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MENNONITE LIFE

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CONTRIBUTORS

H. GOERZ, Mennonite educator and historian, formerly of Winnipeg, now lives in Vancouver, B.C.

JOHN B. TOEWS teaches history at the University of Calgary, Calgary, Alberta, and is the author of *Mennonite Exodus*.

GERHARD LOHRENZ, educator, historian and minister, is pastor of the Sargent Avenue Mennonite Church in Winnipeg.

JOHN D. UNRUH is historian, educator, and curator of the Freeman College Museum. He is writing a book on the Mennonites in South Dakota.

JAMES R. JACQUITH is professor of anthropology, Washington University, St. Louis, Missouri. Presently he is continuing his research among the Old Colony Mennonites of Mexico.

EBERHARD ARNOLD wrote this article 50 years ago when he became the leader of the Society of Brothers in Germany which had to leave the country in the days of Hitler.

CREDITS AND SOURCES

FRONT COVER

Home in Siberia. Courtesy of Mennonite Central Committee.

BACK COVER

A willow on the Dnieper River. Photograph by Heinz Hindorf.

PHOTO CREDITS

Pp. 90, 109, 110, 121 (bottom), Heinz Hindorf; pp. 102, 103, 105, John B. Toews; pp. 111, 112, MCC, Akron, Pa.; p. 115, *Canadian Mennonite;* pp. 116, 117, 121, 122, *Mennonite Life* Archives; p. 132, Photo Waltner, Freeman, S.D.; p. 134, John D. Unruh; pp. 138-140, Kenneth Hiebert; p. 119, *Heimatbuch,* 1965, pp. 3 and 4.

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IN THIS ISSUE

we continue with the presentation of information about the Mennonites in Russia started in the January issue. That cover was a work of art by Daniel Wohlgemuth featuring a Mennonite village on the Dnieper River. The issue was devoted to the beginnings and the rugged life of the Mennonites in the steppes of the Ukraine. The April issue had a cover featuring the post-prosperity of the Mennonites in Russia. The present cover is symbolic of the transplantation of the Mennonites from the Dnieper area into Asiatic Russia. The house typifies the new environment. ¶ H. Goerz continues in this issue with the topic of the cultural life among the Mennonites of Russia while John B. Toews presents the Mennonite effort of preserving and retaining the cultural and spiritual heritage during the early post-revolutionary years in the Ukraine. G. H., G. Lohrenz, and Cornelius Krahn present each in their own way, information about the location, status, and the cultural and religious life among the Mennonites, particularly since World War II. Re-established contacts and published information make it possible to present much more information than was available a decade ago. "Khortitsa Today" is a glimpse of present conditions at the place which gave birth to the Mennonite settlement 180 years ago. An industry began which today has assumed a magnitude unforeseen. ¶ The decrees presented in "Religious and Ethnic Groups" should prove helpful to better understand the situation of church and state relationships and the conditions of ethnic groups in times of war and peace in the Soviet Union. The review of the book written about the Mennonites by a Soviet Marxist should also contribute to a clearer understanding of the Marxist view of religion in general and the evaluation of the Mennonites in particular. The list of books dealing with the religious situation in Russia is to lead interested readers to additional sources of information. ¶ John D. Unruh presents a detailed account about what happened to a withdrawn Anabaptist-Hutterite group during a time of aroused patriotic feelings in World War I. Eberhard Arnold was the founder of the Society of Brothers, partly inspired by the Hutterites. This is a reminder of the approaching 50th anniversary of the Society (see also p. 91 in April issue). James R. Jacquith deals with the unique characteristic of the traditional Mennonite withdrawal from society. He has made a study of the persistent adherence to a language other than that spoken in the country the group lives in as a means of apartness from the "world." This characteristic can also be found among the Hutterites and Amish groups. The Old Colony Mennonites are now receiving attention by scholars as has been the case with the Hutterites and Amish for some time.

They have had days of hard labor, noticeable progress, joy and sorrow at a place in Chortitza which five generations called their home. Some members of the family had to leave and now those left behind must also go, never to come back.

The Cultural Life Among the Mennonites of Russia

By H. Goerz

GENERALLY SPEAKING, IT can be said that the Mennonites of Russia had reached a relatively high cultural level prior to World War I. The standard of life was, as a rule, more advanced than that of other German settlers, not to speak of the Russian population in the midst of which the Mennonite settlements were established.

