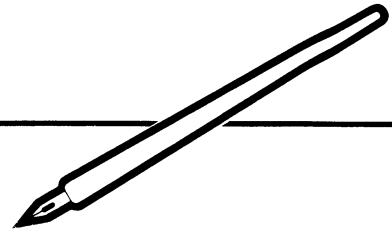


 **Clarion**
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School education in a “new age”

New age teaching

Imagine that one of the teachers at one of our Canadian Reformed schools would tell her very receptive Grade one students to lie with their back on the floor of the class room, and that (s)he would tell them to imagine the following: “You are gazing into the bright light of the sun without this hurting your eyes. Now imagine also that your bodies drink in the radiant warmth of the sun, its power and illumination.” Hear that teacher tell your children: “Imagine now that you are doing something perfect and that you are perfect. You, children, are like the sun. You are full of light; you are perfect; therefore, you must feel a great peace. You are intelligent, magnificent, containing all the wisdom of the universe within yourselves.” Do you think, dear reader, that you would appreciate such teaching? I don’t think so.

Is such teaching just imagination? Or is it reality? Douglas R. Groothuis tells us on the first page of his book *Unmasking the New Age* that such teaching really happens. He also tells us what the teacher who taught her Grade one students this “experience” believes. She is one of the many who believes that we, human beings, are all God and have the attributes of God, the perfect love, the perfect wisdom, the perfect understanding. All that we need is to become conscious of all this. And this new consciousness can be built up by experiencing it. And this experience will come about through the power of our imagination.

The book also tells us about the thinking of movie star Shirley MacLaine. She proclaims four basic “truths”: you are gods; you have lived before and will live again; there is no death; and there are as many realities as there are people since we create our own reality. You understand what this means: When we as gods create our own world, we establish also, with the perfect wisdom that is within us, our own truths and our own laws; in our own reality we ourselves determine what is right and what is wrong as well as what is true and what is not true for us.

Christian teaching

It would be very interesting to delve a little further into this awfully dangerous and rapidly growing, strongly religious but idolatrous, New Age Movement, but we shall not do it. I can refer the reader to the book that I mentioned. It is important to be aware of what is going on in our modern world, and this informative book can help us in this respect. What I want to do is emphasize the great value of our own Canadian Reformed Schools. Knowing about the new “consciousness” training at public schools should make us all the more thankful that we have our own schools and the more zealous and determined to keep them and support them.

I write this in the time of the graduations. Many children have concluded another year of education. A number of them finished their years of training at one of the elementary schools. Others have come to the end of their high school learning. The education of these years was bound to, and in accordance with, the confession of the church and, therewith, based on God’s

infallible Word. It was an education in which God is acknowledged as Creator, His Son Jesus Christ as Redeemer, and the Holy Spirit as our God who sanctifies us. It was an education that is permeated by the faith that we are God’s creatures (not gods or even God), called to serve Him according to His Word, according to His wisdom in Christ, revealed and written down in a book, the Scriptures.

We are thankful, indeed. Through the grace of our God we were allowed again for another year to have our own parental private schools for our children who are children in God’s covenant. We congratulate all the graduates and wish those who did not make it the strength to accept a difficult situation and work it out with the Lord.

We call our children covenant children. That is a great privilege. We acknowledge this privilege openly and publicly, e.g., at their baptism. And we promise the God of the covenant that we, as parents, shall educate these children of His in the fear and the ways of the Lord and have them educated in, and according to, the doctrine of the Scriptures confessed in the Creeds and taught in the church of which we are members.

In this promise, and in building and maintaining our Reformed schools, we uphold the antithesis, the spiritual enmity which God has put in paradise between the woman with her seed and Satan with his servants. It is the antithesis between Christ and Satan, between believers and unbelievers, between God’s covenant children and the children of the world.

Covenantal responsibility

Now we are also aware of the fact that this gift of grace of Reformed school education for our children brings along responsibilities. God’s promises and gifts are one side of the coin; the other side is our calling, our responsibility. We can lose this gift of our God of our parental schools, not only through the enmity of the world, but also through our own lack of faith and endurance. The latter can happen, for instance, when our schools become a matter of feasibility only; a matter of financial possibilities only, instead of remaining a matter of principle, of Reformed conviction, of obedience to the Scriptures, the Word of the covenant.

We speak about covenant children. And that is correct. The covenant that the LORD has established with believers and their children is the basic principle for our Christian schools. That is why we promise the LORD to educate and train *HIS* children for Him, in His ways, in the fear and knowledge of His Name. That is why we also want them to be educated in that way, to the utmost of our power. That is why we have parental schools.

However, with the words “parental schools” we have not said everything when we take God’s covenant as our basic principle. Covenant does not just mean that parents as parents join together in a combined effort to establish Christian schools for their children. Covenant means that there is a people of God to which also the children of believers belong. Covenant means that this people, exactly in, and because of, that posi-

tion of being the people of the LORD, see and accept their responsibility for the children in the covenant. The parents come first. There is no doubt about that. But the people, that is, we all, cannot, and should not, be left out, nor leave ourselves out.

So, as God's people, we should remind ourselves always to remain thankful also for, among many other things, the Reformed school education of our and God's children; and we should show this thankfulness by standing behind those schools and by supporting them. And the best way of doing this is by being members of the school societies, not only as parents, but also as grandparents and single persons and young people who made public profession of faith and are part of the work force.

In this connection I like to repeat a remark and suggestion with regard to the membership of older people who have to live from a small pension, and of young people who just start earning wages. One can hear the argument that it is hard for those older members as well as for young people to contribute the full membership fee every month. Why can our school societies not decide to have a special low fee for these two categories? Why can we not make it more attractive to our young people to get involved. A young person who becomes a member and so involves himself as member of God's covenant people will most likely remain involved. He also becomes used to reckoning with the contribution for the school(s) as a normal monthly expense. It is much harder to involve people later on, when the expenses are higher; when payments for a house are to be made. So easily the school is in third or fourth place. The school has to wait. And when the time comes that the children have to go to school a large entrance fee has to be paid. This is fair. But the whole manner of doing things is not right. We must not only be principled. We must also be wise. And the result can be gain for the school societies, not only in financial contributions, but also in covenantal involvement and increasing faithfulness.

If I am not mistaken, there are congregations where a large part of the membership does not see such a covenantal responsibility for the children of the covenant; where, to a large extent, just the parents are members of the school societies. And I ask the question: are we not losing our covenantal view, our covenantal principle? If our schools become a burden that we have to take upon us because of peer pressure, because we happen to be parents in a community where parents send their children to that special school, we have lost the spiritual battle already. And we are on our way to accepting the public school because of financial, and sometimes perhaps other, reasons. And the chances are growing that we expose God's covenant children to the human and humanistic false religion of the New Age; and anyway to humanistic, godless, wordly teachings.

I know also that sometimes parents simply have no choice. We can mention, e.g., that we do not have Christian universities. But the question is: what is our principle, our faith? Do we still believe that our income depends on the LORD? Do we still believe that He will provide when we act in faith and faithfulness?

The teachers

Schools are not only a matter of children, but also of teachers. The teachers give instruction. At our schools we expect the teachers to give instruction that is bound to the basis of our churches, the Word of God and the Confession of the churches. We do not want our children taught in the ways and views of the New Age, or in any other belief than we believe. We want Reformed teachers.

It is, therefore, good to read that in the beginning of June seven more young people graduated from the Teachers' Col-



lege, and that now a total of twenty graduates have found or will find their place in one of our schools. These twenty represent quite a percentage already.

A drawback for many is that this College is not officially recognized and that, for the government, these teachers are not officially qualified. It means for them that they have to follow summer courses at the secular universities in many cases. That does not make things easier. However, we can also notice with thankfulness that there is the dedication and commitment of faith through which hurdles are overcome, and exertion is blessed.

In this respect, I also like to put a connection between the Teachers' College and the covenant in the same vein as done above. We have a training center here for young people in the covenant who see it as a calling to teach children in the covenant in accordance with our Reformed Confession. Thus, also this College is a communal matter, not only for some schools, but it is meant for the benefit of all. Therefore, it should have the support of all of us.

Besides, there lives the thought among us that this support is not a responsibility of the school societies as such, but of individuals. As societies we should not support this institution. My question is: who will benefit in the end? Is that only a number of individuals? Or is it so that just the school societies and the schools are benefiting? The answer is quite simple, isn't it? When those teachers receive a place in our schools, the schools and the societies reap the profit. That is why it is quite logical that the support should continue to come from the societies. This is also in line with the set-up. The Board of Governors is constituted of representatives of the various school societies.

Let us not only take the word covenant in our mouth. Let us maintain what it implies and accept the consequences in thankful faith and joyful obedience, living by principles for the continued well-being of the schools and to the honour of Him who grants them.

J. GEERTSEMA

Congratulations

In this issue of *Clarion* the reader will find a short report concerning promotion of Dr. C. VanDam, on June 5, in Kampen, the Netherlands. Also *Clarion* adds its congratulations to the many Professor VanDam received. A goal was reached, a course of study concluded, and a milestone in the life of a scholar erected. From the heart we congratulate Dr. VanDam and his family and relatives, as well as our College and the churches with the acquired degree of a doctorate in theology. And we express the wish that Dr. VanDam will continue to be a blessing for the College and those who study there, as well as for the churches in general.

