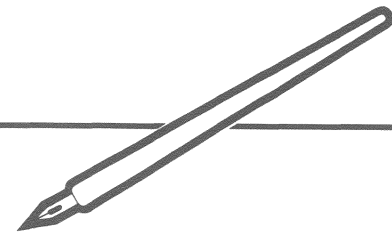




Clarion

THE CANADIAN REFORMED MAGAZINE

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Our brotherhood behind the Iron Curtain

Actions

It is our great privilege to live in freedom and not to be hindered in our public worship services on the Lord's Day, in the instruction of our children, and in studying the Bible and the confessions in our societies.

But we all know that especially behind the Iron Curtain in Eastern Europe these privileges have been taken away from many Christians and that they have a hard time now in these countries.

It is to be applauded that people are becoming more aware of the fact that they have to do something for the Christians in these countries, who have to endure enmity and even persecution from the side of a state and a government which consider Christianity as an anti-social religion.

Several actions have already been undertaken and are still being undertaken in order to help Christians in these countries in all kinds of ways.

There is for instance the organization *Christian Foundation for Aid to Conscience Convicts* (CFACC). It is the aim of this group to provide information about Christian prisoners behind the Iron Curtain as well as to pray for specific individuals and to send cards to these prisoners (e.g. in the Soviet Union). The prisoners are for instance Baptist ministers (cf. *Reformed Perspective*, Vol. 4, No. 9, August 1985).

There is for instance also the *Eastern Europe Contact Society* (EECS), (a chapter of the *Stichting Oost-Europa-Kontakt* in the Netherlands); by which the consistories of the Canadian Reformed Churches, among others, have been kept informed by means of the brochure *Word in Action* ("confrontation with the need of fellow Christians in Eastern Europe"). The aim of *Word in Action* is also to give information about the situation in Eastern Europe and about the work and activities of EECS. The aim is also to bring food, Bibles, and materials for evangelism to Eastern Europe.

"Interdenominational"

The EECS started towards the end of 1985 in Edmonton and in connection with it the names of the Rev. S. De Bruin and Mr. John Van Noordenne are to be mentioned.

The character of this organization is "interdenominational." It has its foundation in (only) six articles, which include some general statements e.g. concerning the Bible, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit.

The Rev. S. De Bruin writes literally in the brochure *Word in Action*: "The Eastern Europe Contact Society is approaching the true believers of many denominations in Canada with a plea to lend a hand in helping to provide our beleaguered brothers and sisters in the Lord who are living and suffering under communist dominion."

The *Stichting Oost-Europa-Kontakt* in the Netherlands is also "interdenominational." The members of this organization

are spread over several "denominations" (the chairman, for instance, is a minister "buiten verband").

Not only the "helpers" but also the people who are to be helped are "interdenominational." We can read in *Word in Action* e.g. the names of seven members of the Pentecostal church in Russia who are imprisoned. What is one to think about the interdenominational character and purpose of both CFACC and EECS?

Is it wrong to pray for people of other denominations?

I do not think so.

Is it wrong to send cards to persecuted and imprisoned people of other denominations?

I do not think so.

Is it wrong to send Bibles to the people behind the Iron Curtain?

I do not think so.

Yet, there is more.

The Rev. S. De Bruin's article quotes in its title the second part of Galatians 6:10: "And especially to those who are of the household of faith." He applies this *second* part of the verse to the Christians behind the Iron Curtain, and he says: "We must all realize that our Lord does not recognize the divisions within His family as legitimate in spite of all the historical differences. He sees His 'household of faith' as one family in spite of the brokenness experienced by us."

But here is the snake in the grass!

Especially because we are sensitive to the need to help oppressed people, we are inclined to say: let us forget the differences between the churches, and let us go to work in order to help them.

But I am afraid that a special theory concerning the church forms the background to the writing of the Rev. S. De Bruin.

He does not appeal to the *first* part of Galatians 6:10: "So then, as we have opportunity let us do good to all men" From that first part we could derive the obligation to do good to people who are not "fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God" (cf. Ephesians 2:19). But the words "household" and "faith" in Galatians 6:10 have especially to do with the *church* and with the *confession*. Also today there are all kinds of sects, which claim for themselves the name of church (cf. Art. 29 of the Belgic Confession).

That does not mean that we may not help the people who are not members of the church, but we have "especially" a task overagainst those who have the "faith which was once for all delivered to the saints" (Jude 3). The question is: are there people behind the Iron Curtain who are of the household of faith?

History

To find "those who are of the household of faith" behind the Iron Curtain, we have to seek them especially in the area of the former Hungarian empire. Before the First World War

that area was almost three times larger than present-day Hungary. At that time it included not only present-day Hungary, but also the north of Rumania, the south of Czechoslovakia, a small part of western Russia, namely Ukraine, and a part of eastern Yugoslavia. In this former great empire there were many Calvinistic churches in the 16th century, and even in the 17th century there was an increasing number of Calvinists. Already in 1567 they established their Theological College in Debreczen in Hungary, and e.g. the late Dr. S. Greijdanus received a doctor's title *honoris causa* from that College.

There was always a relationship between the Reformed churches in the Netherlands and those in Hungary. Before World War II, ministers of these churches visited the Netherlands and were sometimes present at general synods and also the other way around: ministers of the Netherlands visited synods of the churches over there.

About three hundred years ago these churches were terribly oppressed by the Roman Catholic rulers of that time, and the same happened after World War II under the communist regime. But there are still Reformed ministers, who try to preach according to the Word of God and the confession of the church. But there is a lack of training, a lack of knowledge, and a lack of good literature

Deformation

What is the main problem of the Reformed ministers and the Reformed people in these countries behind the Iron Curtain? That is the danger of *secularization*, and that has to do with the *deformation* of the church. Fortunately there are still ministers and also members of the church who offer resistance against the deformation of the church and who want to live indeed according to the complete Word of God and according to the Reformed confession. But their number is limited and their position is difficult. As soon as they show any reforming activity, it brings them into conflict with the atheistic regime. What is now our primary task? To help these brothers and sisters, and to encourage them to profess their Reformed faith and to live according to their profession!

For that purpose, already many years ago, the organization *Stichting Steun Broederschap* was established by members of our sister churches in the Netherlands; year after year it was

advertised in the Handbook of our sister churches and heartily recommended by the late Rev. D. van Dijk and Mr. P. Jongeling, among others. They advertised also in the *Nederlands Dagblad*.

There are many Eastern Europe organizations today. Alas, I must say that most of them are not to be trusted as far as their confessional stance is concerned. Unfortunately some of them are also not to be trusted with respect to their financial affairs. I do not want to apply this last point to organizations like CFACC and EECS.

But I do want to stress that the organization *Stichting Steun Broederschap* (including also the organization *Contact Christenen Buitenland*, CCB) has its own identity. The help, delivered by this organization has in the first place a truly confessional, Reformed character and is therefore *unique*. The goal of the *Stichting Steun Broederschap* is therefore: *to promote and to improve the confessional character of the Reformed churches in the oppressed territories behind the Iron Curtain*. That is very important!

