become law. Fight to maintain God's law.

II *Pornography Made Less Bad?*

Where are we going with pornography? Jack Clarke, member of the Editorial Board of *The Province*, one of the daily newspapers in British Columbia, wrote (Feb. 3, 1984) some remarks in connection with a study of the Paul Fraser Committee on pornography. In his opinion "The Criminal Code sections on pornography are way behind the times. There is a broad gap between what the code says is unacceptable and what the general public seems ready to accept now."

He further asks: "Are community standards a good enough guide? If so, how are community standards to be judged? The Criminal Code is a hopeless instructor in these matters. There are no mechanisms in the code for measuring standards. Judges have to assume community standards (which they do poorly) or retreat from a decision on the ground that they can't decide what community standards are."

Here we have exactly the problem in Canada. The community makes the law, the standards to live by. But the community does not always think the same. It can change its opinion. Besides, who form that "community"? Is it those who speak the loudest? Is it the so-called silent majority? Who can truly measure who the community is and what the community thinks? Here only uncertainty can rule.

But we are dealing with what God's Word calls "lawlessness." God is here completely out of the picture. Again

we say: when man does not reckon with God and His law, when man makes his own community-opinion his law to live by, he brings disaster upon his head. Man simply cannot reject God's law and remain unpunished. In Ephesians 5 and Colossians 3 the apostle Paul warns against immorality, unchastity, impurity, and says: "it is because of these things that the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience."

Oh, Canada, where are we going?

There is one little positive point. The community is the measure and decides on the standards of morality, it is said. Let us, as a Christian community in this country, voice our opinion and make it known to those who have the legislative powers, and let us pray that through the patient mercy of God evil will not be given the free hand.

J. GEERTSEMA

Capital punishment₃

4. Less sound arguments

Although we are convinced that capital punishment is in accordance with the Word of God, we have to be on the alert for some less pure arguments in this respect. There is always the danger that an element of revenge creeps in, and the Holy Scripture teaches us clearly that we should not avenge ourselves but leave it to the wrath of the Lord; for it is written "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord." (Rom. 12:19).

Another aspect is the financial consequences. Some argue that life in prison costs the "tax payer" a fortune. Are we supposed to spend so much money on criminals? Also this argument should never be decisive in making a decision in favour or against capital punishment. The cost of imprisonment might play a role in the judicial system, but then in such a way that ways and means should be developed to make inmates do meaningful work, to make up for the cost of their imprisonment. Without going to the extreme of so-called "penal servitude" or "hard labour camps," inmates can certainly be forced to spend their time in a meaningful way, to the benefit of society.

5. Corrective, remedial, and restorative

An aspect which deserves special attention is the notion that punishment should always be either corrective, remedial, or restorative. It should correct the wrong attitude of the convict, remedy

his "disease," or restore the damage caused by his offence. In other words: it should serve a certain positive purpose and should not only be a matter of retaliation.

We have already seen that this point cannot be used specifically against capital punishment, because it counts in general for every form of punishment. Moreover, it is not true either that punishment always has to be corrective or restorative. Romans 13 teaches us clearly that the task of the government is to be the servant of God to execute His wrath on wrongdoers (Rom. 13:4). The punishment, meted out by the civil government is certainly not only an educative matter. The Bible teaches us clearly that there is also the element of retaliation. That is why the punishment always has to be reasonable and in accordance with the character of the offence. Although retaliation does not pay back to the victim and does not restore the damage, it makes clear to the convict that he has to suffer as a consequence of his wrongdoings. Romans 13:4 says: "If you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword in vain; he is the servant of God to execute His wrath on the wrongdoer."

Of course, punishment is not only retaliation. The aspect of correction and restoration has to be considered as well. The government should try to mete out punishment in such a way that it can contribute to the rehabilitation of the offender. It should, if at all possible, be a remedial

measure. But this aspect should not be the first and only one.

Also restoration can be considered. There are cases nowadays where an offender is sentenced in such a way that he can contribute to the restoration of the damage caused by his crime or that he can help to alleviate the suffering of the victims of his or another's wrongdoings.

6. Protection of the victims

A very important aspect of the judicial system is to protect the innocent. There is a tendency, or even a rule, to give the convict the benefit of the doubt. That might be right to a certain extent. No one should be sentenced without conclusive evidence. But it should never go at the cost of innocent victims. Sometimes very dangerous murderers are released on parole without sufficient precautions to protect potential victims, and it happens too often that more people are killed. That is not a matter of giving the criminal the benefit of the doubt. That is a matter of negligence on the part of the government. The innocent are not sufficiently protected against a well-known danger.

We are living in a time when everyone speaks about human rights, but one may wonder why the "rights" of criminals are better cared for than the rights of innocent victims and potential new victims. The Lord has given the civil government the mandate to maintain peace and order. He has given capital punishment, not to get rid of some bad people, but to protect human life against murderers.

7. Insanity

Nowadays many criminals, often also murderers, are discharged for reasons of insanity. What should our attitude be in this respect? We have to be careful with this earmark. It is often used by the defence attorney to have his client released from further prosecution. The main point in this respect is whether the suspect can be accounted fully responsible for his actions.

Two aspects have to be considered in this respect. In the first place, it can happen that someone who is mentally ill or insane hurts someone else or even causes someone else to die. It is clear that in such a case no capital punishment should be executed, but that medical treatment should be ordered. However, in how many cases of discharge for reasons of insanity is it really a matter of mental illness? It is often used by the defence to give the accused an easy way out and to provide him with an excuse for his crime. Having been released from prosecution, the person often seems to be quite normal.

In the second place, if someone really is insane, so that he kills his neighbour and poses a threat for the lives of others, he should be treated in an appropriate way. He should be protected and prevented from doing such a terrible thing again. In such a situation no death penalty should be executed, but more than usual care should be given to such a person to protect potential victims from being killed. That can necessitate very secure seclusion in an institution. In such a case we should not complain too much about the lack of freedom of the murderer (or the patient, if you wish), but we should first and foremost keep in mind the task of the government to protect people against a potential killer, either by a well-considered action or by an outrage of an insane person.

8. Self-defence

What about those who kill in self-defence? We are not allowed to kill, but we are allowed to defend ourself against a brutal attack.

In the Sermon on the Mount we read: "Do not resist one who is evil. But if anyone strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also." That does not mean that we are not allowed to defend our lives, our possessions, and the lives of our loved ones. It means that we are not supposed to be judge in our own case, and that we should rather suffer loss than to defend our own interests at any cost. We have to love our neighbour, even our enemy, and we have to be willing to give in and to humble ourselves. We have to regard others better than ourselves, and we have to accept loss rather than do harm to others.

The Bible teaches us clearly that we have to protect our house, our life, and all our possessions against robbers, burglars, and murderers. When someone, in an attempt to defend his own life, causes someone else to die, it is not a matter of murder. However, we have to be careful that our self-defence is in accordance with the danger and the character of the threat. Someone who protects his house

The punishment, meted out by the civil government is certainly not only an educative matter. The Bible teaches us clearly that there is also the element of retaliation.

with a security system that kills every intruder is still guilty of murder. It also makes quite a difference whether a civilian (a civil citizen) kills an intruder or a police officer kills a criminal in an attempt to apprehend him during a shoot-out.

We should not be our own judge but leave it to the governing authorities to do justice. A matter of self-defence can easily become a matter of revenge. Even in Old Testament times, when the avenger was charged with the execution of capital punishment in respect to the murderer of his next of kin, six cities of refuge were selected and the manslayer could flee there when he had killed someone without intent.



9. An obligation to execute capital punishment?

The last point I should like to mention is the question whether the government has the *duty* to execute capital punishment in every case of murder.

From what has been said it can be perfectly clear that we believe that the government has the right to kill and that capital punishment is a Biblical way of dealing with murderers. Does that mean that every government that does not execute capital punishment in all cases of murder acts against the commandments of the Lord? Not necessarily. It

all depends on the reason why or why not. The government, in the first place, has the task to maintain peace, order, and justice; to protect and defend the lives and freedom of all citizens. In countries where capital punishment is still used or was used in the past, it always is or was used only in very specific cases, often only for well-considered, deliberate killing, or so-called "first degree" murder, or only for war criminals or traitors.

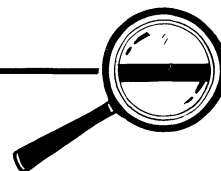
In our country we distinguish between first and second degree murder, between manslaughter and criminal negligence, which results in someone's death. It is clear that the death penalty would not be the proper punishment in all these cases. The government has a great responsibility in determining what the sentence should be. When it is perfectly clear that someone has deliberately killed innocent people, the only Scriptural punishment is the death penalty. I am convinced that a lot of violence and murder could have been prevented if the governing authorities had been willing to act according to the Biblical rule given in Gen. 9:6 and Rom. 13.

At the same time we have to realize that the Bible also teaches us about instances in which a criminal was granted mercy and was not put to death. Even Jesus Himself did so with the woman who, according to the law, had to be put to death. In some circumstances, e.g. in times of war and open revolution, there may be a greater necessity to execute capital punishment and there may be more cases in which it is the only way to execute justice. In normal circumstances there may be more cases for which a jail term is sufficient.

In each and every situation we have to recognize that neither our personal feelings of revenge nor arguments of "humanity" should be decisive, but only what the Lord teaches us in His Word, and the responsibility given to the governing authorities to be God's servants for our good and to execute God's wrath on the wrongdoers (Rom. 13:4).

Langley, BC

W. POUWELSE



Women in office — it has to go through in the CRC

In June, the 1984 Christian Reformed Synod will be held, Deo Volente. This synod will deal with a report on the headship of man and what this means. I read that there is a majority report and two minority reports. The conclusions of the report(s) will be basic for the decision on women in office in the CRC. Will the CRC have deaconesses, female elders and female ministers?

The January 23, 1984 issue of *The Banner* is entirely devoted to this issue and writes completely in favour of opening the three offices to women in the church. It starts with an editorial, written by Rev. Andrew Kuyvenhoven, the editor. I will quote two parts. Under the heading "Authority," he writes:

If we place the women among the deacons but take the deacons out of the consistory, we may appeal to a long and venerable Presbyterian tradition. We would not transgress any particular Biblical rule. There is no job description for the deacon in the Bible. Nevertheless we would strengthen some un-Biblical notions.

Especially since 1973 (Report on Offices) we have been reminding each other that *authority* and *ruling offices* in the church have nothing to do with the worldly idea of dominance or being boss (Matt. 20:25-26; 23:8-11; 1 Pet. 5:3). In the Christian community a leadership role is always a servant role. The authority does not reside in the people, but in the Word of the gospel entrusted to them. However, if we divide ordained people into "servants" and "rulers," we would continue the confusion. Deacons would be servants, and elders would be rulers.