For *Clarion*,

J. GEERTSEMA

Social implications of the computer₃

1. Ancient developments

The Lord gave a mandate to mankind, already in paradise. God laid enormous potential possibilities in His creation. The task of mankind is to develop and explore all the wonderful gifts the Lord has given. We have to utilize the gifts and possibilities in resources as well as in intellectual capacities. We have to develop and put to use not only the plants in the fields, but also all other things. We read already in Genesis 4 about marvelous cultural, and technological developments. However, the most important thing is not that we develop and put to use everything the Lord has intrinsically laid in His creation, but more important is how we put it to use. That determines every technological, cultural, and scientific development.

Progress has been made all the time, in both directions. The results of this progress have been used to serve the Lord as well as to serve the power of darkness. That is certainly not new in this day and age. The name Lamech is a landmark in this respect. In Genesis 4:17ff. we read about this unfaithful and godless man. In the verses 19-22 it says: "And Lamech took two wives; the name of the one was Adah, and the name of the other Zillah. Adah bore Jabal; he was the father of those who dwell in tents and have cattle. His brother's name was Jubal; he was the father of all those who play the lyre and pipe. Zillah bore Tubal-cain; he was the forger of all instruments of bronze and iron." Lamech's sons were prime examples of technological and cultural development. They had past the primitive Stone Age and were already working with bronze and iron. That was, in that time, advanced technology. One of them was a musician, the father of all those who play the lyre and pipe. A high level of cultural development. Great prosperity and development of God's creation. However, it was not used in the right way. In the family of Lamech the Lord was not served, and the whole ancient world of Lamech and his descendants was destroyed by the flood, as punishment from the Lord. That was the end of the descendants of Lamech, the Cainite.

At the same time there was a development in the family of another Lamech. He



was a descendant of Seth. In Genesis 5:28,29 we read about him: "When Lamech had lived a hundred and eighty-two years, he became the father of a son, and called his name Noah, saying, 'Out of the ground which the LORD has cursed this one shall bring us relief from our work and from the toil of our hands.'" Also this Lamech had a son, and his son Noah was also a master and pioneer in technology. He, together with his sons, received instruction to build an ark. According to some illustrated Bibles this ark was more or less a houseboat. We often have a wrong perception about the size of this ark. It was, even according to modern standards, a large vessel. Not just a houseboat, but a ship with three floors or decks, and a total square footage or square meters of about fifty times an average family house. The height of each floor was about five meters or 17 feet. It had enough room to house elephants and other large animals. Certainly a masterpiece of ship building in the ancient time. That was advanced technology in the service of the Lord. While the results of the cultural and technological achievements of the three sons of Lamech the Cainite were destroyed, the result of the work of the son of Lamech the Sethite was used to save mankind during the flood.

2. Continuing development

There always has been progress in technological developments. We do not always realize the importance of some inventions. Many things we take for granted. We might think that the introduction of the computer has been the greatest invention in the world. Few realize what an enormous change the invention of the wheel has brought. It was a revolutionary change in transportation. It made all the difference between lifting and carrying everything that had to be moved, or using a vehicle with wheels.

Many examples could be mentioned of sensational inventions and developments. The steam engine was another prime example, although nowadays little use is made of this device. The combustion engine and electric motor have replaced and outdated the steam engine. The invention of the art of printing has had an unfathomable impact on cultural development. The spreading of literature became much easier. Also the invention of wireless communication, radio as well as television, has brought a turnaround in many lives. Most of these things we are so accustomed to, that we take them for granted, and do not realize what the world would be like, without these conveniences. When there is a power failure and we are

left without electricity for an extended period of time, we all of a sudden realize how vulnerable and dependant we have become. It is hard to say whether the computer has brought a more dramatic change in human life, also in social and economic life, than all these other things. You have to be without for a while, to realize the importance of something you take for granted.

3. Making scientific prognoses

A crucial question is whether ultimately the computer will benefit the average person, or whether it only will increase unemployment. Will it cause large benefits for a few and poverty through lost jobs for many? Very grim predictions can be heard. How real is this danger? Is it an imminent threat? Economic prognoses seem to indicate that unemployment will reach all time high records.

When we hear these "predictions," we have to be aware of the nature of such "prognoses." Often a prognosis is only a statistical extrapolation. This rather technical expression needs some clarification to make it generally understood by the average reader. Let me try to say it in simple words. Through a scientific study of statistics people try to figure out how developments have been in the past. They take into consideration all available information, and through complicated calculations they try to figure out how things will develop, *assuming* that the present trend continues. "Extrapolation" means that the calculation is based on a continuation of the present trend, and that is exactly what gives such a conclusion a specific character. It does not "predict" anything. It only tells what will happen *if the trend continues*. Let me use a simple example to explain the crux of the matter. Suppose a mother is making a "prognosis" about the growth of her baby. She keeps track of his weight and length. When the boy is two years old she tries to figure out what his length and weight will be when he reaches the age of fifty. *Assuming* that the trend will continue, she will come to the amazing conclusion that her child will become a giant. Everyone understands that such a conclusion would be ridiculous. The trend does not continue. She knows that because she can compare the growth of her child with the growth of other children in the past. When we deal with technological, social, and economical developments we often have little with which to compare. The history of mankind is unique. That is one thing we have to keep in mind when we read about such "predictions" or "prognoses."

There is another, no less important aspect. A prognosis or expectation of what will happen or might happen *if the trend continues* is not just made for the fun of it,

or to satisfy the curiosity of the scientist. It has real practical value. If a study of the forestry department shows that within a certain period of time all lumber will be used, it is not a prediction of what is going to happen. It is rather a warning signal. It is a stimulus and incentive to do something to prevent that such a disaster will happen. That is the case with most prognoses. They give signals about undesired developments. They provide indications to take appropriate measures before things run out of control. It shows which measures are necessary to keep things going. That is why such prognoses should not be a reason for panic, but an incentive to act adequately. If you drive your car on a highway on a foggy evening and someone tells you that, if you drive with the same speed in the same direction, you will hit an obstacle within five minutes, there is no reason to panic. You better slow down or take the next exit in order to avoid the problem. It is the same with statistical extrapolations. Sometimes we have to change gears, turn around or take an exit and follow another route, to avoid problems.

4. Unemployment

It is an undeniable fact that through the introduction of the computer many jobs can be done in a much faster, more accurate, and less expensive way than in the past. That can cause and has caused unemployment as an immediate effect. However, here comes the matter of adjust-

ment in the picture. Because so many jobs can be done in a better, more effective and cheaper way, more can be produced with the same cost, and finally everyone can benefit from it. Many conveniences are nowadays available, which would have been impossible without a computer or which would have been too expensive for many to buy.

Another aspect is that through the fast developing computer industry, and the use of microchips in general in all kinds of devices, a number of jobs are created in new areas. Products can be brought on the market which previously did not exist, but are now available for everyone. Although this may not create a large number of jobs, and often certain qualifications are required, it is a contributing factor.

The most important fact regarding the effect of the computer introduction is that with less labour a larger package of services can be made available. That means, in economic terms, that people have to work less hours to reach the same standard of living.

Shorter working hours is not something that can be achieved overnight. Some might go too far in their expectations of a thirty-hour work week, for instance. Though, comparing the situation now with, let us say, forty years ago, we can notice a considerable decrease in working hours and at the same time an undeniable increase in prosperity. The standard of living has increased. Much



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EDITORIAL COMMITTEE:

Editors: J. Geertsema and W. Pouwelse
Co-Editors: J. DeJong, Cl. Stam and
W.W.J. VanOene

ADDRESS FOR EDITORIAL MATTERS:

CLARION
9210 - 132A Street
Surrey, BC, Canada V3V 7E1

ADDRESS FOR ADMINISTRATIVE
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more can be "bought" for equivalent or fewer working hours.

5. Satisfaction in the job

There is still one aspect we have to discuss and that is the question whether the introduction of the computer has taken away the satisfaction in the job. Is the computer a tool, used by the worker, as every other piece of advanced technological equipment? Or has the worker become an extension of the machine? Is there still the same satisfaction in the workshop, or has the job become boring, because all the "thinking" is done by the computer? To answer these questions in

certain extend, in the past, when engineers used a slide rule for their calculations. The accuracy of the outcome of a calculation made with such a slide rule depends on the accuracy with which the slide is moved. For some scientific purposes a rough calculation is sufficient in the first stage. Once I saw an engineer making calculations and, in the routine of his work, using his slide rule for all his calculations. In all seriousness he wrote in his report that three times twenty was about 59. Although the accuracy was better than 98%, it looks foolish to see such a scientific statement. This example shows how people can depend too much on their

“ . . . adjustments have to be made to keep pace with the developments.”

a balanced way, we have to consider a number of different aspect. We have to compare the pros and the cons and, aware of the possible threat, we have to take appropriate measures to avoid unwanted developments.

The first thing I should like to mention is that the computer has taken over, and takes over, a lot of repetitious and routine work. That can be appreciated as a positive point. Certain boring and repetitious jobs can be done much faster and more accurately by a computer. That can make the remaining work more interesting, and can even open avenues, which never have been considered possible before, because of the bulk of routine-like work involved. Though, here we also have to be aware of the danger that people depend so much on the "electronics," that they cannot do without. A simple example is the way children study mathematics, and the way it is practised in the workplace and the office. In the past people had to, and were able to add, subtract, multiply and divide, with the use of pen and paper, or even by heart. Nowadays the calculator is used everywhere. The children use it in school. But the result is that many people are hardly able to make calculations on their own. It happens quite often that a cashier, bank teller, or storekeeper has to use a calculator to add two or three amounts. They are surprised when the customer can do it faster by heart than the letter can key in the figures in the calculator. This lack of active knowledge of counting is a real drawback. It is important for the students to train themselves in mathematics, even when a computer can do the job much faster. Negligence in this respect makes people too dependant on the machine. The same happened, to a

"tools" and are not trained enough to use common sense.