Conclusion

We have to help the brotherhood behind the Iron Curtain. Let us do so in the first place by encouraging our Reformed ministers, our Reformed brothers and sisters by means of the *Stichting Steun Broederschap*. We have to pray for them, we have to send Bibles via this organization, but also truly Reformed commentaries, especially in the German language (which most of the ministers can read).

Year after year our brotherhood behind the Iron Curtain is visited so that the people there, and especially the ministers, may be instructed and thus enabled to deliver good Reformed sermons. They ask for prayer. They ask for further Reformed instruction and training.

So let us go to work and let us see our primary task.

Let me also mention the address of the *Stichting Steun Broederschap*: giro 39.75.627, Postbus 701, 9200 AS, Drachten, the Netherlands.

Maybe we can find a way of cooperation and of a coordination of efforts, as brothers and sisters in the Lord.

If you need further information, please contact the writer of this article.

K. DEDDENS

Health and environment₂

3. Is nuclear energy a threat?

The disaster in Chernobyl triggered a new wave of protest against nuclear power plants all over the world. It is quite understandable that this protest arose. The accident had terrible consequences. It has also made clear that international agreements and safety standards are necessary to prevent such things from happening again as much as possible. With most other industrial disasters the effects and the consequences are restricted to the time and the place of the accident and the casualties are among people who live very close to the site. A case in point is the Bopal accident in

India, in which many people were killed by a poisonous gas leak from a Union Carbide plant. Also that accident resulted in discussions about safety standards, but the consequences were restricted to the immediate vicinity of the disaster. With a nuclear accident it is different. The radioactive pollution of the air can spread throughout the atmosphere and can cause fall-out and increased radiation all over the world. The effect can be felt, not only at the time of the accident, but a long time thereafter. The increased radioactivity in Europe and the pollution of grass and vegetables in different countries are clear examples of this. All these

things have made people scared and they wonder what is next. Increased safety standards in the Western world do not solve the problem as long as a cloud of radioactive dust from the East can cross every border and spread the consequences of a disaster all over the world. An aggravating factor is that most people know little about radioactivity and radiation. The unknown danger is even more frightening. Many action groups argue that all nuclear power plants should be shut down and that we should go back to conventional types of energy.

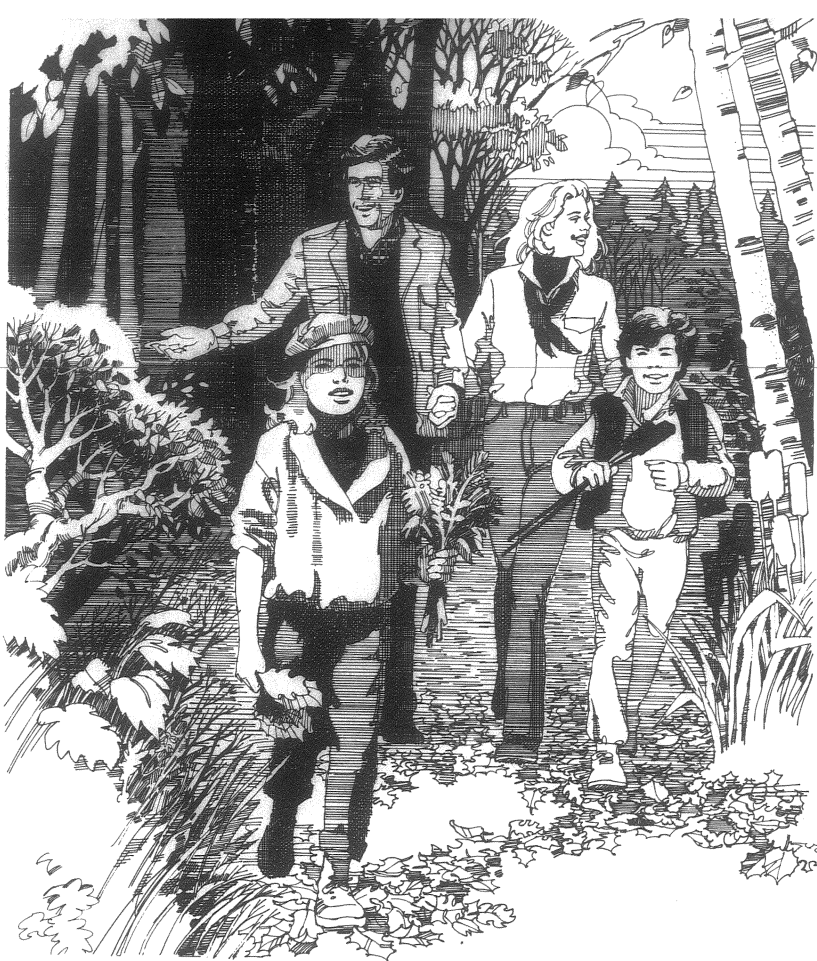
Here we see how a lack of knowledge causes unwarranted conclusions. As long

as people do not see things in the right perspective, wrong conclusions might be drawn and the proposed solutions may be worse than the problem which had to be solved. Very often matters are seen out of proportion. I will try to make clear what I mean. Modern technology has brought us many good things, but every new development brings with it certain risks and unpleasant side effects. There are always well-known disadvantages and also, even worse, unknown potential hazards involved. The steam engine was a big step forward, but most people realized that a potential hazard went with it. Very strict safety rules were necessary, because overheating and explosions could cause a disaster, and many accidents have taken place. Especially in the beginning people were killed and burned in a terrible way by steam. Still this technological development was accepted and the risks were taken.

The same goes for traffic. We all are used to driving our car. It is a well-known fact that every year thousands of people are killed in car accidents, but nonetheless we continue to use them. We try to make driving as safe as possible but no one suggests that we do away with our car and go back to horse and buggy.

Many other examples can be mentioned to show that modern technology brings with it certain risks and potential hazards. We have to work hard to reduce the risks and to improve the safety, but we cannot stop development and ignore the progress which is made. The same counts for nuclear power plants. Certain risks are involved. The question is whether these risks are acceptable and how we can improve the safety measures.

The disaster in Chernobyl triggered a wave of protest, and that is understandable. However, we have to put things in the right perspective. In the first place we have to consider that Chernobyl is not representative of the average nuclear power plant in the rest of the world. The safety standards in the USSR are not the same as in the Western world. The openness and the publicity in our part of the world causes the people who run such a plant to be on the alert. The very critical public attitude guarantees that mistakes are reported in the press immediately. That has made safety standards very strict. In the Eastern countries, however, there is less publicity and the press is not allowed to report everything. The government is in control and decides what will be published and what not. The result is that money can be saved by leaving out some expensive safety measures. The reactor in Chernobyl was not built in the same way as those in the Western countries. Moreover, from recent reports we have learned that even the existing safe-



ty measures were not applied, and that experiments were taking place which, under the strict safety rules in Western countries, are unthinkable.

Our conclusion must be that the accident in Chernobyl cannot simply be used against each and every nuclear power plant in the world. Increased safety measures in the Western world would not prevent such a disaster because the cloud of nuclear dust can cross every border and cause pollution, even if all Western countries would close down all their facilities. The only solution in this case, and the right conclusion to be drawn from the accident, is that international agreements and inspections should be introduced. It would be a premature and even unwarranted conclusion to close down all nuclear power plants and turn to conventional energy sources.