Besides, by reserving the elder's office for males, we would continue to teach that unless one is of the masculine gender, one cannot serve the congregation with the authority of the Word.

This reasoning is suggestive and misleading. A false identity is suggested between ruling (having authority) and serving. The serving character of the office of elder is used to empty out the element of ruling. Ruling as elder is certainly serving the congregation, and not being the boss. But it remains ruling. To be a ruler is the position and task of the elder, and this task and position is restricted to the

male members of the church in the New Testament. Christ came to serve, not to be served. This serving did not at all take away His position as leader. As far as I can see this is the point in the texts that are mentioned: Leaders in the world want to be served. Leaders in the church (remaining rulers) are there to serve, like Christ did.

Further, to suggest that having only male elders means that one teaches that only a person "of the masculine gender" can "serve the congregation with the authority of the Word" is again misleading, because it is a faulty reasoning: as if one has to be an elder in order to be allowed to serve the congregation with the authority of the Word of God. We all have our office as believers in the church. Every believer, every member in the church, also the women and the youth can visit other members to comfort, encourage and admonish them with the authoritative Word of God. But not every one is called to be an elder and rule the congregation.

Under the heading "the big hurdle" the most important point is discussed: what does God's Word say? We read:

The church would be well served if we who say that the Bible allows women to hold office in the church frankly admit that we have made a hermeneutical decision: we have decided how to interpret certain Bible texts. One should not try to make these texts say the opposite of what they seem to be saying to the ordinary reader.

There is no doubt in my mind that Paul was prescribing a restricted role to women in the service of worship when he wrote 1 Corinthians 14:34 and 1 Timothy 2:12.

However, the reasons for the restrictions were local, cultural, and therefore temporal. Paul could appeal to what was in his day a common moral judgment: a woman speaking in church looked "bad," "shameful" (1 Cor. 14:35). But when such an appeal can no longer be made, the special apostolic prescription is also removed.

In other words, the veil, the head covering, long hair, and other prescriptions had a cultural importance they no longer have. But reverence, submission, and the good name of the Christian community are the enduring concerns of these passages.

At one time the forwardness of a Christian woman would discredit the Word of God (Titus 2:5). Today our efforts to hold back

female members might discredit the church.

Just as the gospel liberated the slaves, who were constantly taught submission in Paul's historical situation, so the equality of men and women was taught in the gospel but had to await its own cultural revelation.

That, in a few words, is my understanding of the debated texts. And I, too, wish to be faithful to the Word.

The editor wishes to be faithful, but is he? A Press Review is not the place for an extensive exegetical explanation of texts.

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OUR COVER

A coconut palm; Boma, Irian Jaya.
Photo courtesy Bram Vegter.

However, there is room for a few remarks. The argument is: Paul forbids women in office because of the cultural situation. Was that truly Paul's point? I do not see that in the context. I see a different argumentation. In I Corinthians 14:34 the apostle says, that women "are not permitted to speak, but should be subordinate." The apostle does not adduce as ground the circumstances of his days, a

decides the matter. This "liberation" of women is the liberation of humanism, or rather: of the revolution with its slogan: liberty, equality, fraternity. I am afraid that the "liberated women" do not belong to the "conservative" element in the churches, but are part of the more liberal, modernistic group, which leads away from the truth of the Word of God. But liberals do not see that.

fundamentally different natures, intending them to play clearly distinct sex roles.

Again it is clear what leads the thinking: not what the Word of God says, but the modern situation, modern life experience. And the Scriptures are adapted to fit modern ways of life. That will mean some new hermeneutics, some new ways of interpreting the Scriptures. But modern Bible scholars will take care of that.

The next article gives the stories of a number of CRC women who either left their denomination to become minister elsewhere, or stayed in the CRC as yet and hope to become minister. They speak of a strong sense of calling. One says:

"I feel called. It's something insistent. It comes again and again, the sense of God leading me."

"Feelings" decide the matter, not what "is written."

Then follows a story that leads in the same direction. A subsequent article discusses the meaning of Ephesians 5:21ff. where the apostle Paul writes, "Be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ. Wives, be subject to your husbands" After it is said that:

women ought to submit to their husbands as if they were submitting to God. Why does he (Paul) speak that way? Because submission was the only recourse for women and slaves in that day. Society demanded it.

We have here the same wrong reasoning as in the editorial. It is the reasoning of modern liberation theology. The conclusion is that the shift in our thinking about the role and relationship of husband and wife is present, and that:

Instead of resisting this shift, we should perhaps recognize that God is leading us into a new and exciting time. Not only may we enjoy more than ever the gifts God gives to women, but also we will develop a new respect for each other that arises out of our mutual submission to Christ.

Submission to Christ is abiding by the Scriptures, as they are written. And the Scriptures speak very much about women and their gifts. But it does not place them in an office. Scripture praises the God-fearing mother who bears children and brings them up in the fear of the LORD. See I Timothy 2:15.

I am quite convinced that these women and women libbers are not in favour of having a large family. Are Psalm 127 and 128 also culturally determined, and not really the normative Word of God in our cultural situation anymore? I only ask.

It is sad that the official CRC magazine so strongly pushes into the liberal direction, promoting an ungodly shift with pious words.

J. GEERTSEMA

It is acknowledged that the basis for the "liberation" of women in the CRC is not based on the Word of God, but comes forth from "its own cultural revelation."

cultural situation; no, he adds: "as even the law says." The law is God's Old Testament Word. Paul's ground for his statement is what the Old Testament says. This is in line with what he said in a previous chapter, 11:1-16, where the apostle maintains the headship, the ruling position, of man on the basis of God's creation order.

It is the same with the other text: I Timothy 2:12. Here the apostle says: "I permit no woman to teach or to have authority over men; she is to keep silent." Again, Paul does not give this command for cultural reasons. His ground is God's order in creation and what happened in the fall in sin. Paul writes: "For Adam was formed first, then Eve; and Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor. Yet woman will be saved through bearing children, if she continues in faith and love and holiness, with modesty." This "childbearing" refers to the promise that the woman will bring the seed into the world that will bruise the devil. Our conclusion must be that all the talk about cultural and temporal grounds that are not valid anymore is completely invalid in light of the context. Culture is used to reason away what the Word of the LORD says. That is modern, but bad hermeneutics. It is acknowledged that the basis for the "liberation" of women in the CRC is not based on the Word of God, but comes forth from "its own cultural revelation." Our culture

The following article in the same issue of *The Banner* discusses the result of a survey in the CRC. I quote the following:

Ordination seems to be the great divider. A majority of CRC member oppose women in any ordained office. While 43 percent allow women to serve as unordained ministers of church education, only 36 percent favor women as deacons, 26 percent as elders, and 23 percent as ordained ministers

Acceptance of women in the offices is twice as high in the younger, more educated group (. . .) as in the older, less educated group. Yet, even among the younger, more educated element, over half do not approve of women as elders and ministers.

The article also tries to give an answer to the question how it is that:

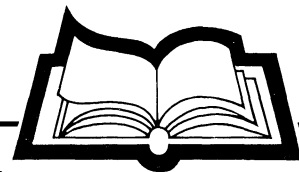
increasing proportions of the CRC's membership will come to accept the idea of women in office. (This is not so much so because) people change their attitudes when new *ideas* (theological or otherwise) are convincingly presented to them

More commonly, people change their attitudes if they have new *experiences*, which in turn prompt them to rework their thinking

So, today many of us are *experiencing* women doing things we used to identify exclusively with men

As Christians we are driven back to Scripture to study anew what was formerly so clear to us. New ideas occur to us; perhaps God did not create men and women with

FROM THE SCRIPTURES



“But Herod the tetrarch, who had been reproved by him for Herodias, his brother’s wife, and for all the evil things that Herod had done, added this to them all, that he shut up John in prison.” Luke 3:19, 20

Under the winnowing fork

Luke’s account of the work of John the Baptist is remarkable, both for its brevity and its content. While we read nothing of the baptism of Jesus by John, we read quite a lot about the reaction of Herod to John’s preaching. It almost appears as if in Luke’s account John is in prison before Christ is baptized, and it is John’s imprisonment that forms the touch off to the ministry of Christ.

One cannot but notice a unique ordering here, an ordering complementing the rest of Luke’s gospel. He is the evangelist who unfolds for us the *triumph* of the gospel from the obscure stable in Bethlehem to the great world center of Rome, at the end of the book of Acts. Hence his stress on the exact universal setting of the first events surrounding the coming of the kingdom: John’s preaching (chapter 3:1ff.), and the Saviour’s birth (chapter 2:1ff.). This is the gospel of the gentiles, the gospel which records the triumphant road of the message of the universal King, Jesus Christ. That is why Herod and his reaction to the gospel also receives a place here; he is not excluded from the call to make ready for the coming King.

So Herod hears the preaching of John, and John does not shrink back from exposing his terrible sins. He had procured the wife of his half-brother Phillip, had married her, and flouting all decency, paraded this incestuous marriage in the sight of all. And he did many other evil things. Yet in hearing John’s preaching, the call of deliverance and salvation comes to him, too. He only must change his heart, bow in humility before the great King, and serve Him. But what does Herod do? Does he repent and turn to serve the living God? No, he does not. He resented John for his preaching, and at a certain point he looses his patience. Although he still heard him (Mark 6:20), he kept him from preaching to the people, and bound him in prison.

Luke’s manner of describing this action shows that it is a *decisive* action on Herod’s part, a *culmination* point in his life. Here we meet the end of a process, a decisive turn describing the definite choice and resolution of a matter after a series of ills and evils. Herod *rejects* the call to preparation; he refuses to bow before the Saviour, the Son of David, the Messiah.

In this action, Herod attempts to rid the world of the good news, the gospel of the kingdom. Here the ancient hostility between brothers of one father continues, the hostility between Jacob and Esau. However, try as he might, he

cannot thwart the salvation plan of God. Just as he tries to destroy the working of the gospel, the Lord makes it grow. That is why Luke follows this order. John’s imprisonment opens the door to Christ’s preaching! And Matthew’s gospel only emphasizes this glorious work of God. For John’s imprisonment forms a major turning point in Christ’s preaching, a turning to the gentiles (Matt. 4:12); and John’s death has a similar effect (Matt. 14:13). Herod thought to destroy the gospel, but this only led to its growth. And the torment of his sin never left him, even after he had put John to death.

So the ministry of John finds its perspective and meaning in the work of *He* who was mightier than him, Jesus Christ. Undaunted, he stood before kings (Ps. 119:46), but humanly speaking he suffered a sad and untimely death — beheaded at 32 years old. But in the unfolding salvation plan of the Father this short ministry had to take place as it did — as a shadow-marker and roadmap for the Lord Jesus. For He had to follow John in his death; only this death was to be much more intense, bitter and shameful — the death of the only Son on the cross, the death in which the wrath of the Father was also carried away.