Another aspect of computerization is that few people can comprehend and overlook the whole process. Everyone has his small area of specialism, or the small part he has to manufacture, and almost no one is able to oversee the whole production process. That can take away the satisfaction and make people feel like a very small wheel in a big machine. This is certainly a disadvantage. Many people are less enthusiastic about their job, because they see little of its results. When people, especially in the management staff, are aware of this effect, appropriate measures can be taken to make the workers feel more involved in their products. That is also important for the efficiency and the productivity of the company. A less motivated worker is less productive and more prone to make mistakes. And because still many accidents and losses are caused by human errors, it is a matter of wise management to make the workers aware of what they are doing and make them feel proud of the final results. It is not only in the best interest of the manager, it is also a matter of fairness with respect to the workers. They should know, and be kept in close contact with, what they are doing.

Awareness of what the worker is do-

ing is very important. With the present trend of specialization it is certainly a matter of mentality, how a worker feels about his job. This mentality can be encouraged or discouraged, depending on the policy of the management staff. It is also a matter of personal attitude. A classic example is the story of two bricklayers who worked on the same project. Asked what they were doing, the first one said, "I am laying two-thousand bricks a day." The other, doing the same job, said, "We are building a cathedral." It is clear that the latter felt much more involved in the result of his work than the former.

The last point I like to mention with respect to job satisfaction is the question whether more and more qualified people will be employed. That is certainly the case. Therefore, the students, in making a choice regarding their education, have to consider that specialization in a certain area is almost necessary. Still here, too, we should be realistic. The number of highly qualified people in the field of computer technology is limited. There are, however, many spin-off effects. Many new types of jobs will be created. Not in the first place computer related jobs, but types of work which have become possible now, and could not be afforded in the past. New products can be manufactured, which in the past were not even thought of. In all these things adjustments have to be made to keep pace with the developments. But with proper response, satisfaction in the workplace is certainly possible, no less than in the past. It depends largely on the personal approach.

Considering the social implications of the computer, our conclusion must be that there are certainly important changes caused by this technological novelty. Still we feel that it is not principally different than with the invention of the wheel, the introduction of the steam engine, or the first space rocket. Proper adjustments have to be made. We have to be on our guard that modern developments are not used in the wrong way, as tools in the hands of the devil. That was the danger and the ongoing struggle already in the time of Lamech, before the flood. That is the case today, and it will be so in the future.

Let us use all our energy, our intellect, and all the other gifts the Lord has given us, to glorify the Name of our heavenly Father in every aspect of human life. Sin and the danger of sin is not in any technological development, but in the human heart, and therefore in the way the results are used by human beings. The Lord has called us to develop His wonderful creation and to have dominion over it, to the Glory of God our Creator.

OUR COVER

Photo courtesy:
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W. POWELSE

The RES and mission¹

I. Introduction

The Reformed Ecumenical Synod (RES) is an affiliation of some thirty-five Reformed church federations from all continents, with a total membership of about five and a half million.² P.G. Schrotenboer, the secretary general of the RES, divides these thirty-five church federations into three groups: those of Dutch origin, those of Presbyterian character, and churches in the third world planted by the Reformed Churches of the Western World. Among them are, to mention only a few, the Christian Reformed Church, the "Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland" (so-called synodical), the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, the Reformed Churches of Australia, the Reformed Church in Japan, Christian Reformed Church of Nigeria and several Reformed church federations from Indonesia.

In three articles we will try to outline the approach the RES has to mission, and evaluate our findings. In order to do so we will turn our attention to the five missionary conferences organized by the RES. Having this as our focal point means we will not deal with the history of the RES as such; we will restrict ourselves.

We will ask your attention for some of the papers and addresses presented to the different mission conferences, and to some issues of the *International Reformed Bulletin (IRB)*, a publication of the International Association for Reformed Faith and Action. The *IRB* not only published the papers of the first two conferences, but also some other issues were dedicated to mission related topics.

Before we begin, some words of caution. When we look at these papers and addresses, we should keep in mind that they are not officially adopted RES documents. The "Messages to the Churches" as adopted by two conferences, are of course an exception to this. The papers and addresses for the conferences were written to provide material for the discussion, which means, they may contain opinions of individuals. Yet we feel free to use them since all the contributors are members of churches that cooperate within the RES. For this reason we claim that these papers reflect a certain common opinion within the RES.

When comparing and evaluating these



papers we must also realize that the contributors limited themselves to the theme of that particular conference. These papers deal with mission from a certain perspective rather than with an all-around Reformed approach to mission. Compiling all the papers will not result in a complete Reformed approach to mission. Much more can be said about mission than what these conferences did, but their purpose was not to be exhaustive. They only wanted to highlight certain aspects.

Finally yet, because of this scope of our articles, it is important to refer to a particular part of the Constitution of the RES. The purpose of the Synod, among others, is described in the Constitution as follows:

2. To give united testimony to the Reformed faith in the midst of the world living in error and groping in darkness, and

to the churches which have departed from the truth of God's Holy Word.

3. To confer together, as far as advisability or necessity may require, regarding missionary work of the churches at home and abroad.³

This quotation shows reflection on missionary work to be an important part of the RES. Therefore since 1968 every general meeting of the RES has been accompanied by a conference dealing with missionary issues. We will highlight and evaluate these conferences.

II. The RES mission conferences

Here follows first a list of all the conferences and their themes:

1. Baarn, the Netherlands, August 5-9, 1968. Theme: The Christian Message to a Changing World.

2. Sydney, Australia, August 7-11, 1972. Theme: Christ's Gospel in a Needy World (Published in *IRB*, no. 51 [Fall 1972] under the title *The Unity of Mission*).

3. Cape Town, South Africa, August 2-6, 1976. Theme: Training for Missions.

4. Nimes, France, July 7-10, 1980. Theme: Prophetic Witness of the Church in a Bewildered World.

5. Chicago, U.S.A., July 24-27, 1984. Theme: Mission and the Future — Charting New Strategies.

Baarn, 1968

Forty delegates and a number of observers, from six continents and fifteen countries, representing twenty-three Reformed communities assembled in Baarn to attend this first mission conference of the RES. The theme of this first conference "The Christian Message to a Changing World" was taken from the Constitution, especially the part which we quoted above, namely, "to give united testimony of the Reformed faith in this world living in error."

Being the first of its kind, this conference mainly dealt with the identity of Reformed mission. Most of the questions raised were the traditional questions, and most of the answers given were the traditional answers. For example, Shigeru Yoshioka in his paper "The Goal of Mission" describes that goal with the help of the famous definition of Voetius. According to Voetius, who lived from 1589 till 1676, the first goal of mission is the conversion of the gentiles, the second is planting of churches while the third and ultimate goal is the glorification of God. Yoshioka uses this definition and comes to the following conclusion: ". . . I insist upon the primary importance of establishing a Reformed Church as the goal of mission (*IRB*, no. 35, 21)."

Another point of discussion was whether they could cooperate with other missionary agencies, and if yes, how far? According to J.W. Deenick joint action is only possible on the basis of confessional unity. However, that does not mean that interdenominational missionary organizations have no right to exist.

The Church of Jesus is certainly not exclusively present or at work in and through denominations. The British and Foreign Bible Society may visibly represent the body of Christ and do its work in a far more efficient manner than does e.g. the Union of Congregational Churches in England or the Coptic Church in Egypt (*Ibid.*, 51).

We should take note that this manner of reasoning deviates from the Reformed confessions. They speak quite differently about the Church of our Lord. However, the author goes on to say that if Reformed Churches want to cooperate in their work

of mission, for example, for a school for training ministers, confessional harmony is mandatory. This harmony requires not only to have the same confession, but also to adhere to these confessions. He therefore concludes:

For RES churches there is no hope for successful collaboration in theological training schemes, unless the foundational creed for it is a sound and relevant expression of the faith "once delivered to the saints" and is honestly subscribed to (*Ibid.*, 57).

Preaching as the primary task of mission also received its due emphasis at this conference. J.M.L. Young said, "Thus the ministry begins by preaching for converts (*Ibid.*, 68)." "But," warns R. Recker at the same time, "this preaching should not make us close our eyes for the needs in society. The total witness of the church has to be focused upon and directed toward the points of need in the society in which she finds herself (*Ibid.*, 94)."

Not only did the conference pay attention to the foundation of Reformed mission, but it was also aware of the world surrounding the Reformed Churches, as the theme of the conference may prove. The Reformed Churches found themselves in the midst of a world which was changing, departing from a Christian past. In spite of this negative change, the relation between the churches and this changing world was seen in an optimistic manner. This optimism was probably in line with the optimistic attitude of the sixties. P.E.S. Smith spoke about a church which is "on the march." J.P. Galbraith, recognized the increasing unbelief in this world, yet spoke of unparalleled opportunities still open for the Reformed Churches. The growth of the world population, combined with the development of modern means to communicate, make mission a challenging task. He concluded with these words: "My friends we have, in an infallible Bible, the very Word of the Creator of heaven and earth, just what man needs today. Let us proclaim it as we never have before (*Ibid.*, 8)."