According to specialists, who know what they are talking about, a nuclear power plant causes less environmental pollution than a conventional power plant. If the same strict standards would be applied for all power plants, many conventional plants would have to be closed down and nuclear power plants would stay open. The radiation level in and around a nuclear power plant is often lower than in many other factories, and the pollution of the atmosphere is nothing compared to a coal-fired plant.

Accidents can happen and can have

disastrous consequences. However, the question is whether these consequences are seen out of proportion. The disaster in Bopal, India, shows that also in the chemical industry potential hazards exist, and recent airplane disasters shown what can happen there. The safety measures have to be appropriate, but the consequences should be considered in a balanced way.

In Canada we have at our disposal the safest form of energy in our hydroelectric power plants. Other countries are less fortunate and do not have such resources. They depend on gas-, oil-, or coal-fired power plants. Especially with the use of coal, the consequences for the environment are worse than with nuclear power plants. There is the problem of acid rain, as well as many more dangerous substances which are blown into the atmosphere by the large smoke stacks of these plants. The smoke even contains radioactive substances.

The availability of natural gas and oil is restricted. The solution is not simply to go back to conventional energy. A balanced evaluation is necessary, considering all implications. For such an evaluation knowledge of the subject matters is required. Within the scope of this article it is impossible to go into detail about all aspects. Still I like to make a few remarks about the danger and the nature of radioactive radiation.

4. The danger of radioactive radiation

Before we can discuss the danger caused by radioactive radiation we have to say something about the nature of this type of radiation. A substance is called radioactive when it spontaneously sends out this type of radiation. It is the same type of radiation that is used by x-ray examinations and during so-called cobalt treatment. It is called ionizing radiation and one of the most significant characteristics is that it penetrates and "goes through" almost everything. It depends on the so-called "hardness" of the radiation how far it penetrates a certain body or substance, and how much radiation is absorbed by the penetrated body. The radiation represents a large amount of energy. When a certain body absorbs the radiation, the energy is released in one way or another. During an x-ray examination some of the radiation is absorbed into the body, while another part reaches the film and is absorbed there leaving a shadow of the tissue structure of the body on the film. The disadvantage or danger of this type of examination is that the energy, released in the body, does certain damage to the tissue. That is why not too many x-rays should be made. The necessity of the examination has to be balanced with the possible side effects. In the case of radiation treatment the aim is that the absorbed energy will kill or destroy the malignant tissue or the tumor. The effectiveness of this treatment is based on the fact that malignant tissue tends to absorb more radiation than healthy tissue, and therefore works in a selective way. Still all radiation treatment and each x-ray examination causes some undesired side effects and does some damage to healthy tissue. In most cases there is no lasting effect because the body can restore certain damage and the advantage of the examination outweighs the disadvantage. The main point in this whole matter is, to which dose of radiation a human body can be exposed without harmful side effects. Some people say that the only safe limit is no radiation at all. Some argue that even the lowest level of radiation can cause serious harm in the long run. We do not have enough experience, they say, to know whether the coming generation will suffer serious consequences. Therefore, they say, no matter how little radiation is caused by a nuclear power plant, it is too much and we should do away with it. However, although this reasoning seems to be valid, more has to be said to come to a balanced conclusion.

Radioactive radiation is present everywhere and mankind has been exposed to it throughout the ages, although no one

was aware of it. The effects, if they are noticeable, must have been there as long as mankind exists. It is only in the last century, or the last decades, that we are aware of it and that we are able to measure accurately the amount of radiation everywhere in the world.

There are different sources of radiation. One of the most significant is the cosmic radiation, reaching the earth from outer space. This radiation is caused by the sun and by cosmic dust in outer space as well as by other planets. The earth's atmosphere works as a shield to protect us against most of this radiation. Still we are exposed to it constantly. Traveling in an airplane you are exposed to a higher level of radiation because you are less protected by the earth's atmosphere. The reason why astronauts wear such heavy suits in space is, in the first place, that, because of the absence of air they cannot breathe and need oxygen supply. Without a pressure suit they would instantly die because of the vacuum. However, the heavy suits are also necessary to protect them against the high level of cosmic radiation in outer space. According to some specialist the gas used in some spray's has a detrimental effect on the ozone layer in the atmosphere which protects us against the dangerous radiation of the sun. The use of airplanes can have the same effect. This might in the long run cause a considerable increase in the amount of cosmic radiation.

Another source of radiation is the radioactivity which is present in all kinds of materials in the earth's structure and

everywhere in the environment. Whether we like it or not, we are constantly exposed to this radiation. However, this has been the case as long as mankind exists and apparently this is a *safe* level of radiation. Still this level of natural radiation varies considerably over the earth. In one place it may at times be ten times higher than at another place, but still a *safe* level. During the Chernobyl disaster the level of radiation in some countries was anywhere from three to ten times higher. That may sound alarming but it does not say much as long as we do not know *what* level it actually was. A level four times higher than normally may very well be less than the normal natural level of radiation at another place in the world. To say that long term effects of such a level are unknown is misleading. We have to consider the fact that mankind has been exposed to such levels as long as the world exists. We have to see matters in the right proportions. It is easy to cause panic by alarming information, but it is misleading, when the figures are not put in the right perspective.

After these remarks about the nature of radioactive radiation, I will give some figures to show what all this actually means in the present circumstances, but that will have to wait till next time. With those figures you will be able to get a picture of how great the real danger is in everyday life, and you can compare certain situations.

— To be continued
W. POUWELSE



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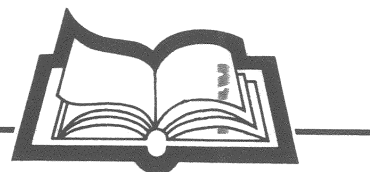
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“But many of the priests and Levites and heads of the fathers’ houses, old men who had seen the first house, wept with a loud voice when they saw the foundation of this house being laid, though many shouted aloud for joy; so that the people could not distinguish between the sound of the joyful shout from the sound of the people’s weeping”

Ezra 3:12, 13a

Indistinguishable Sounds

Great is the joy that fills the courts of Jerusalem when the people see how the ancient temple service is restored in their midst. And shouldn’t they be joyful? The LORD had granted reformation, a liberation from bondage and return to the true worship of the living God. In all respects the old order was instituted as prescribed by Moses and David. Yet weeping also fills the courts of Jerusalem. So loud is this weeping, that one cannot distinguish between the shout of joy and the wail of lamentation. Joy and sorrow are intermingled, and resound in equal measure. And one might wonder: whence the weeping on such an occasion? Was it nostalgia concerning the past?

It is difficult to assume that the priests and Levites, the teachers and leaders among God’s people, were primarily concerned with the dimensions of the temple. The new temple may have been smaller than the temple in Solomon’s day, but this was only a matter of degree. To be sure, the numbers of the people were smaller, and the glory of Solomon’s day had not returned. But why should this create such lamentation?

The great lamentation also does not reflect a partial rather than full reformation to the service of the LORD. In fact, the writer makes clear that the complete temple service of ancient times was restored. The burnt offerings were kept, (cf. Numbers 29), the appointed feasts were reinstated, (cf. Leviticus 23), and the colourful ceremonies of the festal processions as ordained by David were restored, (cf. I Chron, 15 and 16). The Lord had given a new beginning which was *complete* in every way.