Then, too, the rulers and governors thought that they had eliminated the message of truth from the world. But they could not thwart the salvation work of God. God raised Him from the dead, and through the power of His life-giving Spirit, the good news travelled far and wide, and still reaches us today. With all its admonitions, exhortations and warnings, it remains *good news*, the message of the coming kingdom of peace and righteousness. As Herod came under it, so we fall under it today. Regardless of position or state, all must bow before the same message.

Our exalted Lord calls us, with urgency and conviction. Still today we are under the winnowing fork, and He comes to clear His threshing floor. The same fork has a two-fold effect. He gathers and scatters — to life, and to death. And what do we choose? What is our reaction to the call of the kingdom? Will we bow, or turn away even more, becoming hardened to the message of life? That is what Herod did.

From John’s day to our own, the message has gone out, with clarity and faithfulness. By God’s grace it will continue until our King returns to us. Let us then make ready, and bow before Him.

J. DEJONG

News update of the Reformed Evangelism Taskforce

This is the first issue of what we hope will be periodic News Updates from the Taskforce in order to inform you about our activities. After the publication of our introductory letter in *Clarion* we received quite a number of letters both from Canada and Australia. All of them expressed interest in the work that was planned, desired to be kept informed and wished us every success for the future. Naturally, we appreciate this kind of support very much, for the backing and prayers of the brotherhood are essential to all of our endeavours.

Still, you might be curious to know what has transpired in the past number of months. Let us begin by turning to:

EVANGEL

a) Subscriptions

Thus far we have published three issues of *Evangel*, with the third one being sent out in February. For the first issue we had 3,000 copies printed up, 5,000 for the second Christmas issue (partly because of special orders from various churches), but for the third issue we will be cutting back the number to 1,500 copies. This is due primarily to financial considerations. The first issues have cost about \$1,500.00 each and we are of the opinion that this should be reduced to \$1,000.00 because as yet our financial base is not strong enough to support a higher press run.

Now this is not to suggest that the response received thus far has been disappointing. At present ten local churches have requested subscriptions for *Evangel*. The number of subscriptions varies widely from a low figure of 10 from one church to a high figure of 300 each for others. The rest are somewhere in between.

After sending the first two issues to almost all the churches, at no obligation to them and asking them to subscribe, we are of the opinion that we can no longer afford to continue in such a generous way. Thus, from now on we will be sending a few copies to those churches that have not yet made any commitment in the hope that they will eventually come around to ordering copies. We have no

firm goals in mind; however, we do hope that every local church, either through its consistory or through its Home Mission/Evangelism Committee, will give careful consideration to the magazine and how it might best be put to use in their particular area. More about distribution later.

b) Reactions

With respect to the comments received to date, we may report that almost all have been very favourable. Indeed the only negative note that we received was from the clerk of a certain consistory who wrote that the first two issues had been made available to the membership, that no response was received and therefore, please do not send us any more for now. Needless to say, that kind of response is disappointing; however, we realize that the support will take time to grow.

From one corner we heard that some members had some objections to the first two issues, but they did not deem them important enough to pass them on to the Taskforce. We find that regrettable. It is easy to criticize something, especially a new product and venture, but if that criticism is to serve a constructive purpose it should be passed on to the right address.

As for the nature of that criticism, it seemed to go out from the presupposition that *Evangel* is meant in the first place for internal consumption. That, however, has never been our aim. The magazine is directed primarily at outsiders. It attempts to speak to the people of this world in such a way that they can relate to the message of the gospel. And that is a hard thing. If one has been raised in the church and is used to church language, it is very difficult to put oneself into the mind-set of an unbeliever, but that is what we are trying to do. So if something sounds odd or even out of place to you, ask yourselves. "But does it perhaps speak to an unbeliever?"

We have also received suggestions with respect to the more technical side of the magazine. One Evangelism Committee was so kind as to pass on some sug-

gestions regarding improvements. One of these had to do with the possibility of publishing *Evangel* on two different kinds of paper, higher quality for internal distribution and lower, newspaper quality for external distribution. We are looking into this matter, although it should be said, that our preliminary investigations are leading us in a negative direction. In connection with this, some of you will have noticed that the third issue of *Evangel* has been printed on a glossier, more attractive paper. This, however, was the doing of the Printer and will not cost us any extra.

The suggestion has also been made that we should place the name of our church federation and a short confession of faith in the box on the last page. We are hesitant to do that because it may limit flexibility in distribution. Some people are of the opinion that evangelism is an almost exclusively personal responsibility and hence entails little or no official ecclesiastical connection, others are of a different opinion. As Taskforce, it is our present opinion that the open box on the last page gives sufficient possibilities for local identification. An individual can write in his name, a local church can list its address and the times of its worship services, etc.

We have also received the suggestion that the qualifications of the writers be placed somewhere in the magazine. Our policy has been to ignore B.A.'s, M. Div.'s, Ph.D.'s, not because we are anti-intellectual, but because we cannot see that such factors should carry much weight. The emphasis in our magazine should be on the contents, not on the personalities. Besides, we do not exactly have a heady supply of famous, highly-academic people to draw from and with which to impress the world. Nor do we need them.

Still, it should be said that if you disagree with our viewpoint, or if you have any criticisms at all, we would like to hear from you.

c) Distribution

Repeatedly the question arises in the letters received how *Evangel* can be put to the best use. Now we do not promote any one standard formula or method of approach. Here again flexibility is in order, as is imagination. If your church building is located in a residential area, you might be well advised to decide as Home Mission/Evangelism Committee to distribute the magazine within a certain radius on a regular organized basis. This does not mean that every time you do so you have to knock on the door and introduce yourself. We do not have to out-witness the Jehovah's Witness in this manner. Rather place *Evangel* in the mail box for a full year, and then at the end

of the year, knock on doors and ask people for their reactions. This kind of procedure will heighten your exposure in the community and also dispel the impression that we are an exclusive, Dutch Church, an impression that many outsiders seem to have. We know, for we have met this reaction locally time and again.

Or, and here you have another possibility, why not have the local Home Mission/Evangelism Committee order a certain number of copies and pass them out to members of the congregation who are desirous to let their light shine in their neighbourhoods. Then they can take these copies and pass them along to their closest neighbours. Surely in an average size congregation it should not be too hard to find a dozen couples, families, individuals, who will undertake to distribute 10-12 copies each?

Thus far we have given you two basic suggestions, but we can easily give you more. You can place *Evangel* in hospitals, nursing homes, schools, and in many other locations. It can also be used as copy for radio-broadcasts. Rev. C. VanSpronsen is using it in the Smithers Indian Center. One of the Australian committees would like to print some of the articles separately and use them as tracts. And so the possibilities go on and on.

In conclusion, we hope that you and your local church will see fit to support our efforts. And remember, we want to hear from you if you have any comments to make that will improve the end product. One last word before we leave *Evangel* and that is that not so long ago we were told by Presbyterians who are receiving the magazine that there is nothing comparable to *Evangel* on this continent and that it fills a definite need to bring a Reformed witness to bear in our society. Such comments are not a reason to become proud, but they are cause for gratitude and for renewed effort on our part.

Now on to the next matter, which is:

The Bible Course

At the present time about 75% of the Bible Course has been translated. It is being edited and revised wherever needed. If our projections hold up then we hope to have it out in print by the fall of this year.

Naturally, that raises the question: "How is this Course meant to function? How are Home Mission/Evangelism Committees to use it?" The aim of the Course is to give to interested inquirers a basic introduction to the gospel. As such the Course is made up of 25 parts, each part divided into three subjects, namely, Bible introduction, Doctrine, Survey of the History of Redemption, Prayer/Apostles' Creed. At the end of each part or lesson there are questions to be answered and

deductions to be made. Therefore, anyone who has worked through this Course will hopefully come away with an introductory understanding of the message of salvation.

Due to its very nature, we envisage that the Course can be used in any number of situations. The Voice of the Church can invite listeners to subscribe to it. Ministers can use it when they instruct people coming into the church. Home Mission/Evangelism Committees can place advertisements in local newspapers and ask people to enroll on a correspondence level. *Evangel* will advertise it in each issue and so use it to support and develop the message that the magazine brings. We trust that you get the picture.

Nevertheless, for the Course to become a reality a number of hurdles have to be crossed, and the major one at this point is financial. To overcome it we will be writing a letter to every consistory asking them to designate a special collection for the purpose of financing the publication of the Course. In order to give every one an idea of what this Bible Course is like, we will be printing the first of the 25 parts in the next issue(s) of *Clarion*.

Thus far the Bible Course, now it is on to the:

Evangelism Training Manual

We have lately received some inquiries from some of the ministers asking about the Manual seeing that they hope to hold local evangelism seminars in their congregations. Unfortunately, we can not be of much help at this time, since this work is still in its first stages. At present we are busy compiling all kinds of information and later this year an experimental course will be tested. However, we do not visualize having anything ready for publication until D.V. 1985. We are of the opinion that *Evangel* and the Bible Course should have priority in 1984.

Finally, we are coming to the end of our tale, and that leaves us with one area still to cover, namely:

Tracts and Brochures

Also this area is being worked on. At the moment we are busy scrutinizing all kinds of tracts, pamphlets, and brochures. A list is going to be compiled of what is suitable for use. Some of the tracts distributed by our sister churches in The Netherlands will be translated. We are also going to commission various members to write tracts on subjects that are not dealt with in any material that is currently available and can be recommended. Among these we are hoping to place "urgent" on a tract that will introduce The Canadian Reformed Churches. As things stand now many local churches have little introductory tracts which invite

people to attend their worship services. There is, however, no brochure that adequately introduces our churches giving attention to our history, creeds, polity, worship, educational emphasis, international connections, etc. Those of you who have seen the pamphlet put out by our Dutch sister churches know what we mean.

Thus far, our NEWS UPDATE for this time. If you want to reach us, drop us a line at:

Reformed Evangelism Taskforce
PO Box 1008, Station A
Surrey, BC V3S 4P5
Canada

If you wish to make a financial contribution towards our work, please make your cheques payable to: RET c/o CRC — Cloverdale. A charitable donation slip for income tax purposes will be provided.

Consulaat-Generaal Der Nederlanden CONSULATE GENERAL OF THE NETHERLANDS

One Dundas Street West
Suite 2106, Box 2
Toronto, ON M5G 1Z3
Phone: (416) 598-2520

OPSPORING ADRESSEN:

VAN DEN BOS, Rudolf, geboren op 5 maart 1943, laatstbekende adres in Nederland: Duizendblad 75, Sneek, naar Canada vertrokken op 9 mei 1983.