We heard a somewhat different voice in the contribution of D.C. Mulder, a delegate of the "Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland" (synodical). We see his paper as a disturbing dissonance in the whole conference. Mulder pleads very strongly for an indigenous digestion of the gospel, which means that the peoples to whom we bring the gospel, have to digest that in the light of their own culture. As such we have no difficulties with such a plea, as long as the authority of God's Word is not made subject to the culture of the people to whom the gospel is proclaimed. If that would happen then God's Word becomes secondary and pagan elements will enter the church. However, Mulder does

not see that as a danger, he sees it as a challenge, in which faithfulness to the local culture is more important than faithfulness to the gospel.

We need not agree with the results of their (theologians in India) thinking, we might even occasionally hold our breath and be concerned about their faithfulness to the gospel: nevertheless, we should realize that this is the only way for the churches and missions in India to grapple with the challenge with which they are confronted. That is why our primary calling is not to raise a warning finger but rather to stimulate these efforts, which have started a real dialogue between the Christian message and the multi-coloured civilization of the Indian subcontinent (*Ibid.*, 45).

We saw how Deenick pointed out the necessity of confessional unity as well as adherence to these confessions, in order to work together as churches. When we then compare what Galbraith and Mulder brought forward at this very first mission conference we already see the weakness of these conferences and of the whole RES. These two men reason completely different from each other. Galbraith adheres to the Reformed confessions by pointing at the infallibility of God's Word as foundational for our work of mission. Mulder, by allowing different interpretations of the gospel, irrespective of the question whether that interpretation is faithful to the gospel itself, moves in the direction of undermining the authority of God's Word. He wants to have a dialogue with other religions, a dialogue in which the authority and normativity of Scripture is a point of only secondary order. These two approaches are opposed to each other, exclude each other, and can never, as Deenick pointed out, constitute the basis of cooperation between Reformed church federations.

Intermezzo I

During the four years separating Baarn '68 and Sydney '72 reflection about a distinctive Reformed approach to mission continued. The Reformed Churches, just as much as other churches, were confronted with the growing awareness in the whole world of problems like hunger, overpopulation, energy deficiencies, social imbalances, and political oppression. They were also faced with the question of what to do now, especially in their work of mission. As a result two issues of *IRB* were completely dedicated to these problems.

The first one was the winter issue of 1970, subtitled *The Gospel in a Hungry World*. The reality of hunger and malnourishment in this world brought many questions to the attention of the churches. How can we help the hungry people of the world? Besides preaching, does our ap-

proach to mission leave room for material help? Is material help the task of the church or of private individuals? The editor P.G. Schrotenboer is convinced that material aid should have a place within our efforts to bring the gospel to other countries. "It is past high time that Evangelical Christians squarely face their calling in Church World Aid (*IRB*: 40, 1)." The thrust of his article is then also "... that material relief should be given in the closest conjunction with the proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ (*Ibid.*, 28)." He gives the following reasoning:

The Biblical gospel covers life in its entirety: it proclaims redemption for man, the forgiveness of sins and eternal life as well as the lordship and redemption of Christ for the entirety of human society. The goal of missions therefore, should not be merely the erection of a new church, but the building of a new Christian community with all its many facets in every life zone (*Ibid.*, 28).

This means acceptance of the so-called comprehensive, or holistic approach to mission. Such an approach is directed not only to the spiritual needs of the hearers, but also to their medical, educational and social needs. Preaching the gospel then is placed at the same level as helping out in material matters.

The next issue of *IRB* dealing with mission appeared in the fall of 1972 and had as subtitle *Rethinking Missions*. Again the same questions were dealt with, except now more pointedly. Hunger was indeed a world problem, but could only be solved by attacking the roots of hunger, social injustices. How can we give diacnal aid a proper place in our mission, while knowing that most of the world's poverty is caused by unjust structures in society? According to Schrotenboer the answer lies in rethinking mission in a Kingdom perspective, a perspective in which we take the Kingdom of God as our point of departure. This means that the goal of our mission is not simply to plant churches, and to convert heathens, but more to establish a new Christian community that is as broad as society and is true to the national situation.

This aim can be accomplished only if the New Redeemed Community is convinced of the need that the gospel of Christ transforms its culture, not to make it over after the image of the West, but as a new indigenous variety that makes clear that Christ is Liberator not only from guilt of sin but also from oppressive societal structures and that a task of the new Christians is to give new form to their society (*IRB*: 48, 29).

Two things are important with regard to this article. First of all we should note that the idea of the Kingdom of God is introduced here, in order to solve the questions related to hunger and injustice. Secondly,

we learn from this issue, that the introduction of this perspective is accompanied by a greater stress on the horizontal relations, liberations from oppressive societal structures.

Sydney, 1972

The theme of this second conference "Christ's Gospel in a Needy World" shows that the questions discussed in the years between Baarn '68 and Sydney '72, now came to the table of the conference. Is giving material aid indeed part and parcel of our work of mission? The answer to this question can be guessed from the subtitle of the published papers: *The Unity of Mis-*

is in favour of a comprehensive approach, in which many auxiliary services, such as education and medical help, go hand in hand with the preaching. Preaching without deeds is empty preaching, but also deeds without preaching are empty deeds.

In spite of all the attention given to the idea of the Kingdom as a means to unify preaching and material help in *Rethinking Mission*, most papers at this conference did not as yet reflect that "rethinking." Only two out of the ten dealt specifically with this idea. One was written by D.C. Grafford and carried as title "Missions and Church World Aid." According

Hymn 46:1,2

*We thank Thee, Father, who hast planted
Thy holy Name within our hearts.
True knowledge, faith, and life immortal
Jesus Thy Son to us imparts.
Thou, Lord, didst make all for Thy pleasure,
Didst give man food for all his days,
Giving in Christ the Bread eternal;
Thine is the power, Thine be the praise.
Watch o'er Thy Church, O Lord, in mercy;
Save it from evil, guard it still.
Perfect it in Thy love, unite it,
Cleansed and conformed unto Thy will.
As grain, once scattered on the hillsides,
Was in the broken bread made one,
So from all lands Thy Church be gathered
Into Thy kingdom by Thy Son.*

sion (*IRB*: no. 51). That unity was the single whole of the one great word/deed ministry of the people of God, according to Schrotenboer in the Introduction (*Ibid.*, 1). Whereas Baarn '68 was concerned with the identity of Reformed mission, Sydney '72 directed the attention of the delegates to what was going on outside the churches. The emphasis was now on the impact of the new Christian community on its environment.

This emphasis was soon noticeable in the paper presented by Prof. K. Runia, titled "The Church's Mission Today — The Unity of its Task." Our aim in mission, said Runia, is "Not just the planting of a church but the planting of a church that is going to transform the world in which it lives (*Ibid.* 10)." And somewhat later he stated: "It is not enough to convert some or even many individuals but we aim at the whole nations and the changing power of the gospel should be applied to all existing structures (*Ibid.*, 12)." Runia

to Grafford both the word (preaching) and the deed (aid) are part and parcel of the Kingdom of God. "The church has the calling to proclaim the Kingdom of God in the fullness of its spiritual dimensions but also to realize it as far as possible in history in the fulness of its material consequences (*Ibid.*, 64)." The first part of this quotation points to the importance of the preaching, whereas the second part — the realization of the material consequences of the Kingdom — points to the necessity of material help. The church is called to fulfill both tasks. Fully aware that material help alone is not the final goal, the church must go on to find the causes of poverty and hunger. "Although the church forms a small minority of the population of the world, it is called to be the conscience of the world and to protest against all forms of injustice and need (*Ibid.*, 66)."

The second paper dealing with the Kingdom perspective was by P.G. Schroten-

boer, titled "Justice and Mercy in Biblical Perspective." For him the Biblical perspective is the Kingdom perspective, which means mercy and justice go hand in hand. Mercy can only be effective if it is accompanied by the proclamation of justice. Seen from this perspective justice cannot be equated with compassion, even if that compassion stems from love, but rather, it means liberation from injustice. If we take this approach we have a word for the oppressed in this world, their oppressors, as well as, God's people who live in the midst of this. To the oppressed we may say that they are the people of God. The oppressors, and that includes all who live in affluent societies, we must admonish to share. To God's people we say do justice and love mercy in the midst of situations of injustice. They must set up "... structures which are as appropriate and effective to the promotion of public justice in our time as the laws of Moses were in the day of God's ancient people (Ibid., 85)."

It may be clear from these three papers, that the stress on the Kingdom of God is accompanied by a stress on the role of the church in society. The church has to protest against forms of injustice, says Grafford, which means that the church will have to make pronouncements about political matters. Schrottenboer sees justice as liberation — which as such does not have to be rejected — but he applies this to liberation from politically or socially unjust situations and not to the liberation from our sin. If we want to speak about righteousness or justice in a Biblical perspective, then we must first of all mention our sin committed against the most high majesty of God by breaking the covenant (Lord's Day 4). In this way justice or righteousness in the lives of God's children does not deal with social or political issues, but it points to what God in His covenant faithfulness did, to what Christ suffered for us (Lord's Day 23). Was this not the point where Luther started his "conversion," to be justified by faith? Mercy and Justice in Biblical perspective do not make us look at social and political issues first of all, but it makes us realize and confess our sins before God and our faith in the only sacrifice of Christ. This, what we call, vertical dimension comes first, before we can deal with any horizontal dimension.