A Mennonite child attended an elementary school up to the age of fourteen. The teachers were, on the whole, well prepared to present their subject matter in bilingual courses, the German and Russian. Around 1900 approximately half of the time in elementary schools was spent in instruction using the Russian language and the other half was in the German language. The general subjects such as language, arithmetic, science were taught in the Russian language, while the German language and literature and religion were taught in the German language.

In the secondary schools (*Zentral-* and *Mädchenschulen*), the Russian language was even more widely used. Originally the *Zentralschule* was started as an occupational school, designed to train future teachers and secretaries for public offices, etc. Later this developed into general liberal arts schools which many of the sons and daughters of the settlers attended even if they remained farmers. This practice raised the educational and cultural standard of the Mennonite community considerably.

Soon a larger number of graduates of the *Zentral-* and *Mädchenschule* entered advanced secondary schools such as the *Kommerzschule* (school of commerce) of Halbstadt, which was a Mennonite institution, the *Realschule* of Berdyansk founded by Abram A. Neufeld and attended by many Mennonites. An increasing number of young people enrolled in the Russian *Gymnasium* and other secondary schools which were prerequisites for graduate study in the Russian universities. (The study at Russian universities and professional schools was presented in the article by N. J. Klassen in the April issue 1969 entitled, "Mennonite Intelligentsia").

Mennonite Intelligentsia

It is my opinion that there was a Mennonite intelligentsia in Russia. One could consider the teachers of 700 Mennonite elementary schools of Russia as belonging to a beginning level of intelligentsia. Many village schools had two or three teachers so that it can be estimated that at the peak there were some 1000 elementary teachers in the Mennonite villages of Russia. Most of them were men who taught throughout their life and consequently had acquired knowledge, experience and wisdom. Many of them remained in the same village or settlement throughout their teaching career. They were thus the teachers of a number of generations in a community. Most of them received their teachers' training in the teachers' institutes of Chortitza and Halbstadt. It should, however, be added that some of the schools of the newer settlements in Siberia were not always able to obtain fully-prepared teachers.

In addition to the intelligentsia found among elementary teachers, mention must be made of the "lay" ministers among the Mennonites of Russia. Many of them were elected from the ranks of teachers. This practice increased as the educational and cultural level of the general population rose. Quite often such a minister continued to teach.

To the higher level of intelligentsia of the Mennonites of Russia belonged the teachers found in the *Zentral-* and *Mädchenschulen*. Usually they had graduated from a teachers' institute such as Petersburg. Among them were also those who had studied at foreign universities. The latter usually studied at German and Swiss universities. We name only P. M. Friesen, C. Unruh, B. H. Unruh, W. Neufeld, J. Kroeker, S. Ediger and J. Rempel. Among the leading ministers were men like Alexander Ediger who had no specialized theological training but graduated from the University of Petersburg and did some general graduate work at the University of Vienna. He was an outstanding religious leader of the Mennonites during the days of the Revolution, who later perished in exile with many others. Among those who studied abroad and went into the mission fields we name the following: H. Dirks, G. Nickel, Abraham Friesen, J. Fast. Most of them received their training in The Netherlands, Germany or Switzerland. Their foreign training and experiences in non-Christian environments and countries widened the intellectual horizons of their constituency considerably. They reported about their missionary work and experiences both orally and in writing and often returned to become ministers and leaders in congregations.

The Chortitza settlement had developed strong industrial centers in Chortitza and Alexandrovsk. The Molotschna settlement had such a center in Halbstadt and Waldheim. For a while the Mennonite milling industry mushroomed far beyond the home base of the settlements. These industrialists had contact with

foreign countries and their engineers had been trained at domestic and foreign schools of engineering.

Most of the Mennonite settlements had their own physicians who had received their medical training at Russian universities or abroad. Among them were P. Dyck, F. Dyck, A. Klassen, H. Warkentin, D. Hausknecht. The major Mennonite settlements had their own hospitals. The American mental hospitals had their forerunner in Russia in the Mennonite mental hospital known as "Bethania".

It is a little strange that the Mennonites of Russia, engaged primarily in farming, did not have their own scientifically-trained agricultural experts. P. Klassen, now in Vancouver, and a few others, received a training at the Petersburg Forestry Institute. After World War I the Gnadenfeld *Zentralschule* was transformed into an agricultural secondary school.