CAMPBELL-KOTTER, Agatha Irmina Maria, geboren op 6 juli 1927 te Nijmegen, laatstbekende woonplaats: Amsterdam, naar Canada vertrokken op 6 juni 1953.

VAN DEN DOOL, Mevrouw M., geboren op 25 mei 1924, laatstbekende woonplaats: Haarlem, naar Canada vertrokken op 11 juni 1964.

ESSELINK, Elze Grada, geboren op 20 februari 1924 te Adorp, naar Canada vertrokken op 8 juni 1971 met bestemming in Ontario.

VAN DER KRUIJK, Martinus, geboren op 9 juni 1923.

LOPERS, Frits, geboren op 4 maart 1918 te Koekange, laatste woonplaats: Koekange, naar Canada vertrokken in 1951 met als adres: c/o Charles Davidson, RR 1, Arthur, Ontario.

LUIJKX, Hendrik Cornelis, geboren op 3 februari 1919, laatstbekende adres in Nederland: Nieuwe Kerkstraat 69, Veldhoven, naar Canada vertrokken op 3 september 1953.

POELHEKKE, Albertus Petrus Antonius, geboren op 30 november 1918, laatstbekende adres in Nederland: Driebergenstraat 15, Deventer, naar Canada vertrokken op 21 januari 1953.

— Continued on page 89



Thank you for missing me the other time. Is it not mostly so that we appreciate the good things in life when they are not there at a given moment? Yet it was not with that goal in mind that I skipped the previous time. Now that I have been relieved of the constant care for the contents of *Clarion's* pages, I lose track of the dates when the contributions have to be in and was still preparing this one when it should have been on the plates already. No promises for the future, though!

Although the temperature here, for the first time in quite a while, has risen above the freezing mark and we had some rain, yet we start where the balmy Pacific breezes cause the winters to be short, be it on the wet side. Someone sent me a page from a newspaper with pictures of flooding in the Fraser Valley. This past summer we were standing in a park which now appeared as a lake on one of the pictures. Each region has its own attractive points and negative aspects, we'll say.

Anyway, the Fraser Valley is first.

You may recall that there are plans to set up a Study Course, a Study Center. Now the first steps have been taken to realize the plans. They will kick off their activities on June 1 and 2, and Dr. J. Faber will give a seven hours' seminar on *The Doctrine of the Church*. This is a very wide topic which certainly will attract many interested church members.

The Cloverdale Church experienced a break-in. "The damage was not major and neither was the theft. As far as we can determine to date, the clock in the consistory room, one of the microphones on the pulpit, and the amplifier were stolen." There was, fortunately, no vandalism, as Rev. Visscher reports.

Something in the consistory report of Cloverdale drew my attention. Of course, you'll say, otherwise you would not have mentioned it. Right you are. It was something which I found previously in the report of another meeting in a different part of the country. It was this, that the consistory received a letter from the School Society "regarding outstanding debts of some members. More information will be requested."

I am sorry, but I cannot agree with either the act of sending that letter or the decision to request more information. In my opinion, the letter should have been returned with the remark that the consistory is not a collection agency for the School Society. I am convinced that the office-bearers would abuse their office if they went somewhere as a result of this information to urge the members to pay up or even to threaten them with discipline if they don't. The latter would unavoidably be the result of admonitions given; and it is, of course, the intention that the delinquent members are admonished. Is it really so that the dignity and the authority of the office-bearers in Christ's Church may be used to achieve what the School Society wants to achieve? I'm sorry, but I consider this to be totally wrong.

This is all about the Valleys, whether Fraser or Bulkley or Okanagan.

Crossing the Rockies, we arrive in Edmonton.

The Immanuel Church used their new church building for the first time on January 22, 1984. The consistory was the first body to make use of it, and then the Catechism Classes were held in it. On January 22, the first services were conducted

in the new auditorium. It must have been a day of rejoicing. I know this by experience.

As a result, the Providence Church now has its building at their disposal all the time. They changed the times of the services to 10:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. I mention this for possible visitors to Alberta's capital city.

The Immanuel bulletin also contained a passage regarding voluntary contributions. In almost all bulletins this point is mentioned these days. The month of December is always a month in which many have to catch up and to make up for what they fell short during the past year. It is a sad thing, but that's how it is. The contributions for the ministry of the gospel are too often the last item on the budget — if there is a budget, that is. During the month of December the treasurers and committees of administration are always tense: will we make it or not? According to some bulletins a little less than one-fourth had still to come in during the last two months of the year. That is not a very healthy situation.

Anyway, the Immanuel bulletin contained a passage which I pass on for the instruction of the membership!

Since this week is the last opportunity to contribute towards the 1983 budget we should also all remember the fact that the church is actually paying out \$144.00 for every communicant member to pay for synodical, classical, and mission assessments, i.e. the first \$288.00 donated by every family and \$144.00 per single member must go to causes other than our *local* needs for the ministry.

I have not calculated how much the amount mentioned here would be for us in Ontario North. I presume that it would not be much different from what Edmonton has to pay. And it will be the same all over.

It is a good thing that our contributions are calculated per communicant member, for they are the ones who can be expected to be working and earning money, at least the men and boys and the girls who are not married. If I am not mistaken, it was the custom in the old country to calculate contributions on a per-member basis, which included little infants, all who were members of the church, whether they had made profession of faith or not. This put too much of a strain on congregations with larger families; it is much healthier to do it the way we do it.

Whether it is done on a per-communicant-member-basis or on a per-family-basis (as is done by others), it is a fact and should be borne in mind that a considerable part is needed for federation expenses, Mission, College, Broader Assemblies are a few of the causes for which our contributions are asked. For every one who fails to contribute at all or who contributes only a small amount, the cost goes up for the others. It is not proof of being a true and faithful Christian when one lives off the others.

In the southern regions of Alberta discussions are still going on about possible sale of the church building in Coaldale. The committee that investigated various possibilities reported that selling the present building and erecting a new one would add approximately \$50,000.00 to the budget per year. That is quite an amount for a congregation of less than five hundred.

There is some light on the horizon, I should say. The con-

sistory received a letter "from confessing members of the Taber area expressing their desire to institute a church and requesting council's guidance and advice concerning the same. No decision has been made as yet."

No, I did not expect to read a decision right away, and fully understand that the implications have to be studied before a decision can be made. Yet I am very happy with this development. I am happy with it in the first place because the initiative comes from the members themselves. This always prevents an impression as if something is imposed upon the members. And in the second place I am happy with it because this is a healthy development. I shall not elaborate on it this time; I said enough about it a previous time or previous times.

Institution of a church in the Taber area could also result in a solution to the problem of size of church building. A new institution enables the "mother-congregation" to use its building for a considerable time to come and thus solves various difficulties which are encountered at the moment. It opens other possibilities than the one of adding fifty grand per year to the budget.

Speaking of buildings, I may mention that the Church at Burlington South has decided to open a special account for a building fund.

A jubilant passage in the Guelph bulletin.

The organ pipes have arrived The new addition will be called Salicional 73 pipes and Musette 73 pipes. The Salicional will be the softest register on the organ and belongs to the "string family." The Musette is a reed stop and will be used as a solo register . . . this particular reed stop belongs to the "Regal family" of reeds.

As mentioned before, the Guelph congregation has been planning for some time to add some stops to their organ. Do you remember that the Guelph organ may be unique on this continent because it is a so-called "swallow-nest" organ?

The Toronto Church made the decision to discontinue the collections for the church commencing February 1984.

They also decided "that the chairman will attend all meetings of classis until such a time that we will have a minister again."

I never heard this before, but I think it is a very wise decision. Apart, of course, from the wrong expression "meetings of classis." "The chairman will attend all classes." That's how it should read.

When a church has a minister, he attends all classes. This ensures some continuity and makes it easier for a consistory to remember what was dealt with at previous classes. If different brothers are delegated every time it becomes more difficult to keep track of the various classical decisions, even though the acts are sent to all consistories in as many copies as there are office-bearers — plus one for the archives, of course. Sending one of the brothers all the time when a church is vacant prevents such difficulty. I pass this on for the benefit of other vacant churches.

Both in Coaldale and in London attention is paid to the manner in which the auditorium and the rest of the church building are to be evacuated in case of fire or other dangers. Coaldale enclosed a layout of the auditorium with arrows showing the way to the exit that each particular pew is to take. I mean, of course: the people in that particular pew. And in London "the building committee will also investigate what evacuation procedures should be used in the event of a fire."

I would have loved it to close on a more optimistic note, but carefulness and preparation have to be praised as well. Our prime minister may then have changed the well-known expression "If you want peace, prepare for war" into "If you want peace, prepare for peace," we are thankful that we have not reached that stage of "wisdom" as yet and would rather learn how to deal with emergencies, in order that we may be able to cope with them when they arise. Such preparation certainly gives us a good and peaceful feeling.

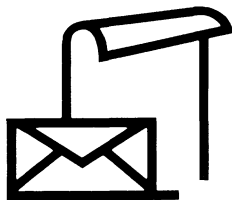
All right, then, let me end with an optimistic note.

From Winnipeg I got word that the first proofs of the Acts of Synod have been mailed for proofreading. They contain the first part; they are working hard on the other part(s).

If that isn't good news, I won't know what you want to hear. Cheerio!

VO

Letter to the Editor



Dear Editor,

A number of times in recent issues of *Clarion* some of your regular contributors made mention of a token- or coupon system for collection or donation purpose in the church. I was rather surprised that in both cases the idea was rejected on what I consider rather loose grounds. It appeared to me that not much thought was given to the subject at hand. It also appears to me that we perhaps should have an accountant deal with this issue instead of a minister.

As I see it, a token system is primary meant to assure that the purchaser of these tokens will receive a tax deductible receipt for the total amount. He then uses these tokens in the various collections. And what is wrong with that. In particular

when the minimum face value for each token is 1 dollar. It will certainly increase the net results!

A number of years ago, I asked my consistory to eliminate all collections and budget for all Christian purposes instead. There is an awful lot of money collected for which no receipt is issued, and in particular in Ontario where we have absolutely no cooperation for grants or tax relief for our schools, any receipt will be most welcome.

I do not see any validity in the argument that when the tokens are purchased, you have already given, and that this takes the fun away when the collection bag arrives! Any regular traveller in buses, subways or other public transportation knows better than that! Church collection tokens will be valid currency within the church. You may even get your money back if you like. I really see this system increase the giving, where the tax savings will end up in the accounts of the various Christian causes.