We all know how, within the World Council of Churches, (WCC) liberation is seen and spelled out in horizontal terms. Claiming to bring true justice to this world, money is given to revolutionary organizations. We all know, too, how influential the so-called Theologies of Liberation are within the WCC, not only today in 1986, but already in 1972. Neither Grafford nor Schrottenboer principally protect themselves against these modern theories, and

thus leave room for such un-Scriptural elements to enter also the Reformed mission.

The RES wanted to come to a unity of mission by trying to mould everything into one great united word/deed ministry. This may sound nice, but will not succeed, as long as word and deed are placed on the same level. Certainly the two are not to be divorced, but neither may they be equated. Salvation is not through the deed, but through the preaching of the Word (Rom. 10:17, Lord's Day 25). The task given to the church by our Lord is then also not to engage as church in developmental aid, but to proclaim that healing word of the gospel in all its richness, with all its demands in all areas of life.

Intermezzo II

Before moving on to the next conference, we again will pay some attention to an issue of *IRB*. This time the Winter/Spring issue of 1974, titled *Missions — In the Reformation — And Now (IRB: no. 56/7)*.

Two articles in this issue deserve some attention. First of all one written by E. Rubingh — "Missions and Secularization" — in which he promotes a wide-as-life view on salvation. He agrees that salvation is salvation from sin, but it cannot be restricted solely to redemption of the soul. The danger of secularization — worldly influences entering the church — is very real if we see mission only as preaching the gospel and nothing more. However, a wide-as-life approach to salvation will give mission its proper place and protect it from becoming worldly. It will also leave room for more involvement of laypeople, who can be of service in areas of education, medicine or business. Another positive element of this wide-as-life salvation is that it gives the receiving nation the opportunity to accept the gospel in a manner suitable to their culture.

Schrottenboer's article, "Towards Catholicity in Mission," is again a strong plea for the Kingdom of God perspective. Unity in mission can only be achieved by starting from that Kingdom:

This idea (the Kingdom of God) perhaps more comprehensively than any other serves as a compendium of the Bible's message. In other words, it is the frame in which we may catch — even while seeing darkly through a glass — the whole counsel of God and direct it upon human life as a whole so that a full-bodied response of faith will result.

He connects this idea of the Kingdom with the three goals of mission as defined by the well-known Baptist laypreacher and missionary William Carey, namely: the conversion of the soul, the planting of churches and the service to mankind (Ibid., 41). Combining the Kingdom per-

spective with these three goals we should come to a "catholic" approach to mission, which means that the whole person in his whole environment is addressed and involved. He concludes with the warning not to impose our western ways on the new converts.

Again we meet in these two articles stress upon life-relatedness of the proclamation of the gospel. The one calls it wide-as-life, the other catholicity, but both want mission involved not only in spiritual matters but also social and political matters. Indeed the proclamation of the gospel must be related to life, to the lives of the believers, but not at the expense of the vertical dimension.

We should also note that Schrottenboer uses the word "catholic" (or "catholicity") in a different way from what we are used to. We know the word from the Apostle's Creed, where we confess to believe "a holy catholic Christian Church." Article 27 of the Belgic Confession explains the word "catholic" with the term "universal." The word "catholic," and thus also the word "catholicity," is derived from a Greek word which means "according to the whole." To be a "catholic" church, no matter where on the globe, means, among others, to live by and out of the whole revelation of God, in unity with all those who in the past or at present lived or live on that same foundation. However, for Schrottenboer "catholicity" means "according to and directed to the whole man."

Next, Schrottenboer, when dealing with the aim of mission, does not mention the formulation of Voetius, but instead refers to Carey's three goals. Voetius' formulation also had three parts, the conversion of gentiles, the planting of churches, and the ultimate goal, the glorification of God. Schrottenboer now replaces Voetius' description by Carey's, the conversion of the soul, the planting of churches and the service to mankind. We are critical of this change. Not only because Carey, influenced by Pietism, speaks about the conversion of the soul instead of the conversion of the gentiles, but more so because the glorification of God as the ultimate goal of mission is replaced by the service to mankind. In our final evaluation we will return to this.

— *To be continued*
D.G.J. AGEMA

¹This is a revised version of a paper written as part of a missiology course at Calvin College, Grand Rapids.

²P.G. Schrottenboer, "The Christian Reformed Church and the Reformed Ecumenical Synod," in *Perspectives on the Christian Reformed Church*, P. De Klerk and R.R. De Ridder eds. (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1983), p. 345.

³Acts of the RES, Sydney, Australia, August 15-25, 1972 (Grand Rapids: RES, 1973), p. 63.

Theological College

To my knowledge no arrangements were made with respect to the reporting on the promotion of Dr. C. VanDam on June 5, 1986. That leaves open the possibility that more than one report is presented for publication. However, it could also lead to it that no report was published. To avoid this latter possibility I present for publication the short report which as a delegate I wrote for the Board of Governors.

Esteemed brothers,

I am happy to report that in agreement with your honourable commission I attended the convocation of the Senate of the Theologische Hoogeschool at Kampen on June 5, 1986 at which the degree of doctor of theology was conferred on Prof. C. VanDam after he had successfully defended his dissertation on *The Urim and Tummin*. This defence must have been a strenuous effort for the promovendus because of 'the free for all' it included and the Dutch language wherein it was all conducted. The entire proceeding was at the same time a very happy event for me who with the other members of the Senate of our College closely had followed the struggle and triumph of our col-



league and friend in the time of preparation of the dissertation. It was also a happy occasion for the many attendants of the meeting and in particular so for the considerable number of Canadian Reformed brothers and sisters who had come out to witness the promotion, the VanDam family, of course, in a very special way. I received the opportunity to offer congratulations on behalf of you and in you of College and Churches whom you represent, at the reception following

the academic session and to do so more extensively at the dinner offered by Dr. and Mrs. VanDam to a select company of fellow scholars, relatives and friends. Many good words were spoken at these various occasions but above all thanks was given to the Father of lights from whom every good endowment and every perfect gift comes down.

With brotherly greetings
L. SELLES

Mission work in Papua New Guinea

The Free Reformed Churches of Australia recently experienced disappointment when they received news that the second minister whom they had called for mission work in Papua New Guinea declined the call which had been extended to him. This in itself, is, of course, not a new phenomenon. Many congregations experience these disappointments. Such moments bring us to the humble recognition that the Lord's plans run higher than our own and that we must faithfully continue in the work which needs to be done. Yet, such a disappointment takes on different perspectives when one realizes that the work which has been faithfully commenced and nurtured by the blessing of the Lord, may not be able to continue, and that that which has been carefully built up, may well fall

away. This injects a greater measure of urgency into the continued calling work. Such is the unique situation faced by the FRC of Albany which acts as the calling church in the PNG mission work.

Origins

It was in the early seventies that the FRC of Australia first gained contact with some West Papuan refugees in the district of Port Moresby. These refugees had been displaced from their homeland as a result of the Indonesian takeover of what once was known as Dutch New Guinea, in 1962. Over the years many more people fled from Irian Jaya and settled in various districts of Papua New Guinea. Most of the refugees were once either members of, or at the very least had contact with,

the Evangelical Christian Church of Irian Jaya. Upon arrival in Port Moresby many difficult situations faced the refugees. Problems related to settling into their new country, such as finding work and accommodation. Among the arrangements which they made, featured also the matter of continuing their religious worship as they had experienced this in their own country. Over the years this has been sustained although many have fallen away and only a small group remained to continue this. Since the early 70s a number of attempts were made to render assistance to these people. Both the FRCs of Australia and also the Gereformeerde Kerk te Amersfoort West looked at the possibility of providing assistance which would nurture and build up on any foundations laid in Irian Jaya.

It was not till 1983 that these plans came to fruition. By then, the many difficulties experienced by the group had caused them to dwindle away to a small number. A proper Agreement of Co-operation was drawn up between the Australian churches and the Church at Amersfoort West which resulted in the Church of Albany becoming calling church. A number of visits were made between late 1983 and early 1985. The churches came to the understanding that help was required urgently if any hope was to be maintained for the future of the work. This resulted in the Rev. Bruning being released by the Church of Armadale and being sent to Port Moresby for a period of eight months. This period ended in February 1986.

Growth

Rev. Bruning left for Port Moresby in June of 1985, after the synod of the Free Reformed Churches of Australia. His first attempts were directed at bringing the people together again as a group. The people, sensing a renewed interest in their plight responded well. So, after a brief period of settling in Rev. Bruning and his wife were able to give their full attention to building up church life. Activities such as a Bible Study club, a study course for preparation for office-bearers and catechism classes for the youth were amongst the first to be initiated. Regular meetings were and are still being held with what has become known as the "Church Committee." In these meetings various practical aspects are discussed and as a result of these some decisions could be implemented.

Of course, all this work, brought with it many difficulties. Rev. Bruning had to make some difficult choices as to whom should serve on the Church Committee. There were problems in relation to suitable meeting facilities. Many of the refugees live in trying circumstances, socially and financially. Some of the refugees have been strongly politically motivated, especially towards a free West Irian. All of these difficulties would normally make it difficult for the mission work to flourish. Despite this, the blessing of the Lord has been very evident. Each report from Rev. Bruning mentioned new contacts, new and sustained enthusiasm for the development of church life in Port Moresby. It has been touching to read of the growth in understanding. Suggestions relating to the implementation of homevisits and collections for the needy show that there is a growing concern for one another as brothers and sisters in the Lord. Suggestion for changing the liturgy; moderated opinions on political matters, all these echo positive growth in the direction of Reformed church life. Much self evaluation has led

to an apparent redirection of lives. Much appreciation has been expressed for the work being conducted in their midst. Rev. and Mrs. Bruning have had a very rewarding period in the midst of these people. There is much warmth in the relationships which have developed between them and the people amongst whom they are working. Having recently visited Lae and Madang, on the north coast of PNG, Rev. and Mrs. Bruning reported similar contacts with refugees there.