Yet the lamentation begins just at this point of complete and true reformation to the LORD. For the elders and leaders of the people see that the splendour of Solomon’s age is gone, and they are also reminded of the reason why it had to be removed from the land. They were reminded of their sins, through which the LORD was forced to bring His fierce punishment upon His people. Knowing the prophecies, the priests and Levites also realized that all that had happened corresponded with what the prophets of past generations had said. This new beginning is also a reminder of the sin and the misery of human failures in the covenant. And isn’t the knowledge and realization of sin and misery the first element of true reformation?

Yet these priests and Levites knew more about the prophecies. Much as they shared in the joy of the new beginning, they also saw the limitations with which it was beset. For the LORD had completely restored the old, but He did not yet bring in the new. And isn’t that what the priests and Levites were longing and hoping for? In the rebuilding of the temple the LORD granted a fulfillment of the ancient prophecies — and yet they remained unfulfilled. A new

beginning had come — and yet, so much was still outstanding. For when the LORD restores the old, He simultaneously says that the time is not ripe for the new.

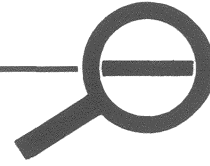
That is why we see the joy of reformation mixed with the sorrow of lamentation, and why the sound remains an indistinguishable sound. The time of delay in the fulfillment of the ancient prophecies is not yet over. And what guarantee is there that the past will not be repeated? So joy and sorrow are intermingled, and one does not outweigh the other. The LORD has made a new beginning, directing the hearts of His people to a new spiritual order; but it has not yet come.

All this must wait until the fullness of the times when God sends His Son into the world. Then even the glory of the second temple has almost faded, and God’s people live under the yoke of spiritual and political bondage. But through the obedience and love of the Chosen Son, a new order of righteousness is introduced, a new order which not only maintains all that had gone before, but fulfils it, thereby also surpassing the ceremonies and signs of old.

And with the arrival of this new age, joy *triumphs* over sorrow. The indistinguishable sound disappears, for the fulfillment has come. To be sure, there is still sorrow and affliction in the Christian life because of sin; but the theme of the new order is “Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice” (Phil. 4:4). For now the triumph over sin has come, and the guarantee has also been given that we will never fall away again. The hour of eternal punishment is past for those who believe in the Son who dies for them! A new foundation has been laid, the temple not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, a sure and steadfast Anchor of the soul, Hebrews 6:19, 9:24. And with the inauguration of this temple liturgy, the shout of joy and triumph begins among God’s people: “We give thanks to Thee, Lord God Almighty, who art and who wast, that Thou hast taken Thy great power and begun to reign” Rev. 11:17.

Salvation is nearer today than when we first believed. Yet still today, the joy of triumph is mixed with the sorrow of our weakness and failings. Even though joy has the upperhand today, the fullness of victory has not yet come. Joy is still mingled with sorrow, and happiness is dampened by pain. But we may with good confidence look forward to the day when the last enemy will be defeated, and when the new, heavenly liturgy will be instituted in the new Jerusalem, the holy city descending from heaven. Then all tears shall be wiped away from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning nor crying nor pain any more, for the former things have passed away” Rev. 21:4. Then our joy will be full!

J. DE JONG



Impressions of the "Schooldag" 1986 at Kampen, the Netherlands

In a previous issue of *Clarion* (October 3, 1986) you could read an extensive report on the Fourteenth Convocation and Seventeenth Anniversary of our Theological College. The "college evening" has become an annual event which is attended by many people every year, mostly from Ontario, but also from other places in Canada. Our sister churches in the Netherlands also have a Theological College ("de Hogeschool," as it is called), and they usually make a day of it: the "schooldag." To give our readers an idea of how it goes on such a "schooldag," here are some impressions taken from *Variant*, a supplement of *Nederlands Dagblad*.

They came to Kampen from all over the country. Those from the south had to be on the road by 6:00 a.m.; those from the north could get up a bit later. But when the meetings began at 10:00 a.m. in the various buildings, they were all present: about eight thousand visitors of the "Theologische Hogeschool," the forty-first one in succession.

Just as in the previous year, the "schooldag" - committee had come up with seven meeting places. Also this time some of these buildings were already filled shortly after 9:30 a.m. When the meetings began, everything was pretty well filled up. In the afternoon, less people attended the meetings, but also that is not new . . .

The governors, professors and leaders of the meetings had attentive audiences which were composed not only of older people but remarkably also of many young people. There are quite a few Reformed schools who give a day off for the "schooldag."

In order to purchase books for the library, a "ladies committee" every year organizes a savings action in the churches. The amount of this action is made known during the meetings at the "schooldag." This year the amount was f.180,000.

As usual, in the various meetings, the governors provided information about the theological training during the past study year. This year especially gratitude was expressed that the Theological Col-

lege in a time of cutbacks could continue to work without great (financial) worries in the training for the ministry. The quorum per member could even in the past year be lowered somewhat. But the governors did warn that this reduction should not be seen as permanent.

During the meetings mention was made of the promotion of Dr. C. van Dam of Canada and also of the illness of the Rev. M.K. Drost, lecturer of Missiology. It was noted that 22 new students were registered.

The special flavour of the "Hogeschooldag" is that so many are able to attend this annual gathering. The Dutch sister churches are much larger than ours while their country is so much smaller. For the rest, many of the same matters come to the fore: the spiritual and material well-being of the College has everyone's attention and prayer. Notice how in both countries the "women's savings action" is quite successful!

May the Lord continue to bless the work of the Theological Colleges, wherever these work in faithfulness to His Word. And if you ever visit the Netherlands in the month of September, be sure to put the "Schooldag" on your itinerary; it's a unique experience!

A life-partner and a faith-partner?

Occasionally you can find in *Clarion* an advertisement from SRH, Kampen, which presents itself in Canada as "The Foundation for a Reformational Marriage Bureau." This rather cryptic-sounding bureau intends to bring together marriage

partners who have the same faith and "focuses on members of the Reformed Churches (Vrijgemaakt) in the Netherlands and their sister churches," as the ad says.

It appears, however, that this organization is meeting with some competition. *Nederlands Dagblad* (September 24, 1986) recently printed an advertisement announcing plans for another reformed "marriage bureau." Yet another? The editors of *Nederlands Dagblad* investigated the matter and came up with the following report.

There are plans for a new organization for a marriage bureau. This new organization will operate exclusively within the Reformed Churches (Liberated).

It has become clear that the ad was placed to receive insight into the need for a bureau within the communion of the church. According to those who took this initiative, the response has been quite extensive. It would be clear that those who reacted to the ad have very little trust in other marriage bureaus and are often scared away by the high fees.

It is not yet certain if the new (Liberated) Reformed marriage bureau will actually be organized. A decision will be taken shortly.

Of course, the editors of *Nederlands Dagblad* also asked the SRH (known among us!) what they thought of this new initiative. Understandably, the SRH would really regret it if another bureau was organized. The Director of SRH, Mr. L.H. de Roon, gave the following reaction.