ARIE J. HORDYK

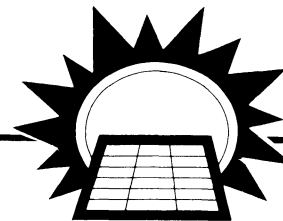
Editor's comment:

I can agree that the purpose to receive tax deductible receipts for our contributions for the church is good. But do we really need a token system here? I cannot see it. In most churches there are no collections for the church anymore.

The contributions are received in envelopes, and for them a receipt is given. Should a person want to do this, he can in the same way contribute to the care for the needy, by writing a cheque, and receiving a receipt.

However, when the church sets up a token system for the collection of *all* the different Christian purposes for which the consistory allows a collection, the church actually becomes itself on that point a keen money business. That is what I do not like. And I think we would be going in a wrong direction. Christ cleansed the temple, which had become (partly, of course) a money business. Let us avoid taking even a very little step in that direction.

RAY OF SUNSHINE



Therefore we must pay the closer attention to what we have heard, lest we drift away from it.

Hebrews 2:1

To be strong in faith has nothing to do with having a strong character. The strongest characters may have the weakest faith.

It is through the knowledge of Scripture, and the believing in God's promises given therein, that our faith is made strong. You will have noticed this in yourself that when you neglect to study God's spoken and revealed Word you are starting to feel very insecure. Which person can "keep up the good fight" on his/her own? This neglect of studying the Scriptures may be the result of simply having too many things to do; of being too tired after a day's work. It may also be a cause of disinterest.

Scripture gives us a stern warning not to "neglect such a great salvation," as is explained in the first chapter of the book Hebrews. In chapter 12 we are again warned not "to be irreligious like Esau, who sold his birthright for a single meal" (verse 16). And in verse 25 the warning is emphasized so that we are made aware that if we refuse to listen to God's Word we will not escape punishment. "For if they did not escape when they refused Him who warned them on earth, much less shall we escape if we reject Him who warns from heaven" (Hebrews 12:25). ". . . Let us offer to God acceptable worship, with reverence and awe . . ." (verse 28). This acceptable worship, reverence and awe can only be properly given when we know from Scripture how to give it. It is therefore imperative that we study. In a world wherein people drift farther and farther away from the basic truth of the Scriptures, and consequently live without hope, without comfort, our faith should shine, and point to the only rock of our salvation — our only hope and comfort — Jesus Christ. Such shining faith can only be strong in knowing and believing God's promises.

* * * * *

*"Faith clings to Jesus' work alone
And rests in Him unceasing;
And by its fruit true faith is known,
With love and hope increasing.
Yet faith alone does justify,
Works serve thy neighbour and supply
The proof that faith is living."*

* * * * *

On our calendar for March we have the following names of brothers, who, the Lord willing, will celebrate their birthdays:

TREVOR HOFKINK

Box 411

Smithers, BC V0J 2N0

Trevor was born with Spina Bifide and was operated on right after birth. He underwent many more operations in Vancouver. Last fall he was operated on his legs. He is

now able to balance himself while walking. He still has to go to Vancouver for regular check-ups on the drain in his head. Trevor's mind is good and he has a happy disposition. He attends church occasionally. Trevor, and his family; his father, mother, and four older brothers and sisters would very much enjoy the pleasure of receiving cards for Trevor's sixth birthday on March 3.

GERRY EELHART

"Rehoboth"

Box 1089

Stony Plain, AB T0E 2G0

The Lord willing, Gerry will be celebrating his 22nd birthday on March 12. Gerry has moved to a different group home, so please note the change in address from previous years. He is staying at "Rehoboth" — a Christian group home for the mentally retarded. "It is a new adventure for Gerry — a new challenge." On the home grounds they have a greenhouse and a carpentry workshop. Gerry would be thrilled to receive cards for his birthday.

JIM VANDER HEIDEN

RR 2, Smithville, ON L0R 2A0

Jim hopes to celebrate his 25th birthday on March 15. Let's make it an unforgettable day for him, and for the other brothers, by sending our "rays of sunshine" to East and West. You can be sure it will be greatly appreciated.

Each Day Brings a Chance to do Better

How often we wish for another chance
to make a fresh beginning,
A chance to blot out our mistakes
and change failure into winning —
And it does not take a special time
to make a brand-new start,
It only takes the deep desire
to try with all our heart
To live a little better
and to always be forgiving
And to add a little "sunshine"
to the world in which we're living —
So never give up in despair
and think that you are through,
For there's always a tomorrow
and a chance to start anew.

Helen Steiner Rice

A thought to ponder:

"We must have passed through life unobservantly if we have never perceived that a man is very much himself what he thinks of others."

Send your requests to:

Mrs. J.K. Riemersma

380 St. Andrew Street East

Fergus, ON N1M 1R1

PATRIMONY PROFILE 31

By Rev. W.W.J. VanOene

A Synodical Confession of Guilt (continued)

“We look back with shame and confession of guilt on that which we did before and may have been the cause of many discords within the church and of troubles without. With the prayer that the Lord be so gracious to us as to forgive the unrighteousness and sin committed therein, and that He may restore that which we have broken — for, alas! we can break, but to restore is His work. We wish to return to that point where we were when we left the Babel of false doctrines, setting aside what seemed to make us a new Babel, from which God may graciously keep us! We do not wish to say with this that we would want to be without a Church Order, no! but, as we have now declared, to confine ourselves to that which did exist as such for the Reformed Church.

We also desire in childlike simplicity, and not without experiencing the Lord’s approval, that through His grace the Lord may give us that with these efforts we may be found active in the fruits, as, yea even more than, we have already experienced it at our Assembly.

We, then, commend ourselves and the congregations to God and the Word of His grace and the prayers of God’s children to remember us before His throne, considering how much we need the Lord’s guidance and direction in our ministries, since we are unable of ourselves to do any good, but our ability comes from God.

May the Most High bless these our efforts to the honour of Zion’s King and for the promotion and salvation of Zion. That is the wish of our heart.”

Dissenting Voices

Not all members of Synod were happy with the reintroduction of the Church Order of Dort. Rev. A. Brummelkamp, Rev. A. van Raalte, and their brother-in-law, elder C.G. de Moen, disagreed.

The Rev. Brummelkamp presented a memorandum in which he declared that he wholeheartedly agreed with the doctrine, discipline, and ministry of the Reformed Church, but that yet the Church should not have returned to the Church Order of Dort. He gave three reasons why he could not vote in favour of such a return. In the first place, he stated, the Seceded Churches had adopted the Dort Church Order in 1836. In 1837 they changed it insofar as they deemed this necessary. If Synod 1840 was convinced that the revisions of 1837 had to be undone or augmented, that should have been done instead of going back all the way to an unrevised Church Order of Dordrecht.

Secondly, he was of the opinion that return to the Dort Church Order proceeded from conservatism. This, he claimed, led to a false security.

In the third place, he declared that he had been placed by God as a shepherd over the congregation, and that it was his obligation to lead the sheep to the good pasture and to guide them as people whose minds were illumined by the Holy Spirit. Therefore he could not see that the Lord permitted him to agree with the decision since

“agreement would be nothing else than driving the sheep onto the heath of the wilderness.”

Yet Brummelkamp wished to avoid the appearance as though he wanted to place himself above the other brothers. He therefore declared that he was willing to accept all that was necessary to maintain concord and unity. He accepted also “all that is decided and adopted by this Assembly, to maintain, in accordance with God’s infallible testimony.” Brummelkamp was aware of it that a different view of the Church Order should not be a reason for alienation, let alone for a schism. He also added a personal confession of guilt to the one which the Synod adopted:

“The Mighty Lord, who cannot give His honour to others nor His glory to the children of man, looked down upon our pride and conceitedness of which we rendered ourselves guilty when dealing with His holy cause. Where God had made us small, we have exalted ourselves. Where God had made us see our guilt, we have begun to say by our deeds: we are holier than others. Where God gave us the honour of standing up for His honour, we have fought for our own honour and confused it with God’s honour. Where God put us to wait for His salvation, we have tried to cause this salvation to sprout. Now the LORD has smitten us, now the LORD has chastened us: the people with the ministers who had made gods for themselves; the ministers with the people in whom they put their trust. To Thee, O LORD, be thanks! Everlasting thanks and praise to be Thy Name, Thy compassion in their chastisement. Everlasting thanks for that Thou causest us to feel pain because of this — LORD, forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors! Lord forgive and heed our supplication for Thy own sake, for the sake of Thy great Name, for the sake of the merits of Thy own Son, for the sake of Him who is our Shepherd, our Redeemer, Lord and King. O LORD, our Lord, hear our supplication! Yes, Thou wilt hear according to Thy faithfulness, according to Thy unshakeable covenant faithfulness. Amen, yes, Amen!”

The Rev. A.C. van Raalte also presented a memorandum. He declared that his opposition was not directed against having ordinances as such. However, abuse even of that which is good and legitimate degenerates all to soon into papal hierarchy. Therefore he is compelled to reject anything that might be introduced to compel the consciences thereby.

As for elder de Moen, he even declared in his memorandum that some of the principles contained in the Church Order conflicted with the revealed Word of God. Yet he wished to leave the brothers free and continue in ecclesiastical fellowship with them.

What did Synod decide in the end? (Elder de Moen was absent when this decision was made unanimously): “The Church Order of Dordrecht of 1618 and 1619 is hereby adopted as the only rule in the government of the Reformed Church in The Netherlands, with the charge to execute the same according to God’s Word and the Forms of Unity, in accordance with the intention and spirit of the Fathers of Dort, expressed in the Acts and the Post Acts of the Synod of 1618 and 1619 and previous Church Orders, to the edification and upbuilding of the congre-

gation of Jesus Christ, unto mutual love and unity and, unto barring of all lording over it.”

A Lost Opportunity

The question of the Church Order having thus been resolved, at least as far as the large majority of the Seceded Churches was concerned, the Synod of 1840 could have been the starting point for a restoration of the relations within these churches. Instead, it became the beginning of a more permanent split and of much sorrow and alienation. The main figures in this drama were the Rev. H.P. Scholte and the Rev. S. van Velzen.

The Rev. H.P. Scholte was probably the brightest of all the ministers of the Secession, but he was perhaps also the hardest one to get along with. His own son-in-law wrote, “It was hard for him to cooperate with others when such demanded following fixed rules, and he made it clearly known that he regretted his participation in the Synods of the Seceded Churches. Actually, he could not be said to belong to any religious persuasion.”

When he emigrated to America, he did not go with others, nor settled there where others had found a place when arriving from The Netherlands, namely in Michigan, but established a colony in Iowa. There he would be able to put his ideas into practice and to realize his ideals: a wholly independent church without any formal ties with any others. However, there it became evident to what result Scholte’s ideas led him and his followers.