"I am not too optimistic when I say that three Reformed communities in PNG is not an idle speculation." (Quoted from one of Rev. Bruning's reports.)

Of course, we must be careful in interpreting these initial developments. Much work awaits the FRCs of Australia before independent congregations can be established. Yet these first reports give confidence that there is future in the work in PNG. It creates also an awareness of a great responsibility given to the churches to continue this work with vigour, faithfully proceeding to till the soil in the vineyard of the Lord.

The future

At the end of February, 1986, Rev. Bruning and his wife returned to Australia.

For eight months, by the grace of the Lord, the little plant, sick and dying from the searing attacks made on it over the years, has been carefully nurtured to a state where survival and ultimate health seems within grasp. It is with concern, however, that we view the immediate future of the work. Calling of ministers, which

is done in conjunction with Amersfoort West is a slow process. And a minister is needed urgently. For that little plant is not yet strong enough to withstand further buffeting from the searing blasts of Satan's attacks. It needs further shielding, further care. Patient instruction and firm leadership is needed so that the community can be led on the path towards the establishment of God's Church in Port Moresby.

A number of possibilities can be considered as interim measures.

Perhaps a non-minister can serve to give guidance for a short period of time.

It may even be possible to find an missionary who is both prepared and able to take several months leave from his own congregation and to assist in Port Moresby for that time.

These considerations are presently under review.

A determined effort is being made to maintain contact from Australia. Correspondence, sending of sermons, whatever may be useful to assist the community while they are alone, is being undertaken.

May, in this most urgent and desperate situation, the Lord give the answer to the difficulties surrounding His work of gathering, defending and preserving His Church.

May we take also this opportunity to urge our brothers and sisters in Canada and Holland to remember and to pray for the cause of the West Papuan Community in Port Moresby.

A.H. TERPSTRA, secretary
PNG Committee Albany

Consulaat-Generaal Der Nederlanden CONSULATE GENERAL OF THE NETHERLANDS

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

OPSPORING ADRESSEN:

KHO, Sie Oey, geboren op 28 augustus 1953 te Manado, Indonesië, laatstbekende adressen: PO Box 3863 Station D, Edmonton, AB en 216-1 Beach Court N., Terrace Bay, ON.

VAN ROON, Marie Elisabeth, geboren op 25 februari 1926 te Delft, naar Canada gekomen op 26 oktober 1966.

DE ROOS, W.L., naar Canada gekomen in 1958 (het betreft de heer de Roos).

WOLTERS, Herman, geboren op 3 juni 1918 te Rotterdam, laatstbekende adres in Nederland: Hendrik Groeisinckstraat 64b, Rotterdam, naar Canada gekomen op 16 oktober 1967.

ALBLAS, Jacobus, geboren op 13 februari 1921, laatstbekende adres in Nederland: Wilhelminastraat 46, Lekkercerk, naar Canada geëmigreerd op 10 april 1958.

KLOP, Jan, geboren op 10 september 1898 te Rotterdam, naar Canada vertrokken met zijn echtgenote Wilhelmina Klaris tussen de jaren 1960-1965 om zich bij hun kinderen Johan en Sara Klop te voegen. Bestemming onbekend.

De Consul-Generaal
voor deze:-
Mevr. G. SCHNITZLER
Fgd. KANSELIER

The Canadian Reformed Society for a Home for the Aged Inc., Hamilton, ON₂

In our previous report we provided our readers with some background information about Ebenezer Villa in Hamilton, Ontario, our senior citizen home, and about Mount Nemo Lodge, our Nursing Home in Burlington, Ontario. At this time we wish to inform you about the practical operation of Mount Nemo Lodge Nursing Home. Our br. Leo Knegt, as Convener of the Management Committee, reported to us at the annual meeting as follows:

For it has been nearly six months now that we have operated Mt. Nemo Lodge Nursing Home. A lot of changes have been incorporated and many new ideas initiated. Just to mention a few — new schedules for the employees' working hours, so that they will know in advance exactly when they will work and how many hours; food menus have been made up; in the Lounge Room there is always coffee or tea available for residents as well as visitors; privacy bedside curtains have been installed; we plan to replace the drapes in every room as well as the common room; stainless steel carts have been purchased to make it easier to transport the food from and to the lounge; also, a utility cart was purchased for the purpose of changing beds and cleaning rooms. Needless to say, the help of our qualified Administrator has been a tremendous asset to us in the initial weeks and subsequent months following our takeover.

The Management Committee consists of Nancy McCullough, who is the Administrator, Joe Boersema, who is our Maintenance Person, George Hart, who is our Treasurer and Anko Scholtens and Leo Knegt. We are responsible for the daily operation of the Nursing Home and meet on an average every two weeks.

Because winter was just around the corner when we purchased the home, we had to prepare for snow plowing and sanding. We also installed a snow fence. We found that the water in the home was extremely hard and we have purchased a water softener. The sump pump also broke down and needed to be replaced.

There was only one telephone line to the home and we have corrected that so that at least the Administrator can make private phone calls. Also, a paging sys-

tem has been installed. With spring now upon us, we hope to make the appearance outside the Nursing Home a bit more attractive with landscaping and shrubs so that by the time we have our official opening, you may, for those who attended the initial "Open House," see some changes and improvements. In the meantime the official opening has been set for June 21, 1986 at 2:00 P.M. Please do come and show your interest. We hope to have a pleasant afternoon.

To give you some idea of the staff at Mt. Nemo, we have at present seven registered nurses, nine R.N.A's, two students, three ladies who work in the kitchen and one housekeeper, a total of twenty-three, including our Administrator.

The cleaning of the home itself is done in a systematic manner. Since we have purchased proper equipment for that job, it has saved us a number of hours each week over the way it was previously done.

In the kitchen and downstairs, we have made some changes which will help to alleviate time-consuming jobs, for instance, we have purchased an automatic dishwasher. We have made the food stockroom accessible from the kitchen itself, which also save time and will cut down on our overhead expenses, while at the same time it is more pleasant for the staff to be able to do more in less time and so increase the efficiency. Our residents also appreciate these changes. Although it takes some time to adjust to new systems. We had someone come in to show the staff how to prepare food, how much to provide for each of the residents and to do so in a systematic manner, which eliminates waste and at the same time provides for better care for the residents in nutritious diets. It even effects the atmosphere in the home. New shelving in the stock room has been installed so that it is easier to take inventory. The freezers which were here, there and everywhere, have all been neatly placed along one wall in the stockroom.

We have also ordered two roadside signs, one on Guelph Line and one for the Second Sideroad, so that you will not have to look too hard to find the entrance to our Nursing Home.

And so the list goes on and on and on. Every meeting presents new challenges. So far we have not had to deal with an impossible task. Because we are dealing with helping elderly people who need care, there is never a status quo. There is always something that needs our attention. On matters which we feel are outside our jurisdiction we consult with the Board of the Society. We meet with them once a month and keep them informed of our proceedings by way of a copy of our minutes. The Management Committee of Mt. Nemo Nursing Home and the Board have excellent cooperation. Also our relationship with the staff at the Nursing Home has been excellent. We have heard through others, as well as from our Administrator, that it is a lot more pleasant to work in the home since we became the owners, which is something especially for the committee, to be thankful for. After all, we also are new to them and have much to learn.

Because it is operated as a non-profit and charitable institution, our Treasurer br. George Hart, has quite a bit of work. The finances need constant attention. There are accounts receivable, but of course there are also accounts payable. It was good that we had an amount of money set aside for unforeseen expenses, which we had to make use of to modernize the home. However, our Treasurer watches us closely.

As you may know, we have appointed an Activity Director: Sister Liz DeJong, who will tell us about her work later.

In cooperation with other Ministers, our "own" Rev. J. Mulder, of the Burlington West congregation, conducts a "service" once a month. The choir of the John Calvin School visits on a regular basis. However, more volunteers are needed.

Since we took over the home, five people have passed away. The beds were almost immediately filled with people who are on the waiting list.

Finally, what we would like to emphasize is that we all promote this home. If there is someone in need of it, we should do our best to try to place him or her in our home. That is after all the ultimate goal, that we provide an environ-

ment where they can feel at home so that it can be said that it is truly a Reformed Nursing Home. You may ask, what about the staff? That is a good question. You must remember that when one buys an existing facility, it is often best not to make drastic changes which would be to the detriment of the residents. However, we do hope that any vacancies in the staff can be filled by our own qualified people. You might be interested to know that we have just filled a staff vacancy with one of our own. She is Mrs. Schenkel R.N. from Waterdown, ON. Also a part-time student was hired to replace Miss Marchese. Our goal is to have the home run "by our people for our people." This may take time, but we have already made a step in that direction with the hiring of the two aforementioned.

Now to give you an idea as to how the home is actually run. You will have heard already that Mrs. Nancy McCullough is the Administrator. She is also a registered nurse, as well as our Food Services Supervisor. She in turn has a "charge nurse" on the day shift and in the event that Nancy needs to be away, this nurse automatically becomes responsible for the home. All under strict control of the Ministry of Health.