We feel hurt by this initiative. When we started our bureau a year ago, we concentrated clearly, among others, on the Reformed Churches (Liberated) and made it very clear without possible misunderstanding that we have great reservations against a mixed marriage. I would not know what is wrong with our bureau that others now start to work aside from us. We do hear sometimes that if you go to a bureau with listings of different ecclesiastical origins, you do run the risk of a mixed marriage. But then I do ask myself: are we dealing with children that we force our candidates to

OUR COVER

Canoe — Pyramid Lake
Jasper National Park
Alberta, Canada

seek (a partner) only in their own church? That would mean faultfinding! There is a church magazine which refuses to accept our ad because we offer the opportunity to seek a partner outside of our own Reformed circle. But do you then not run the risk of tutelage?

People often regard our fees with some suspicion, but our fees are nothing compared to what other, common bureaus dare to ask. The others demand f. 1200 to f. 1500, but we ask only f. 575 and for this money you are registered for about two years! And I must add that we do not treat people by letter but personally. We do not completely depend on what a person says about himself but also

form our own judgment. That is why I have five consultants in the land. This does lead to some extra costs, but ultimately benefits the customer and prevents much disappointment.

It is good to know about the background and purpose of such a marriage bureau. Many of us would not dream of ever using the services of a bureau, but for some it can be a helpful means. I do wonder whether all the above personal service can be extended to members of our Canadian Reformed Churches and whether this Dutch bureau also has Canadians registered.

From the above I also conclude that

the ad in *Clarion* does indeed not give a complete picture for it does give access to an interdenominational listing. When I first read the ad I thought that it was precisely the intention to prevent this possibility. One cannot be careful enough on the rocky road of romance. If we are seriously looking for "a faith partner," it should indeed be a search within the communion of the church that is faithful to God's Word. This is as important for older people (widows and widowers not excluded) as it is for young people. For if such is a *norm*, it goes for everyone.

CL. STAM

Premillennial or Reformed?₂

Developments in the Orthodox Presbyterian Church after its foundation in 1936

When Westminster Seminary was started there were, as Rian points out, three groups of men appointed to the Board of Trustees. There were those who were committed Presbyterians willing to maintain true doctrine despite the cost: if the course of the church could not be changed then a new church would have to be founded. A second group on the Board and on the faculty were determined to supply loyal ministers of the Word for the church and would try to reform the church, but they would not be willing to pay the cost of leaving the church if that were the only way to continue a true witness to the Reformed faith. A third group on the Board were opposed to modernism. They were not definitely Presbyterian but rather were non-denominational in outlook.

The creation of the Independent Board for Foreign Missions, led by Dr. Machen and others on the faculty of Westminster, with the subsequent Deliverance by the church led to dissension in the seminary. On October 22, 1935, the faculty presented a resolution to the Board of Trustees asking it to declare its position as to whether the seminary was to continue in the vanguard of the gospel and the fight against modernism. The Board upheld the faculty and urged those who opposed the faculty to resign. On January 7, 1936, thirteen members of the Board and Dr. O.T. Allis of the faculty presented their resignations. Thus, the second group left the seminary.

There was still the question of how Presbyterian and Reformed the Indepen-

dent Board, the seminary and the new church would be. Dr. Machen and most of the faculty at Westminster had been concerned for some time that many who were involved in the work of all three institutions were not strictly Reformed in doctrine or Presbyterian in practice. Dr. Machen made it very clear that he viewed it as essential that the new church be a truly Reformed church. Professor John Murray wrote a series of articles in *The Guardian* entitled "The Reformed Faith and Modern Substitutes." Modernism was attacked, but Arminianism and modern dispensationalism were also said to be contrary to the Reformed faith. Professor R.B. Kuiper wrote in *The Banner*, after the First General Assembly of the new church, about how the General Assembly had examined several men for licensure and ordination. He said:

It would have warmed the cockles of the heart of any Christian Reformed minister to hear how closely they were questioned about the two errors which are so extremely prevalent, Arminianism and the Dispensationalism of the Scofield Bible. The Assembly wanted to make sure that those prospective ministers were not tainted with such anti-reformed heresies . . . The Presbyterian Church of America is not just another fundamentalist church. Its basis is strictly Reformed.¹³

This brought protests from some on the Board of Trustees and other supporters of the seminary. The Rev. Carl McIntire, writing in his paper *The Beacon* in an editorial entitled "Premillennialism," said that R.B. Kuiper in his reference to dispensationalism had attacked premillennialists as heretics.

The Second General Assembly (held in November 1936 with Dr. J. Oliver Buswell as moderator) adopted the Westminster Confession of Faith without the changes made in 1903 which had toned down the Biblical and Calvinistic witness of the Confession. Carl McIntire and others were for keeping these changes. The Presbyteries of California and New Jersey overtured the General Assembly to declare that there was eschatological liberty in the new church. The assembly declined to make such a statement because it was felt not necessary.

Dr. Buswell published a book, *Unfulfilled Prophecies*, in the early part of 1937. Professor Murray reviewed it in an article entitled "Dr. Buswell's Premillennialism" and was quite critical of the book.

Dr. Buswell around this time published a volume on *The Christian Life* in which he dealt with the matter of Christian liberty and worldliness. His thesis was that total abstinence from alcoholic beverages is a requirement for the Christian. Professor Ned B. Stonehouse challenged Buswell's views in *The Guardian* in an editorial entitled "Godliness and Christian Liberty." Carl McIntire had already criticized Westminster Seminary for not having regulations about the use of alcohol by its students.

In April 1937, Professor Allan A. MacRae resigned from the faculty of Westminster Seminary in a spectacular way. In his letter sent to the newspapers he charged that control of the faculty of the seminary was in the hands of "a small alien group without American Presbyterian background."¹⁴ MacRae went on to say that the seminary was militantly hostile to premillennialism, and they were

also intent on a campaign to defend one's right to use alcoholic beverages.

Along with MacRae, three ministers and two ruling elders resigned from the Board of Trustees. At the same time that these events were going on, there had been a struggle on the Independent Board for Foreign Missions. In the fall of 1936 an issue arose over the matter of church government. The Independent Board was formed to promote Presbyterian church government. In the November 1936 meeting there was a clash over this issue. Since the Board was founded Dr. Machen had been its president. Now some who did not like his policy of promoting Presbyterianism revolted against his leadership and nominated an ecclesiastically independent member for president. Dr. Machen was defeated.

It must be noted that it was just after this defeat that Dr. Machen, the great leader in Westminster Seminary, the Independent Board and in the newly formed church, died. He died on January 1, 1937, in Bismarck, North Dakota. At the next meeting of the Independent Board in May of 1937, a group who were particularly concerned about the vice president of the Board, the Rev. Merrill T. MacPherson, pastor of the Independent Church of the Open Door of Philadelphia, made an issue of independency. They asked the Board to uphold Presbyterian principles. When the Board refused, the Westminster group resigned. They included Professors Paul Woolley and Ned B. Stonehouse.

Not Premillennial but Reformed

All these events led to a showdown at the Third General Assembly held in June 1937. In which direction would the new church go? Buswell had told the Philadelphia papers before the assembly that the church was a "wet" church. The historic American Presbyterian position, he said, was total abstinence from anything that would intoxicate. There were overtures from three presbyteries recommending total abstinence while a fourth overture warned against making man-made rules. The three overtures were defeated and the church declared that the Standards spoke adequately on the matter of Christian liberty and the use of intoxicating beverages.