One judgment about him reads as follows:

“What became of Scholte, the second father of the Secession of 1834? He laboured in Pella, but was opposed to affiliation with any church whatever, especially the Reformed Church. He stood alone and wanted to stand alone. In some things he apparently was not Reformed Whoever now knows the congregation and the neighbourhood of Pella sees the signs of the aversion against ecclesiastical affiliation which characterized the initial colonial life there until this very day. Nowhere in the Dutch colonies did the people divide into so many different groups which represented different *thoughts* as precisely there. Much of what happened in Pella could not have happened in a regular church federation.”

In his Pella Church Scholte was suspended as well; a schism took place. A large part formed a “Netherlands Reformed Church” and joined the federation of what is now the Reformed Church in America. One year after his death, Scholte’s church was disbanded

Scholte was also the man who led the Secession in Amsterdam. He helped the congregation there many a time and maintained a close bond with it. Small wonder that the Provincial Assembly of September 9, 1837, advised the Church at Amsterdam to make use of Scholte’s services for as long as the vacancy existed.

In the beginning of 1838 the Rev. A. Brummelkamp was called to Amsterdam. He was willing to accept this call, provided he could also be a minister of Gelderland and live in Hattem. It will not be a surprise to anyone that the Consistory of Amsterdam could not accept that condition.

On October 3, 1838, Scholte was called, but he declined. On November 28, 1838, a call was extended to the Rev. S. van Velzen. He accepted the call without setting

any condition but . . . remained connected with the congregations in Friesland until they would be able to do without his leadership. Van Velzen knew full well that this was not according to the intentions of the consistory. There were some who protested, but on June 16, 1839, the Rev. S. van Velzen was installed in Amsterdam by the Rev. H. de Cock.

It was van Velzen’s preaching which was the immediate cause for a conflict between Scholte and him. In his preaching, van Velzen considered it his duty to preach man’s total inability and God’s sovereign grace. By the one-sided emphasis on these truths, the call to faith and repentance was not always brought strongly to the fore. When members spoke to him about this, he always seems to have claimed that he did preach what they thought they found lacking, and then referred to the complaints in following Sunday’s sermon.

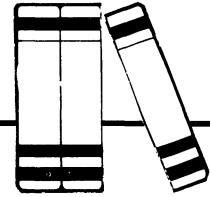
On a certain Sunday Scholte was in Amsterdam and attended a service conducted by the Rev. van Velzen. The two men talked together after the service but apparently not a word was said about the sermon. Yet, back in Utrecht, Scholte spread the word that van Velzen proclaimed only a framework of doctrinal truths without the living Christ, without the quickening Spirit, without the living and active faith.

One would have expected that, if matters were that serious, the Rev. Scholte would have spoken about these obviously grave deficiencies in his colleague’s preaching when talking with van Velzen after the service. He did not do so but acted contrary to the will of the Lord. It must be said that also the reaction to Scholte’s action was not such as the Lord wishes to see it.

What happened? The consistory of Amsterdam received a letter from the consistory of Utrecht in which the above accusations were repeated. That was a very serious thing. How could the Utrecht consistory do such a thing? They went by the testimony of one man, based on one sermon, and mingled in an affair which was none of their business. The consistory of Amsterdam should have returned this letter as being inadmissible. They did not do this. The Amsterdam consistory — or was it the Rev. van Velzen? — made an additional mistake by tabling and discussing the letter at a meeting, no, not of the consistory, but with the male members of the congregation! Rev. van Velzen forced the brothers to take a stand with respect to the accusations contained in Utrecht’s letter. Two elders and two deacons plus some members of the congregation stated that in their opinion the preaching should be somewhat different, although all acknowledged that their minister did not omit any part of the truth. The Rev. van Velzen then pulled a letter out of his pocket which he had drawn up himself and in which it stated on behalf of the consistory and the congregation that the Rev. van Velzen was an irreproachable minister both in doctrine and conduct; that the Rev. Scholte and the Utrecht consistory were wicked slanderers and that all fellowship with them was broken off as long as they did not withdraw the accusations. The letter was adopted by the consistory with a majority vote.

— *To be continued.*

BOOK REVIEW



A Book Review of Outlines on the Epistles of James and I, II Peter

1. An Introduction

As you may already know, the ILPB (Inter-League Publication Board) sold all their stock to Premier Printing some years ago. Meanwhile, the ILPB tried to remain busy by obtaining new outlines from our own ministers and/or by translating Dutch outlines from "our" ministers in The Netherlands. A few outlines did see the light of day under this new arrangement but it was not very productive.

This has all changed recently. Premier Printing has sold back all the outlines to the ILPB, and they are now neatly stored on new shelving units in the church basement at London, Ontario. When at classical meetings, we can see this impressive stock of outlines.

Not only have the outlines changed hands and location, but the ILPB has come out of its dormancy to new life. Outlines on *Messianic Motherhood* and *Ruth* were published some months ago. Now right on its heels come new outlines on the letter of James and the letters of Peter. I understand from the ILPB that a number of other outlines are either being typeset (they have bought their own word processor!) or are being planned for publication soon. So you can see that the ILPB is zealously fulfilling its purpose and goal of supplying outlines for the Bible study groups in our churches.

Especially for the new season ahead, all societies should investigate the new outlines available and make use of them. They will certainly promote a fruitful study and discussion of the Bible. All members would be able to have the outlines to help in preparing for the meeting. In addition, there are numerous questions at the end of each outline to aid the discussions. Obviously, these outlines have been purposely set up for use by our societies, clubs and Bible study groups.

2. The New Outlines on James

The outlines on James deserve my warm appreciation. Each outline deals with a section of the letter. The pericopes are not too large in my estimation, but allow a study group to come to grips with the words of Scripture which they are studying. Sometimes one hears that two to four chapters of Scripture are discussed in one meeting. I am afraid such an

ambitious schedule breeds a superficial study. So I favour a program which studies shorter passages, especially when dealing with such a practical letter as James.

The author, Rev. H.D. van Herksen, has further divided each outline into separate sections, each one having a short title which catches the theme of the verses covered.

I feel that this method provides ample commentary on the text; moreover, it gives the Bible student good keys for remembering the main subjects of the passage.

Having read a number of the outlines, one is impressed by the quality of the commentary. It edifies and gives solid knowledge.

The points for discussion bring out the main themes covered in the outlines. Relevant questions are asked. Recent literature from our own circles and from our country in the English language are referred to. Whoever wrote the questions did a good job. Also, a good bibliography of the best English commentaries are included in the first outline and it should prove helpful.

The translation is good. I do find that there is too much punctuation but that may be a personal bias. Sometimes the translation is awkward or confusing. For instance, what does the subtitle: "The apostate tongue dominated by Christ in the church," mean? Does Christ claim full use of the apostate tongue or does He curb and correct it in the church? One suspects the latter, but the language is ambiguous. Thankfully, such cases are few, and the translation is very good.

In summary, this set of outlines should be well-used by our Bible study groups. It is heartily recommended.

3. The Outlines on I and II Peter

These outlines did not impress me as much as the previous ones. Another minister, Rev. J. Smelik, wrote them (in Dutch), and therefore one expects some differences. This comes out in the format employed. In each outline the author very briefly summarizes the contents and then comments, also very briefly, on the passage. The main body of each outline consists of "aantekeningen" (notes on the text). This is indeed an easy way to write a set of outlines, but I do not find it particularly edifying or useful. In my mind, what Rev. van Herksen did in

dividing the passage into smaller sections, each with its thematic title and commentary, helps the student of the Bible much more. This patchwork approach of a series of notes on words and verbs tends to discourage the use of such an outline, rather than its use in preparation for a meeting.

Otherwise the outlines are profitable. The discussion points are again very worthwhile. But no bibliography is supplied, whereas the Dutch outlines do offer a list of recommended commentaries.

My recommendation of these outlines (published in one booklet with the outlines on James) cannot be as enthusiastic as that of the previous outlines. Still, they are worthwhile, even if the set up is not as attractive and the commentary a bit more "learned."

The ILPB has put a good cover with a drawing of the London church building (some local advertising?) on the booklets. They are neatly printed.

May the ILPB continue in its fervour to publish good outlines for our church members and study groups so that we may not only be hearers of the Word but also doers of the Word.

W. HUIZINGA

J. Douma, Another Look at Dooyeweerd (Premier Printing, Winnipeg, 1980, pp. 75, \$4.75). Reviewed by J. DeJong.

This book is the result of a lecture which Prof. Douma gave at a meeting of the Association for Calvinistic Philosophy in The Netherlands in 1976, and comprises, in a very compact form, a summary of the criticism of various writers and scholars in the Liberated churches of the philosophy of Vollenhoven and Dooyeweerd. In revising and expanding the lecture, Douma has also added lengthy explanatory notes with references, which, besides giving greater support and explanation to the text, also provide the reader with a host of references and a wealth of literature on the subject of Calvinistic philosophy. Most of the literature is Dutch, and only serves to prove that since the Liberation the debate concerning the idea of a Christian philosophy still continues, and problems and difficulties are still being dealt with.

Douma deals with the major points of criticism in an orderly fashion. In brief chapters on the place of the confession, the church, the pistical function, and the

relationship between revelation and creation, the view of heart, sphere-sovereignty, and the ground-motive, as well as the relationship between philosophy and theology, Douma pieces together the criticisms of such writers as B. Holwerda, W. Nieboer, K. Popma, K. Schilder, C. Trimp and J. Kamphuis on these and other themes in the Dooyewerdian philosophy. The result is a booklet which forms a gateway to further study and resources.

With such a broad field to cover, it's understandable that the book only gives a *brief* treatment of the subject matter, leaving the reader to turn to the literature and make his own judgments. Brevity, however, sometimes has its drawbacks, and in places one would like to see Douma go into a question in a little more detail. For example, he accepts H.G. Geertsema's criticism of Schilder's refusal to use the word "believe" for unbelievers; but one may ask whether this is really an accurate reproduction of Schilder's view; also, on the relationship between the scientific and nonscientific attitude,

one senses that the problem is a little more complex than Douma indicates in his brief paragraph on the matter, (p. 68).

If brevity is the book's weak point, *clarity* is its strong point. Regardless of what he writes, Douma always writes with a clarity and pointedness that can only be envied and admired. And Prof. Kim Bateau of Busan, Korea, shows us his skills as a translator in the manner he has kept up Douma's style in the English. All this makes the book a little simpler, easy to read, and thus accessible to a wider audience.

We can be thankful for the translation, since the book is very relevant to the North American scene as well. The AACs and related organizations are not the focus of controversy as they have been in past years. However, the influence of the philosophy of Dooyeweerd is still considerable, especially in the field of education. Our people still come into contact with this philosophy in their many areas of study.