The afternoon shift as well as the night shift have a registered nurse on duty with other support staff. During the day and at meal times extra help is on duty to assist our thirty residents. Some are fully bedridden.

The purpose of this report was to give you some general idea how Mount Nemo Lodge Nursing Home is doing and

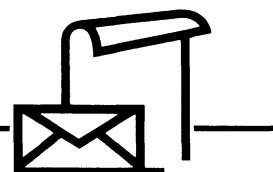
what it is. It goes without saying that much work still lies ahead of us. We have been abundantly blessed in the past, and we know that we depend totally on the blessings of the Lord for the future without whose help our work would be in vain.

In closing, we would like to reiterate what has been said before. There definitely was and is a need for this home for our people, probably even more so in the future. We would like to thank again all those who have made this possible. Please continue to support us. For more information we refer to the *Yearbook* of the Churches under Burlington-West.

— To be continued

TONY VANDERHOUT

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



Dear Editor,

Please excuse me for perhaps sticking my nose in where it does not belong, but I feel a certain degree of indignation as a result of reading the letter from brother H. Boersma in your January 24, 1986 copy. Also please excuse the lateness of this letter — but then things do reach us a little slowly in this part of the world.

I would remark that it was my privilege to serve the brethren in Blue Bell (then OPC) as a ruling elder before being called to serve in the Reformed Churches of New Zealand. I can testify first hand of the tyranny of the Philadelphia presbytery which constrained that congregation to flee for its life. Knowing therefore of the pain, grief, and sorrow of my brethren as they were pilloried, reviled, and slandered for the sake of our Reformed faith, I can only remark that Br. Boersma's assessment of Blue Bell's act of self preservation as an act of schism is both inaccurate and regrettable.

Let me remark further, however, that Br. Boersma seems to "deplore the decision of Classis Ontario South" because he rightly appreciates and wholeheartedly believes in the Reformed view of church government. In this of course he is to be commended. Given a church (namely Blue Bell) operating under that polity, what they did might rightly be called schism. But they were not — and they scrupulously abided by the provisions of

the OPC FOG. The OPC FOG, it must be understood, is altogether different from the church order operating amongst your brethren in Canada (and America) at crucial points. In particular it allows for a presbytery to lord it over a congregation — something that could (should) never happen in a Reformed federation. Such an arrangement is inherently hierarchial!

I should also like to point out that the Blue Bell congregation was denied elders (I myself was one of those rejected), denied control of its own pulpit, and denied the Lord's Supper. It was harassed at every turn, (which one of your classis has these powers?) I therefore see absolutely no Biblical, confessional, or procedural reason why Blue Bell had to live with that appalling state of affairs for another whole year while appealing to the General Assembly. In my view they rightly liberated themselves from this oppressive yoke when they did. After this liberation perhaps they should have then proceeded with an appeal (perhaps they did, I do not know). But Br. Boersma should realize in the OPC constitution, appeal to the General Assembly is not in fact obligatory. The aggrieved may appeal if he so wishes, but need not. In other words Blue Bell certainly had that right, if they had so chosen. (The brother should not make the mistake of mixing Presbyterian and Reformed church government!) To have failed to secede from the OPC when they did, because of the circumstances, would

have granted *de facto* legitimacy to the Philadelphia Presbytery's tyrannical behaviour, while at the same time most certainly would have been certain suicide for the congregation. Can a church exist with no office bearers, no ministry of the Word, no discipline, and no sacrament? Of course not!

I wish for the sake of the good name of my beloved brethren to testify publically to these facts. I wish also to testify with gratitude as to the help provided by Rev's Kingma, Stam, and Huizinga. These brothers very carefully evaluated the case and in no wise are men who would rashly (or otherwise) countenance schism. Nor for that matter would the classis Ontario-South. Br. Boersma should realize that he has in fact indicted all these brethren — and in my view should retract his letter.

I give unceasing praise to our common Lord for the decision to receive Blue Bell into the Canadian-American Reformed Churches. I applaud the courage, fortitude, and discernment, of the classis and my dear friends in Blue Bell. It was indeed the Lord's work. May reconsideration of the Blue Bell case help your brethren see the OPC in a clearer light and help foster unity with all believers in Christ — in the truth.

Yours sincerely in Christ,
J. SAWYER

Dear Editor,

After reading the report of the first meeting of the ICRC by Rev. J. Visscher and especially the paper prepared by Prof. Dr. J. Faber and the discussion about this paper by the participants of the Conference, undersigned felt compelled to make the following remarks.

He is very conscious of the fact, that one cannot mention everything about what can be said concerning the church in one speech.

But while attention was given to the two distinctions of visible and invisible church, the true and the false church, the recognition of baptism administered by a Roman Catholic priest, and other subjects concerning the Westminster Confession, it struck me very strongly, that no mention was made of a subject which is confessed in the Belgic Confession and

of which nothing is said in the Westminster Confession.

I mean what we confess in Article 31 of the B.C. namely, the *choosing* of the office-bearers by *lawful* election of the church, with, as it is *confessed* in the old redaction, *calling* upon the name of the Lord.

When we consider what we confess in Lord's Day 21 concerning the Holy Catholic Church of Christ, that HE it is, who gathers, defends and preserves for HIMSELF this church, would it not have been appropriate to show the brethren by what *means* the Lord does this gathering of His Church, as it is confessed in the Articles 30 and 31 of the B.C. and of which nothing is said in the Westminster Confession?

Though chapter 33 speaks about synods and councils, there is not one word said in which way those councils

and synods are formed except by appointing such assemblies.

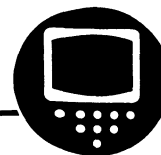
The *congregation* as such is not mentioned.

It was not only in this speech and discussion that this *important* difference between these two confessions was not mentioned, I noticed this also in the discussions on the synodical level between the Canadian Reformed Churches and OPC.

Now this subject: "The doctrine of the church" is brought up and treated on an international level, I thought it fitting to bring the above mentioned difference to the attention of the brethren — theologians and to the other members of the churches.

Sincerely yours in the
service of the Lord
B. VAN HUISSTEDE

PRESS RELEASES



Classis Ontario-South at London, ON, June 11, 1986

1. *Opening.* On behalf of the convening Church at Chatham the Rev. J. Van Rietschoten called the meeting to order. He requested the brethren to sing Hymn 40, the stanzas 1 and 2. Hereafter the Word of God was read from 2 Peter 1. The meeting was led in prayer.

Rev. Van Rietschoten made some appropriate comments in reference to the real portion of Holy Scripture.

A cordial welcome was extended to everyone present.

Congratulations were extended to the Rev. W. Huizinga who had accepted the call of the sister Church at Armadale, Australia.

2. *Examination of Credentials.* The Church at Chatham checked the credentials, and reported that the churches were duly represented.

The Church at Hamilton requested that the Rev. D.G.J. Agema be present in an advisory capacity ad Art. 44 C.O.

3. *Constitution of Classis.* Classis was constituted. The officers were appointed. The moderamen consisted of Rev. G. Wieske, chairman; Rev. R. Aasman, clerk; Rev. P. Kingma, vice-chairman.

4. *Request of the Church of Hamilton.* Classis acted on the request of the Church at Hamilton and admitted the Rev. Agema as member of this classis in an advisory capacity.

5. *Adoption of the Agenda.* A few items

were added to the agenda. The agenda was adopted.

6. *Preparatory Examination of Candidate Br. P.G. Feenstra.* The necessary documents were presented and found in good order. The result of the examination was judged favourable.

Br. Feenstra was declared eligible for a call in the federation of the Canadian Reformed Churches upon his promise to teach nothing against the Standards of these churches. He was given permission to speak an edifying word in the American and Canadian Reformed Churches for a period of one year.

7. *Examination of Student Br. G. Van Popta.* Br. Van Popta requested to receive permission to speak an edifying word in the Canadian and American Reformed Churches.

The documents required for the examination were presented and found in good order.

Classis judged the result of the examination to be favourable, and granted his request for a period of one year according to the classical regulations.

8. *Question Period ad Art. 44 C.O.* No church presented any matter.

9. *Reports.* Regarding Guidelines for Church Visits classis decided: To wait with the adoption of the "Guidelines for Church Visits" until all the church visits have been completed, and all churches have had an opportunity to test them in these church visits.

10. *Proposals ad Art. 33 C.O.* The call extended to the Rev. D.G.J. Agema by the Church at Attercliffe was approved after the required documents were found in good order.

Upon motion Rev. Kingma was appointed to represent the churches of the classical district of Ontario-South at the inauguration of Rev. Agema June 22, 1986.

11. *Correspondence.*

a. The report submitted by the treasurer Br. P.L. Schuller was adopted, and classis expressed thanks for the work done by our brother.

b. The report on Audit of Treasurer of Classis Books was not available. It will be presented at the next classis.

c. Report on Inspection of Classical Archives submitted by the Church at Watford was adopted and appreciated.

d. Report re: *Fund for Needy Students ad Art. 20 C.O.* Classis decided to support a needy student, and decided to assess every communicant member in the classical district of Ontario-South for the amount of \$16.50.

e. Letter from the Church at Grand Rapids requesting classis to deal with the proposals of the brothers and sisters at Palmetto, Florida. Classis decided to give the churches more time to study these proposals and instructed the Church at Grand Rapids to come with proposals regarding this matter.

f. Request from the Church at Chatham on behalf of Prof. L. Selles regarding his

retirement from active ministry. Classis granted this request.

g. Letter from General Synod Burlington West 1986 in reply to submission of classis to synod.