The Third General Assembly felt the church could no longer support the Independent Board, and so the assembly erected its own Foreign Missions Board.

On June 4, 1937, fourteen ministers and three ruling elders who were at the assembly met to organize a separate church, the Bible Presbyterian Synod. In their Articles of Association they said that the Presbyterian Church of America (OPC) had departed "from the historic

position of American Presbyterianism."¹⁵ They saw themselves as "stalwart fundamental Christians, having withdrawn from the Old Church to form a new Testimony — Calvinistic, fundamental, premillennial, and evangelistic."¹⁶

Carl McIntire and J. Oliver Buswell were two of the main leaders of this new group. At the First Synod Meeting in 1938 this new church accepted the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. without the changes made in 1903 to the Confession of Faith, but with

the day. This meant that the church as it had gone through a year of great struggle had come out of the fire as a special church in the American scene, even in the American Presbyterian scene. MacRae was correct when he charged that an "alien element" had dominated at the seminary and now in the church. He was obviously thinking of the fact that Professors Cornelius Van Til, R.B. Kuiper and Ned B. Stonehouse were all from the Christian Reformed Church and that Professor John Murray was from the Scottish

"It would have warmed the cockles of the heart of any Christian Reformed minister to hear how closely they were questioned about the two errors which are so extremely prevalent, Arminianism and the Dispensationalism of the Scofield Bible."

changes made to the Confession of Faith and Larger Catechism to make them conform to premillennialism. This church also supported the Independent Board. They adopted the resolution, voted down by the church they had left, which called for total abstinence. In the fall of 1937, Faith Theological Seminary was started under an independent Board of Trustees made up of the men who had resigned at Westminster and Carl McIntire. Dr. MacRae was Chairman of the faculty.

As a result of the division of 1937 the Presbyterian Church of America (OPC) was greatly weakened in numbers. There had been few enough to start the church. Now a whole presbytery had left. In another presbytery the majority voted to leave by a vote of 10-8, and then left the meeting. The minutes read, "The room being vacated by the ten malcontents with the PCA, the meeting of the Presbytery of California of the Presbyterian Church of America continued."¹⁷

The church had to regroup. Those were very hard days. The Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., had filed suit and had taken back the property of every church but two of the churches which had left the old denomination; thus, the new churches were without facilities in which to meet. Their home missionaries were living on \$25.00 a month, if that was available. But there was a spirit of sacrifice for the cause and a willingness to endure. Through it all there was great leadership coming particularly from Westminster Seminary.

In the Third Assembly in 1937 the Westminster Seminary position had won

Presbyterian tradition. All four had studied at Princeton Seminary. The three men from the Christian Reformed Church all had an extensive background in Dutch theology and in the Reformed tradition. Van Til and Kuiper were born in Holland. Dr. Stonehouse had studied in the Free University in Amsterdam. These men were to apply ideas of Abraham Kuiper, Bavinck and others in their teaching. There was an emphasis on Biblical Theology following the work of Geerhardus Vos. There was an emphasis on the antithesis in the apologetics of Van Til.

The new church, led by the faculty at Westminster, would not just challenge modernism. It would study the Boy Scouts. It would declare that such an American institution as Masonry and all secret orders were incompatible with a true Christian commitment. This new church would encourage the establishment of Christian Schools, not as places to escape from worldly influences, but because education was basically religious and all subjects must be taught from a Christian — yes, even a Reformed — perspective. This church would challenge the American way of life: it would ask critical questions about American culture.

— *To be continued*
DONALD J. DUFF

¹³Hutchinson, 202.

¹⁴Rian, 102, 302-305; Hutchinson, 228.

¹⁵Hutchinson, 247.

¹⁶*Ibid.*, 248.

¹⁷*Minutes of the Presbytery of Southern California*, 1, 48.



THE PAS, MB

An association of 12 churches has started a petition to try to prevent a local high school from eliminating religious exercises from its curriculum.

"Freedom of religion does not mean freedom from religion, but rather freedom for religion," said Rev. Dan Manning of The Pas Ministerial Association. (TVS)

CLEVELAND

Leaders of the World Council of Churches have called for closer relations between Christians and Muslims, pointing to the rapid growth of Islam in many traditionally Christian countries.

"There are now more Muslims in Great Britain than Methodists and more Muslims in France than Protestants," Wesley Ariarajah, Shri Lankan clergyman, told a news conference.

"Both have exclusive claims as world faiths," he said, "but Islam, as a faith, is now in a very important period of its history in coming to terms with modern society." (TVS)

AMERSFOORT

The Consistories of the Reformed Church at Amersfoort-West and of the Netherlands Reformed Church (NGK) at Amersfoort decided to enter into a discussion to see whether both churches could recognize each other there as Church of Christ.

Before this decision was made, some members from both congregations had discussions among themselves which concerned, among other things, binding to the Reformed confession and the basic rules of church polity. They came to the conclusion that they agreed with each other to a great extent and put this into writing, offering their conclusions to both consistories for further action. The decision to enter into a discussion as consistories was the result. (ND)

BUSSUM

"Many pronouncements regarding the political questions of defense and peace do much harm to the church and little good to the world. They do harm because they give a political distortion of the gospel and omit the essential elements of the gospel. They do no good because they simplify the most difficult questions of our time to such an extent

that they make a solution even more difficult."

Thus spoke Dr. J. Vlaardingebroek of Rotterdam at a conference in the Netherlands. Most of the participants, it is reported, agreed that the church should refrain from making political pronouncements. "The church can be a blessing by preaching the values of faith, love and justice much more than by making political pronouncements," he warned. (ND)

GENERAL DEPUTIES FOR MISSION?

"More than once the question came up with me why we have not yet come to the appointment of general deputies for mission by a general synod. There are deputies for diaconal matters, for correspondence with foreign churches and for various other matters which concern all the churches in general. However, we could never come to appointing such people for the matters of mission which no less concern all churches — and this in various respects. I have the impression that a fear for 'mission by deputies' — which I can understand but which I consider unfounded — plays a part. It all depends on what sort of instruction these deputies will receive from a general synod. An example of such a good instruction can be found in a proposal which the

Church at Emmen formulated and that has been tabled at Classis Hoogeveen. Rev. P. van Gulp writes about it in the *Reformed Church News* of Groningen, Friesland and Drenthe, in the issue of June 28, 1986. He correctly remarks: "It is clear that the issue here is a Scripturally-responsible course of action regarding the mission. This is a matter of all churches indeed. They all have, in one way or another, their task in the matter of mission, either as a church that sends missionaries or as a church that supports it in this endeavour."

Thus the Rev. M.K. Drost wrote in the September issue of *Tot aan de einden der aarde*, the mission publication in our Netherlands sister churches.

Although we do not wish to compete in this column with the Press Review column, we cannot but pass on the warning voice of Dr. Lester DeKoster who, in the September issue of *The Outlook* continues writing about "Bureaucracy in the CRC."