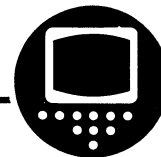
What makes the book all the more worthwhile is that it pinpoints to my mind

what are the more accurate criticisms directed against Dooyeweerd's philosophy. The story of the splintering and decline of the Association for Calvinistic Philosophy in The Netherlands is a sad one, but the story on this side of the ocean is no less sad. Unfortunately, much of the criticism directed against the "Amsterdam philosophy," over the years — even from members of the same church — has been overstated and misdirected. That stems from a failure to understand and appreciate the background of this philosophy. And that is what this book clearly presents to the reader.

We can recommend the book, especially to the students in our midst. Incidentally, the book has created some discussion and an exchange on its points can be found (in Dutch) in the interdisciplinary periodical *Radix*, an exchange which, I believe, is still going on. We hope that on this continent as well the book will not be ignored.

J. DEJONG

PRESS RELEASES



Classis Ontario North, January 26, 1984.

1. *Opening.* On behalf of the convening Church at Burlington West, Rev. J. Mulder calls the meeting to order, requests the delegates to sing from Psalm 57:4, 5, reads from Matthew 6:25-34 and leads in prayer. He welcomes the delegates.

2. *Constitution.* After the credentials are checked and found to be in good order, classis is constituted. Rev. R. Aasman serves as chairman, Rev. M. Werkman as clerk and Rev. G.H. Visscher as assessor.

Rev. Aasman welcomes candidate G. Nederveen and congratulates the Church at Brampton with the acceptance of the call extended to him. He also welcomes Rev. Mulder who now represents Burlington West and expresses the wish that the LORD will soon provide the Church at Toronto with another minister.

3. *Agenda.* The agenda is established.

4. *Peremptory examination.* After the relevant documents are found to be in good order, cand. Nederveen's sermon-proposal (on Phil. 4:4-7) is heard and considered; it is decided to continue the examination.

The respective examiners examine him on O.T. and N.T. exegesis (Psalm 137, Ezek. 36:16-38; John 10:1-21, II Cor. 4), on knowledge of Holy Scripture, and church doctrine. After lunch, cand. Nederveen is examined on his knowledge of church history, ethics, church polity and diaconology. After due consideration, classis declares that the result of the examination is favourable, and that candidate Nederveen can be admitted to the ministry. Br.

Nederveen is informed of this, signs the subscription form, and is congratulated.

5. *Approbation.* The Church at Brampton requests classis to approve the call extended to and accepted by cand. Nederveen; classis does so.

6. *Correspondence.* The Church at Burlington South informs us of their intention to appeal Article 9 of the *Acts* of the last classis (re support of Rev. Olij). Received for information.

7. *Reports*

a. Fund for Needy Churches

b. Church at Orangeville re Rev. Olij.

In accordance with Article 9 of the latest classis, Orangeville has investigated the financial needs of the Olij family for 1984 and asks classis for financial assistance in giving this support. Classis decides to grant the request of the Church at Orangeville and to allot the Church at Orangeville for the additional support of the Olij family the monthly payments of \$450 for as long as necessary during 1984. The churches of Classis Ontario North are requested to send \$3.50 per communicant member to the treasurer of the Fund for Needy Churches.

c. Proposed Classis Regulations

Classis decides to continue the classis committee of September 1983 which prepared a revision of the classis regulations and requests this committee to serve the next classis with a proposal as to the mandates of the Church for Financial Aid to Students of the Ministry and the Committee for Needy Churches. The churches are asked to forward their remarks re these regulations to this committee.

d. Classis Treasurer

8. *Instructions.* The Church at Toronto requests pulpit supply during their vacancy. This request is granted. The following schedule is adopted: March 4, R. Aasman; March 25, D. DeJong; April 15, J. DeJong; May 6, J. Mulder; May 27, G. Nederveen; June 17, W.W.J. Van-Oene; July 8, G.H. Visscher; July 29, M. Werkman; August 19, R. Aasman; Sept. 9, D. DeJong; Sept. 30, J. DeJong; Oct. 28, J. Mulder; Nov. 11, G. Nederveen; Dec. 2, W.W.J. Van-Oene; Dec. 23, G.H. Visscher; Jan. 13, M. Werkman.

9. *Question Period ad Art. 41 C.O.* None of the churches make use of this opportunity.

10. *Personal Question Period.* The Church at Brampton invites the churches to the ordination of candidate Nederveen, expresses appreciation for the pulpit supply received during their vacancy, and thanks Rev. J. Mulder for his work as counselor and catechetical instructor. Rev. D. DeJong is appointed to represent classis at candidate Nederveen's ordination.

11. *Preparation next classis.* The convening church will be the Church at Fergus. Rev. D. DeJong will serve as chairman, Rev. R. Aasman as clerk, and Rev. M. Werkman as assessor. Scheduled for June 14, 1984.

12. *Censure ad Article 43 C.O.* Not necessary.

13. The *Acts* are read and adopted. The *Press Release* is read and approved.

14. *Closing.* The chairman speaks some concluding words, asks the delegates to sing from Psalm 95:1, leads in prayer, and closes the meeting.

For classis,
G.H. VISSCHER, assessor e.t.

Annual Board of Governors' meeting. Canadian Reformed Teachers' College Association, Cornerstone Church, Hamilton, ON, February 11, 1984.

The chairman opens the meeting in the usual Christian manner and a warm welcome is extended to all. He also expresses our gratitude to the Lord that He has blessed us beyond expectations, also in the financial need that was a great worry to us a few months ago, but which now has all but disappeared.

The roll call reveals that the following governors are present, J. Gelderman, treasurer; W. Gortemaker, Winnipeg; C. Hoff, London; J. Jonker, Orangeville; J. Kingma, Smithville; R. Lenting, Watford; H.J. Nobel, Hamilton; C.J. Nobels, Brampton; G.J. Nordeman, Burlington; J. Tillema, Chatham; W. VanAssen, Carman; P. VanderPol, Surrey; T.M.P. VanderVen, Principal.

The various standard agenda items such as, establishing the agenda, minutes, and correspondence are dealt with in an efficient manner.

The annual secretary report is presented. Again the highlights were the gratitude for the Lord's blessings which were experienced this year.

The principal presents his report.

Some highlights: at present there are 21 students, of which 6 hope to graduate this year. The overall average performance is 76%.

The library has grown substantially (there are now 2700 items on the library shelves), and is rapidly expanding. There is a great need for: a plain photo copier, overhead projector, video equipment etc. Since there is no money available for this in the regular budget at present, these items may be the basis for some local projects, e.g. in collecting special or extra donations. The Public Relations Committee is instructed to work out a plan for this. Requests to modify the admission requirements is granted for the 1984/85 calendar year, to continue to ensure enrollment of students with suitable qualifications. In addition a proposal for academic policies is presented to and adopted by the Board.

The chairman thanks the principal for providing his report. It is clear that he carries the "lion's share" of the work and appreciation for this is expressed.

The financial statement is presented by the treasurer. There is much reason for gratitude in that enough funds are received, and it appears that it will be possible to stay close to the budget approved last year.

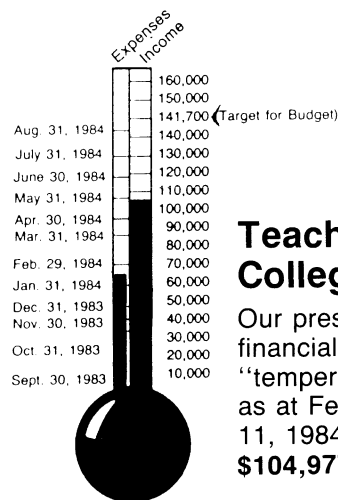
The budget for next year is given in preliminary discussion. It is expected that the increase in net expenses will be approximately 7%! It is expected that the membership fee for 1984/85 will remain at \$160.00

A graduation evening will be held immediately following the school year. Details will be worked out at a later date.

The National Board ratifies the Executive Committee's actions from April 9, 1983 to February 11, 1984.

After the usual question period the meeting is closed with prayer.

For the Board,
C.J. NOBELS



Teachers' College

Our present financial "temperature" as at February 11, 1984: **\$104,977**

"Anchor" Canadian Reformed Association for the Handicapped, Hamilton, December 19, 1983.

The chairman, br. J. Witten, opened the meeting in the customary Christian manner and welcomed all those present. A special welcome was extended to sr. E. Boersema of Burlington East and br. H. VanVeen of Fergus. The secretary read the minutes of the last meeting. These were approved and signed.

The agenda was set up for the meeting: 1. Year-end Review; 2. Logo; 3. Br. Zomer visit; 4. Mail; 5. Building Committee; 6. Vote for Corresponding Secretary; 7. Press Release.

The chairman thanked sr. R. Medemblik for the work she has done in the board for the past 6 years. He then proceeded to give us an overview of the past year and it was with gratitude that we could see good progress in 1983, and there will be much to do in the coming year to be able to accommodate the foster parents and the handicapped brothers and sisters. After some discussion of this presentation we went on to discuss development pertaining to the building committee.

Logo: After some discussion the board decided on a logo to be used by the association.

Br. W. Godschalk reports to the board that br. Zomer from The Netherlands has indicated his desire to come over for a short visit to familiarize himself with the situation and to offer advice on developments here. The board agrees to have br. Zomer come here, at our expense, as soon as possible.

Contract: The brs. W. Godschalk and H. VanVeen will draw up a contract which will then be considered by the board.

Incoming Mail: A donation of \$3,500 is received from a church member. Also a donation was received from Guido de Brès High School, which will be used to buy a slide projector.

Br. H. VanVeen will be our corresponding secretary.

The agenda for the next meeting is established and the date is set for January 13, 1984. After singing Hymn 62, br. Kok prays with us and the chairman adjourns the meeting.

— Continued from page 81

VEENSTRA, Wypke, geboren op 14 februari 1937 te Heeg, naar Canada vertrokken met bestemming Redcliff, Alberta.

VERBERNE, Hendrikus, geboren op 8 april 1919, laatstbekende woonplaats: Assen, naar Canada vertrokken op 15 april 1952.

DE VISSER, Johannes Theodoor, geboren op 13 maart 1913, laatstbekende woonplaats: Den Haag, naar Canada vertrokken op 22 oktober 1959.

TOPFER, Johan Martinus Lubbertus, geboren op 19 april 1931 te Heerde, laatstbekende adres in Canada: 16 Lloyd Street, Oshawa, Ontario.

GOODMAN, (EX BOS, ALIAS COOPER), Sharon Helen, geboren op 28 augustus 1951 te Toronto, laatstbekende adres: 4 Audubon Court, Willowdale, Ontario.