Classis instructed the convening Church at Grand Rapids to place this letter on the agenda of the next classis to give opportunity to churches to study this reply.

Classis also decided to receive and exchange with the Committee for Contact with the OPC decisions and reports concerning the "Hofford" case.

12. Appointments.

a. Convening church for the next classis is the Church at Grand Rapids, September 10, 1986, 10:00 a.m. in London, ON.

b. Suggested officers for appointment: Rev. D.G.J. Agema, chairman; Rev. G. Wieske, clerk; Rev. R. Aasman, vice-chairman.

c. Church visitors. Rev. Agema was appointed alternate church visitor.

d. Appointment of examiners. 1. Deputies ad Examina, Rev. J. Van Rietschoten and Rev. C. Bosch; 2. Examiners for sermon proposals, Rev. J. Van Rietschoten and Rev. C. Bosch; 3. Exegesis Old Testament, Rev. R. Aasman; 4. Exegesis New Testament, Rev. J. Moesker; 5. Church Doctrine, Rev. P. Kingma; 6. Ethics, Rev. J. Van Rietschoten; 7. Knowledge of Holy

Scripture, Rev. M.H. Van Luik; 8. Church History, Rev. G. Wieske; 9. Church Polity, Rev. M.H. Van Luik; 10. Diaconology, Rev. D.G.J. Agema.

Students wishing to be examined are advised to contact Rev. C. Bosch.

e. Reappointment. Br. P.L. Schuller was reappointed as classical treasurer.

13. *Personal Question Period*. Is held. The brethren of the Church at Watford inform classis of *church services to be held from June 29 - August 31 in Watford, 9:30 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. at the United Church Building, corner McGregor and Ontario Street.*

14. *Censure ad Art. 44 C.O.* It was judged not to be necessary.

15. *Adoption of the Acts and of the Press Release*. The Acts and the Press Release were read. The Acts were adopted and the Press Release was approved.

16. *Closing*. The ladies were given thanks for their service.

The chairman spoke a word of farewell to the Rev. W. Huizinga, expressed appreciation for his active service and diligent administrative work.

Rev. Huizinga responded by saying that he since 1971 had been a member of the several classes in Ontario-South during his ministry. It had been a pleasure to him. He also recalled names of older ministers with whom he had served the

churches of the classical district Ontario-South in the first period of his ministry.

Hereafter Rev. Wieske requested the brethren to sing Hymn 40, the stanzas 2 and 3, and led in thanksgiving.

After prayer Rev. Kingma addressed Rev. Huizinga and reminisced that Rev. Huizinga and himself were at the present the only two ministers left who had served the churches of the classical district Ontario-South since 1971. Sharing memories of the past with Rev. Huizinga since that time Rev. Kingma expressed his appreciation and admiration for the talents and activity God had given Rev. Huizinga and which he had industriously displayed in service of the churches. Finally, he expected of Rev. Huizinga the same in the midst of the sister churches of Australia, and to serve the unity of the faith between these churches and the Canadian Reformed Churches.

This classis was closed.

For the classis,
P. KINGMA
vice-chairman e.t.

"Anchor" Canadian Reformed Association for the Handicapped, June 20, 1986

The Chairman, Br. J. Witten opened the meeting with prayer and Scripture reading and welcomed everyone present.

With a few minor changes the minutes were adopted. In discussing the minutes the Board dealt with the possibility of getting some government support, but concluded that government requirement would be unacceptable.

The Director, Daryl Kooiman read his report on the progress of the Home. From a suggestion from the Director, the Board decided to meet every third Friday in the month. The Director again stressed the need to move to the Grimsby area, even if we have to rent temporarily. This recommendation will be discussed at the next Board meeting.

The Summer Camp Committee reported that all the preparations have been made, except a couple of male helpers are still needed. Any visitors to the camp are requested to come after 7:30 p.m.

The Advisory Committee reported that a work schedule has been established for when Rennie Beijes assumes her duties. Some relief help is still needed in case of staff illness or for staff holidays. The committee is also continuing to formulate a detailed working manual for the Home, which it hopes will be finished in the fall.

The meeting was closed with the singing of a Psalm and prayer.

K.J. SPITHOFF
Correspondence secretary

Consulaat-Generaal Der Nederlanden CONSULATE GENERAL OF THE NETHERLANDS

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

OPSPORING ADRESSEN:

VAN LOHUIZEN, Hendrik, geboren op 23 juni 1937 te Haarlem, laatstbekende adres in Nederland: Kanaalstraat 53 te Amsterdam, naar Canada vertrokken op 29 juni 1978.

PEELS, J.M., laatstbekende adres in Nederland: Bosschebaan 9, Velp (NB) naar Canada vertrokken omstreeks maart 1984.

DE RUYTER, Rudolf P., geboren op 8 augustus 1956 te Leidschendam, naar Canada vertrokken in 1980, laatstbekende adres: P.O. Box 405, Wolfville, N.S.

SYARANAMUEL, Rudolf Johannes Alexander (roepnaam John), geboren op 9

januari 1929, in Indonesie. Vandaar naar Nederland gekomen in 1951 en gewoond hebbende te Haarlem, Eikenstraat 14. Naar Canada vertrokken in 1957 met bestemming Hamilton, ON.

DERKS, Franciscus Antonius, geboren op 28 augustus 1917 te Huissen (Gld.), gewoond hebbende te Mississauga, ON, 1177 Bloor St. E., apt. 1008 en laatstbekende adres: 96 Southwood Dr., Toronto, ON en zijn zoon.

DERKS, Roland, geboren in 1947 en waarschijnlijk wonende in Vancouver, BC.

ERKAMPS, Johannes Bernardus Jan, gehuwd met Helena E.M.T. VAN DER SOMMEN, geboren op 3 juni 1926 te Hilversum, laatstbekende adres in Nederland: Bongerdstraat 9, Tegelen, naar Canada vertrokken op 1 mei, 1975 met mogelijke bestemming Victoria, BC.

De Consul-Generaal
voor deze:-
Mevr. G. SCHNITZLER
Fgd. KANSELIER



Dear Busy Beavers,

Time for our big Summer Quiz Contest!
Get out your story Bible and your pens!
Try your very best!
You may ask someone to help you if you find a trouble spot.

Join in everybody!
I'm looking forward to hearing from you all, Busy Beavers.

SUMMER QUIZ CONTEST

Quiz #1

MATCH THE HUSBANDS AND WIVES

- | | |
|---------------|-----------|
| 1. Ahab | Jochebed |
| 2. Boaz | Esther |
| 3. Isaac | Asenath |
| 4. Joseph | Rachel |
| 5. Ananias | Zipporah |
| 6. Jacob | Naomi |
| 7. Elimelech | Hannah |
| 8. Zacharias | Jezebel |
| 9. Amram | Rebekah |
| 10. Ahasuerus | Ruth |
| 11. Elkanah | Sapphira |
| 12. Abraham | Elizabeth |
| 13. Moses | Sarah |

Quiz #2

WHO DID IT?

- Who beheaded John the Baptist? _____
- Who denied Jesus? _____
- Who betrayed Samson? _____
- Who betrayed our Lord? _____
- Who armed his soldiers with trumpets, lamps, and pitchers _____
- Who built the first great temple at Jerusalem?

- Who preached the sermon on the Day of Pentecost?

- Who entered the chariot and explained the Scriptures to an officer? _____
- Who climbed into a sycamore tree to see the Lord Jesus pass by? _____
- Who escaped from his enemies over the wall of a city in a basket? _____
- Who made soup for an angel? _____
- Who set up a monument in the middle of a river?

Quiz #3

WHO SAID IT?

- "Curse God, and die."
CLUE: Said to a very patient man.
- "Died Abner as a fool?"
CLUE: A king and a leader.
- "Thou art the man."
CLUE: A faithful prophet
- "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock."
CLUE: Laodicea
- "Get thee behind me, Satan."
CLUE: A disciple who always wanted to be first.
- "Say 'Shibboleth.'"
CLUE: Some people were trying to cross a river.
- "He was wounded for our transgressions."
CLUE: A prophet who foretold the Saviour
- "What must I do to be saved?"
CLUE: A prison
- "The half was not told me."
CLUE: A king and a queen
- "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian."
CLUE: His name starts with "A."

* * *

AUGUST

Let's all join in wishing all the Busy Beavers celebrating an August birthday a very happy day and many happy returns of the day! May the Lord bless and keep you all in the coming year.

Here's hoping you have a great day celebrating with your family and friends.

| | | |
|----------------------|-----------------------|----|
| Joanne Visscher | 1 Kathryn Smid | 17 |
| Wayne Penninga | 2 Emily Moes | 20 |
| Adalia Dam | 4 Tim Hofsink | 21 |
| Heidi Siebenga | 5 Karin Boot | 22 |
| Janina Barendregt | 6 Caroline Wubs | 23 |
| Christine Lodder | 6 Lois Lof | 26 |
| Kristi Van Popta | 11 Karin Van Hof | 26 |
| Edward Stam | 12 Jocelyn Kamphuis | 27 |
| Alice Van Woudenberg | 13 Wendy Vandergaag | 28 |
| Alex Sikkema | 14 Audrey Vandersluis | 30 |
| | Edie Alkema | 31 |