Taught by the pre-Liberation experiences in the Netherlands, our Netherlands sister churches did away with "general deputies" but thirty-five years after the General Synod of Kampen 1951, again voices are heard to have "general deputies." O yes, they have to have a good instruction and mandate, well-defined and Scripturally-founded. But that's how it all starts. Pure and good intentions at the start, but a development will be unleashed which cannot be stopped.

Part of Dr. DeKoster's description of how things went may follow here.

Or again, it was said, "Look here now! Local congregations can't bear the burden of mission work, haven't the time or expertise to supervise it. We've got to have a denominational missions board, maybe two of them, don't we?" (Reverend Van Dellen, you may recall, was thinking of that.)

And local consistories, some more readily than others, chorused in effect, "Yea, we don't really want to be responsible for organizing and supervising mission projects anyway. Who's got the time or the money? Let's have a board!" (The bureaucrats will find the time; and we will still put up the money).

But at first some congregations probably applauded. Now we began to count in the world. Some "leaders" had vision, they did. Let the Van Del-

CHURCH NEWS



CALLED and DECLINED to the Church at Calgary, AB:

REV. E. KAMPEN
of Houston, BC

REMEMBER!

Don't forget to hand in your year-end greeting to your local correspondent before November 18, 1986

lens (and there were others) croak their ill omens! Bigger is better! Who needs to be hobbled by Reformed polity, whatever that is? And lo, mission boards there are! As bureaucratic as described. . . .

Probably so it went. Always the apparently right solution to a problem, though always bearing the same stamp: transfer of responsibility out of the hand of the local consistory — and authority going along.

“What does the laity know about liturgy, anyway?” And so we got a liturgical committee. “What do consistories know about hymnody?” And be-

hold, a succession of *Psalter-Hymnal* revision committees. “How could local churches compete on the air waves with the electronic church?” Another committee. “What about extending material relief into areas of disaster?” Another committee. Interchurch relations? Another committee. Race relations? Another committee. Hosts of matters to be studied and then “guidelines” into the churches? More committees.

Matters may be presented in a somewhat too-much-simplified form in the above quotation. Yet the warning should be taken to heart.

Matters with which each Church has to deal are not yet by that very fact matters of the churches in common! And even if churches cooperate in a certain matter, this matter does not thereby become a matter of the churches-in-common. We should not create a pseudo-federation or substitute federation beside the “official” one.

— May our sister churches — and we with them — see to it that the “fruit of the Liberation” also in this respect be not eroded gradually and thus become lost via small steps taken with the best of intentions but leading into a direction which leads to hierarchy. VO

Do you remember?

It is again the time of the year when everywhere poppies are sold and the “last post” sounds for those who fell in battle during the great wars in this century. Remembrance Day is directed mostly to the two great world wars, but also includes such “minor” skirmishes as Korea and (in the U.S.A. today) Vietnam.

Last year my wife and I had the opportunity to visit the Vietnam War Memorial in Washington, D.C., a black marble wall which contains the names of all who fell in that dreadful jungle of South East Asia. There were also many other visitors that day, most of whom were searching out the names of loved ones or comrades. Emotions were freely displayed when people found the name for which they were looking.

At that occasion it struck me anew that my generation in Canada has never seen war. Those who were born after 1945 and who have lived in Canada since their early youth, have seen only times of enduring peace and growing prosperity. We were never called to enlist or forced to dodge the draft, as so many young Americans, but could devote all our time to building up our life, as the Lord granted opportunity. We have never undergone the trauma of battle or been subjected to the devastation of warfare.

To be sure, this is a great gift of the Lord. It is the Lord alone who can give peace and ensure it among the nations. The fact that the world has not seen a major global conflict since 1945 (already more than forty years ago!) is to be regarded as a result of God’s sovereign providence. So we could give all our time and energy in this country to the building up of our lives and the work in God’s Kingdom.

Tend to forget

Generations which have not experienced war tend to forget the sacrifices made by others in the struggle to preserve freedom and restore peace. Sometimes it is even openly expressed that we should abolish institutions as “Remembrance Day.” It is not good, we are told to dwell on the past, but we must look to the future! Besides, institutions like “Remembrance Day” tend to keep old hatreds alive and remind us of our grief, whereas we should forgive *and forget*.

Many others will not really think about these matters so deeply, but will just continue on in their busy life. If it were not for the veterans selling poppies and the brief reports of ceremonies on the evening news, perhaps many of us, too, would have completely forgotten that it was “Remembrance Day.” It involved a war that was so long ago and people whom we never knew We just simply forgot to remember.

The thankful generation

If any generation, however, has reason gratefully to remember those who gave their lives in battle for our freedom, it is my generation. Most of the members of our Canadian Reformed Churches are of Dutch descent, and even if we were born in Canada, our parents have experienced the great world war, the Nazi oppression, and the jubilation which followed when Europe was liberated. Were it not for this liberation, and the sacrifices it cost, we, humanly speaking, would not be here today in this country. We should, therefore, be known as the thankful generation.

I have often wondered why so few of

our people take time to attend “Remembrance Day” ceremonies or why our churches are never officially represented at local memorials. Is ever a wreath laid on our behalf? Or am I completely mistaken here? Is this something we can only do as individuals and not as churches? I do feel that it would be a fitting testimony when at such ceremonies officially the Canadian Reformed Churches were represented. We should most definitely not exclude ourselves from such ceremonies.

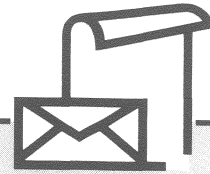
Here in Fergus a memorial gathering is held sometime in June, and is known as “Decoration Day.” Then wreaths are placed at the local cenotaph. But this is always done on a Sunday, even at the time we have a worship service. The consistory has officially asked the local Royal Canadian Legion branch and the Mayor’s office to find a more suitable time, so that we can participate as church and as citizens. We have had no response to this request, but at least it can be known locally that we do wish to participate actively in the commemoration.

There is another reason to be involved. As Reformed people we have a sense of history. We know that the past is not to be forgotten. We know of the great deeds of God also in the history of this world by which He makes room for the gathering of His church. Our remembering is more than a memorial for the dead. It is a remembrance of the work of the living God who throughout the tumult of the latter days is preparing the great Peace of the eternal sabbath.

It would be terrible if we forgot to remember.

CL. STAM

LETTER TO THE EDITOR



Esteemed Brother,

In answer to personal requests from readers to refute statements made in a series of articles dealing with the "Christian Heritage Party" please publish the following statement.

1. As interim leader of the Christian Heritage Party I have decided not to engage in a debate of brother against brother via a magazine. Attacks from the secular media are on the increase and we need all our time and energy to withstand the wiles of the evil one.

2. The party's position and its purpose have previously

been clearly enunciated in a published interview.

3. Speaking tours are being conducted in many locations and people have the opportunity to ask questions.

4. All readers are invited to request further information by writing to: The Christian Heritage Party, Box 22009 - Station B, Vancouver BC V6A 3Y2.

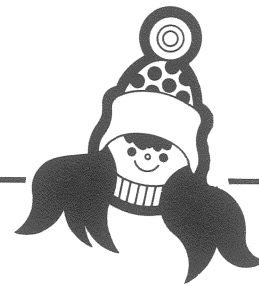
Your prayers are essential.