VAN DALEN, A.A., laatstbekende adres: 5268 Appleby Line, Milton, Ontario.

DE GRAAFF, Arnoldus Huibert, geboren op 17 juli 1933, laatstbekende adres: 4 Tennis Crescent, Toronto, Ontario.

SAPULETTE, Arthur Raymond, geboren op 9 juli 1950, laatstbekende adres: 2395 Bromsgrove Road, Unit 67, Mississauga, Ontario.

WESTERWOUDET, Maria Josepha Hendrika (gescheiden van D. Draaisma) geboren 18 november 1904 te Amsterdam, naar Canada vertrokken op 23 mei 1947.

CAMPAGNE, Christa Mia, geboren 25 december 1943 te Amsterdam, laatstbekende adres in Nederland: Chopinstraat 39, Lisse, naar Canada vertrokken op 23 december 1980.

HAISMA, Johannes, geboren 22 juli 1918, verdere gegevens onbekend.

VAN DEN HEUVEL, Hendrik, geboren 21 december 1918 te Barneveld, laatstbekende adres in Nederland: Irisstraat 17, Amersfoort, naar Canada vertrokken op 15 juli 1958.

The Consul-Generaal,
voor deze-
Mevr. G. SCHNITZLER
Fgd. KANSELIER

CHURCH NEWS



CALLED and DECLINED to Hamilton, ON for the mission in Brazil:

CAND. A.J.T. van der Scheer
of Beetsterzwaag, The Netherlands.

CALLED and ACCEPTED

DR. K. DEDDENS

of Groningen Zuid, The Netherlands to be set apart for the training of ministers at the Theological College at Hamilton, ON as professor of Diaconology.



Hello Busy Beavers,
Let's start with a story today!

Hunting is my Sport

Hello. My name is Papluka. My father is a great hunter and chief of our Eskimo tribe. My father has taught me many Eskimo secrets. One day he even told me that maybe I will become a great hunter or the chief of our tribe. My father's name is Ogluk. Sometimes my father takes me on hunting trips. Oh yea, I just about forgot about my dog. His name is Oluke. He is my very own dog. We always have adventures together. Today my father will go on a great hunting trip because our food is scant. But I am not allowed to go . . . My father has just left. So while I am waiting for them to return I might as well tell you about my greatest adventure.

Papluka's Story

I was walking with my father one day. It was the coldest day ever. The cold wind bit your cheeks. We were going ice fishing. As soon as we got to a good spot we put our stuff down. Father took the skin bag and took out an axe and started to chop the ice. Soon I did not have anything to do. I was waiting for father to make a hole in the ice. I asked father if I could look on the other side of a white hill. Soon I was behind it. All of a sudden I heard a noise behind me. Out of the bushes came a huge polar bear! I ran to father.

"Father," I yelled.

Father heard me and saw the big polar bear. He grabbed his spear. I jumped for joy.

"Hit the bull's eye!"

That was the story, and until now we do not have enough food.

"Papluka! Papluka!" My sister is coming. Her name is Sasha.

"Father is back." Oh, she is yelling my father is back. He caught three seals, two polar bears and one deer. Oh, I'm sorry, but I have to leave and say goodbye.

Goodbye!

by Busy Beaver *Edward Stam*

* * *

Calligraphy is Busy Beaver *Brenda De Boer's* hobby, too. She has sent in this pretty verse to share with us.

If wisdom's ways you truly seek,
five things observe with care:
Of whom you speak, to whom you speak
And how and when and where.



Time for birthday wishes!

Here's hoping all the Busy Beavers celebrating a March birthday have a very happy day with their family and friends. May the Lord bless and keep you all in the year ahead. Many happy returns of the day!

MARCH

Lyan Van Ellenberg	4	Gwendolyn Werkman	11
Yolanda Van Spronsen	4	Nancy Lodder	14
Anne-Marie Jonker	6	Melanie Werkman	23
Heather Vandenberg	6	Wayne Breukelman	26
Gerald Schoon	7		



From the Mailbox

Welcome to the Busy Beaver Club, *Erica Moesker*. Thank you for the pictures and the puzzle. You are a real Busy Beaver already, I see! Keep up the good work.

And a big welcome to you, too, *Carl DeBoer*. Have you done lots of skating this winter, Carl? And was that you on the snowmobile in your picture?

Welcome to the Busy Beaver Club, *Krista Ellens*. Thank you for the puzzle. Don't you think it's a good idea to save it for next Christmas? I hope your sister is home from the hospital, Krista.

Welcome to the Club, *Terri-Lynn Schulenberg*. Thank you for a nice letter. Will you share one of your pictures with us sometime, Terri-Lynn?

A big welcome for you, *Walter Bartels*. We are happy to have you join our Club. I guess you've had lots of fun skating and playing in all the snow this winter, Walter!

Yes, you may join our Club, too, *Michelle Bartels*. Be sure to join in all our Busy Beaver activities! Were you all pretty excited when your Dad found a balloon from so far away, Michelle?

Thank you for the riddles and jokes, *Jason Wierenga*. Sounds to me as if you're having a good time enjoying winter fun, too! Bye for now.

Hello, *Monica Haveman*. It's nice to hear from you again. Thank you for the puzzles. That should keep the Busy Beavers busy, right?

How often do you practise your gymnastics, *Michelle Oostdijk*? Thank you for the puzzle. Write again soon!

Thanks for an interesting quiz, *Carol Witteveen*, and also for your pretty lettering. I guess you are very busy with your new writing things.

Hello *Cindy Oosterveld*. It was nice to hear from you again. It sounds to me as if you got really spoiled, Cindy! Thanks for the puzzle and riddles!

Congratulations on the new nephew you share with our Club member, *Teresa Oosterhoff*. He doesn't know yet how lucky he is to have two aunts who are Busy Beavers!

Thanks for a nice chatty letter *Brenda De Boer*, and also for your calligraphy sample. I see you are keeping busy and

enjoying lots of winter fun. Congratulations on a good report, Brenda.

Hello *Nadine Woudenberg*. How are you doing? Thank you for sending in a quiz for the Busy Beavers. Bye for now. Write again soon.

Hello, *Edward Stam*. Thank you for an interesting story. Did you have lots of fun this cold winter, Edward?

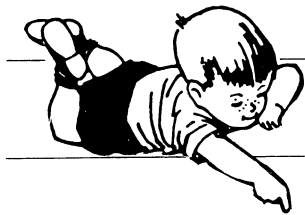
Thank you for a pretty picture and puzzle, *Emily Barendregt*. Are you still enjoying winter or are you looking forward to spring?

You have been very busy, too, *Betty Barendregt*. Thanks for all the interesting things you sent in to share with us! Keep up the good work.

Do you and your Australian pen pal still write faithfully, *Linda De Boer*? Thank you for the quizzes, Linda. I will save the Christmas one for later this year, all right? (That's less than 10 months away, you know!)

Thanks for the card and good wishes, *Karen Stam*. Congratulations on your new cousin. You must be very busy writing all those pen pals, Karen! Sounds to me as if you and your family have been having a good time over the holidays, too.

Congratulations on your new sister, *Debbie Jagt*. Do you get to help look after her? I'll bet she smiles and coos a lot when you do!



QUIZ TIME

TRUE or FALSE?

by Busy Beaver *Linda De Boer*

CHRIST JESUS

1. Luke is the only writer of the gospels to make mention of Jesus' ascension.
2. Because of Christ two bitter enemies became friends.
3. Christ delivered a criminal from the fear of death.
4. Pilate had Jesus scourged because he refused to answer him.
5. The glorified Christ made an appearance outside of the land of Palestine.
6. Jesus promised to meet a man in Paradise.

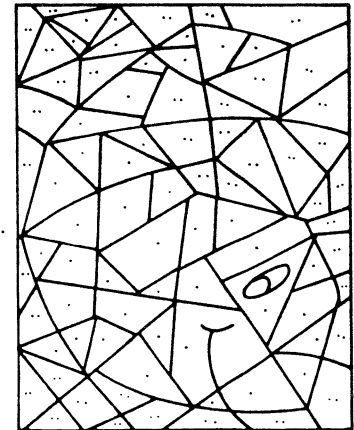
7. Only John the Baptist spoke of Jesus as "The Lamb of God."
8. Demons knew that Jesus was the Christ of God.
9. The first word of the risen Lord was addressed to a man.
10. Jesus let His worst enemies know that He prayed for them.

Unscrambling WINTER Words

by Busy Beaver *Monica Haveman*

- | | |
|------------------|------------------|
| TERIWN = _____ | GTOBOGAN = _____ |
| DSEL = _____ | ITMETNS = _____ |
| WSNO = _____ | CRAFS = _____ |
| FSNOORTW = _____ | SSNWOTIU = _____ |
| FSNALLOW = _____ | MUSEAFRF = _____ |
| MSOANNW = _____ | |

Shade in just the spaces with one dot and see who is hiding here.



Scrambled Words: Winter, Sled, Snow, Snowfort, Snowfall, Snowman, Toboggan, Mittens, Scarf, Snowsuit, Earuffs.
Answers: 1. False (Mark 16:19); 2. True (Luke 23:12); 3. True (Luke 23:43); 4. False (John 19:1); 5. True (Acts 9:4, 5, 6, 7, 9); 6. True (Luke 23:39-45); 7. False (1 Peter 1:19; Revelation 7:9, 15:3, 21:22); 8. True (Matthew 8:29; Mark 1:24; 3:11; Luke 4:41; Acts 19:15); 9. False (John 20:13-17); 10. True (Luke 23:33, 34)

Did you get all your answers right?

Good for you!

Keep up the good work, Busy Beavers.

Love from your Aunt Betty

Matt. 19:14

With joy and thankfulness to our heavenly Father, who has made everything well, we proudly announce the birth of our first child, a precious gift:

JESSE TYLER

Born: January 18, 1984

Jack and Regina Meints
(nee Nyman)

Box 121, Houston, BC V0J 1Z0

In thankfulness to our faithful covenant God, who has made everything well, we announce the birth of:

JONI PATRICIA

Her parents:

John and Rita VanAssen
(nee Rowaan)

Her brothers:

*Peter Allen, Jerold Anthony
Ivan Wesley, Robert Glen
Grant William, Loren Dale
David Lyndon, Earl John*

January 23, 1984

Box 12, Neerlandia AB T0G 1R0

Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our Lord for ever and ever.

Revelation 7:12

The Lord has richly blessed us with the birth of another child, a son, whom we have named:

RYAN JARED

Born: January 24, 1984

Leo and Diane Kampen
(nee Visscher)

A brother for: *David, Stephen,
Marcel, Nathan and Deanna*

425 Easy Street
Richmond Hill, ON L4C 3Z5