Your participation is needful.

Your donations are welcome.

With brotherly greetings,
E. VANWOUDEMBERG

OUR LITTLE MAGAZINE



Dear Busy Beavers,

Friends are a very important part of our life, don't you think?

Busy Beaver *Annette Jonker* says:

Why I Like My Friends

"I like my friends so I will have someone to play with. And so that I won't get bored. I like them because they are suited for me and they're more like me. I like playing with them and I like telling them secrets. I like them because they are nice to me and never fight or argue with me. Some of my friends are"

But what happens when friends *do* have an argument, or worse yet, a real fight?

How do *you* straighten things out between friends, Busy Beavers?

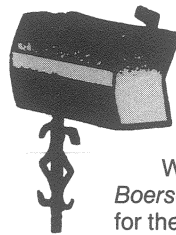
Will you share your helpful ideas?

CONTEST NEWS!!!

Thanks very much to the Busy Beavers who entered our Summer Quiz Contest. You all did a super job and had nearly all the answers right! Keep up the good work!

We congratulate Busy Beaver *Loren Van Assen* on winning the Contest and *honourable mentions* go to Busy Beavers *Laura Breukelman* and *Margo Hofsink*.

Once again, keep up the good work!



From the Mailbox

Welcome to the Busy Beaver Club, *Rebecca Boersema*. We are happy to have you join us. Thanks for the joke, Rebecca. Will you write and tell us something about Brazil? I think the other Busy Beavers will be curious about that far-away country!

Hello, *Peter John Sikkema*. I see you have been keeping very busy! I think the summer must have gone very fast for you. You are right, of course, Peter John about taste in jokes. Maybe you have some very good ones for us? And how do you like Grade Seven?

It was nice to hear from you again, *Joanne Visscher*. And I see you are keeping busy, too. Keep up the good work. Write again soon, Joanne.

JOKES FROM BUSY BEAVERS

Thanks for sharing *Sheila Wierenga*, *Gwenda Penninga*, and *Marjorie Barendregt*!

FRED: It's raining cats and dogs.

BARNEY: How can you tell?

FRED: I just stepped in a poodle!

BARRY: I fell over 50 feet today.

LARRY: Oh my! Did you get hurt?

BARRY: No, I was just trying to walk through a crowded bus!

JOAN: I haven't seen Mary since that game 6 months ago.

JEAN: What game?

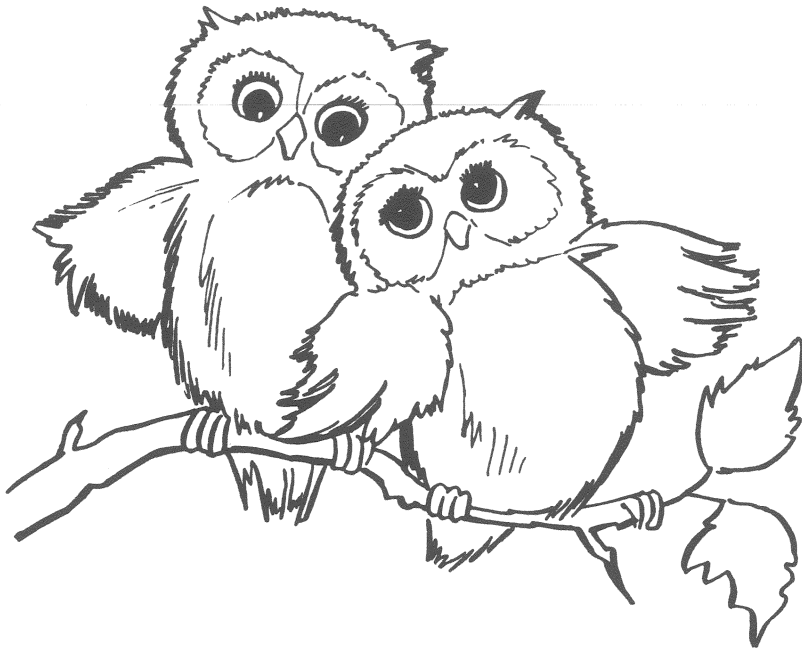
JOAN: Hide and seek!

MAN: Hey, you're not allowed to fish in that river!

BOY: I'm not fishing. I'm teaching my pet worm to swim!

FOR YOU TO COLOUR

Sent in by Busy Beaver Margaret Admiraal



MAGIC WORD SQUARES



1.			
2.			
3.			

1. baby dog
2. make use of
3. animal friend

1.			
2.			
3.			

1. travel by air
2. untruth
3. opposite of "no"

yes



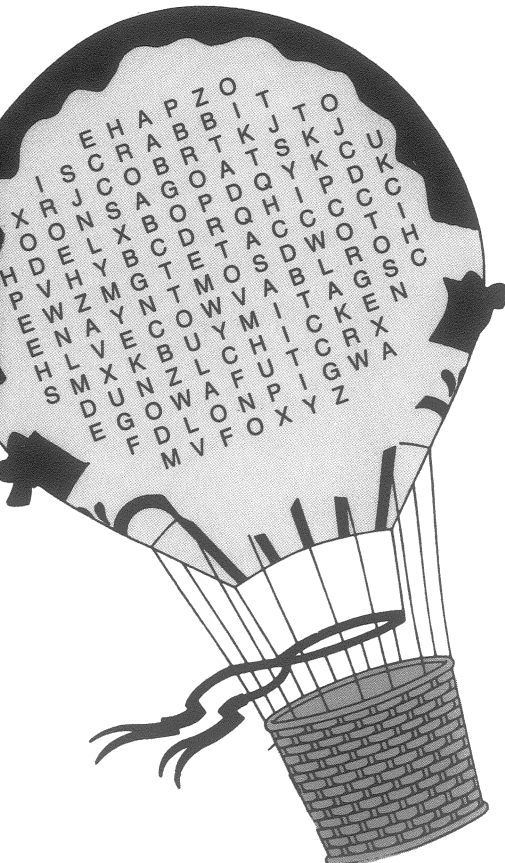
1.			
2.			
3.			

1. feline
2. we breathe this
3. "Do your best!"

Quiz Time!

WORDSEARCH

by Busy Beaver Wendy Vandergaag



cow
dog
cat
goat
sheep
lamb
colt
foal
horse
pig
chicken
donkey
rabbit
chick

ADD THE A'S!

Three or more A's are needed to make the following Bible names complete. Remember, only A's!

1. BRHM _____
2. SMRI _____
3. BLM _____
4. ZCHRIS _____
5. CNN _____
6. GLTI _____
7. NNIS _____
8. BRNBS _____
9. HZIH _____
10. BITHR _____
11. NMN _____
12. BINDB _____

(answers below)

Answers to *Add the A's*
 1. Abraham 2. Samaria 3. Balaam 4. Zacharias 5. Canaan
 6. Galatia 7. Ananias 8. Barnabas 9. Ahaziah 10. Abiathar
 11. Naaman 12. Abinadab

How did you do on the quiz?
 And how did your family like the jokes?
 I'm looking forward to lots of letters from good friends!
 Bye for now, Busy Beavers.

Love to you all from
 Aunt Betty