A significant contribution was made by the Mennonite writers. Among them were B. Harder, P. Harder, A. Loewen, J. H. Janzen, D. H. Epp, J. Kroeker, A. Kroeker and others. Among the Mennonite publishers were H. Braun and A. Ediger.

Russian Cultural Influences

As pointed out every child received an elementary training in the Russian language which was expanded in the *Zentral-* and *Mädchenschulen*. Hired help in the household and in the field furnished an opportunity to get acquainted with almost all levels of culture and language of the Russian peasants. Nevertheless, the influence of the Russian cultural characteristics and language remained limited even among the intellectuals. The reason for this was that the Mennonite settlements formed a semi-isolated entity of a unique cultural and religious background. Very few Russians were found within the Mennonite settlements. The communication with the Russian servants was limited to a dialect and common practical questions. Normally the servants were well treated. The wages were in line with the prevailing conditions. Numerous Russian words were accepted in the daily Low German language. Dress patterns and foods were accepted and transplanted wherever Mennonites went. (See article by W. Quiring in April issue.)

On the other hand, the hired Russian help and the Russian neighbors accepted agricultural and domestic practices from the Mennonites. Direct religious influences were limited for numerous reasons. It was illegal to proselyte among the Orthodox population. Nevertheless, around 1860 the Mennonites influenced the beginnings of the Russian Baptist and Evangelical movement.

A strong influence was exerted on the Mennonites who attended universities. Some of these Mennonite families began to use Russian as the language of communication even in the family. This was particularly the case when a Mennonite married a Russian and raised a family in a Russian environment.

As has been pointed out by N. J. Klassen (see April issue of *Mennonite Life*) some of the Mennonite intelligentsia began to participate in the cultural and literary life of Russia more fully while aiming to remain faithful to the Mennonite brotherhood. Examples are P. M. Friesen and Abram A. Neufeld. P. M. Friesen (1849-1914) became the most voluminous Mennonite historian in Russia. He studied in Odessa, Moscow and Switzerland. He was teacher of the *Zentralschule* in Halbstadt and one of the initiators of the Mennonite Educational Institute of Halbstadt (1878). He spent a considerable span of his life in the city of Sevastopol where he was a minister of a Russian Evangelical congregation. He also lived for a longer period of time in Moscow and in both cities he was in contact and fellowship with Mennonite students who attended the school. It was my privilege to attend such a student fellowship meeting in Moscow in 1913.

Abram A. Neufeld (1860-1909) studied at the Universities of Odessa and Berlin. He had the tempting opportunity to become a professor and scholar of a public institution. Instead he returned to his brotherhood and served for many years as teacher and director of the Chortitza *Zentralschule* and Teachers Institution. In 1902 he founded the *Realschule* at Berdyansk which was an approved Russian secondary school and attended by many Mennonites from the various settlements. Friesen and Neufeld were leaders of the Mennonite intelligentsia communicating and writing freely in both the German and the Russian languages.

Peter Fast succeeded Abram A. Neufeld as director of the *Realschule*. He was a graduate of the University of Moscow. For a while he was teacher of the *Zentralschule* at Halbstadt and also teacher of the Russian *Gymnasium* at Theodosia, Crimea. I was privileged to be his pupil and was deeply impressed by his excelling knowledge and ability to communicate to us Russian history, literature and culture.

In conclusion we can say that the culture of the Mennonites of Russia was basically German transplanted from West Prussia to Russia. This culture soon became bi-cultural under the influence of its new environment. A similar process had taken place when the Dutch Mennonites had settled on the Vistula River and became bi-cultural, Dutch and German. Many were again transplanted from Russia (1874-80; 1917-27) to a new environment in North America after the Russian influence had increased. Those who remained are continuing in the Russianization process which is now proceeding much more rapidly because of the dispersion in which most of the Mennonites of Russia find themselves. The trend to concentrate in certain areas has been strong during the last ten years. There are official efforts to preserve and foster minority cultures and languages, including the German, in schools, by use of the printed page, radio and television.

The Mennonites in the Early Soviet Period

By John B. Toews

THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION of 1917 certainly produced the most sudden and dramatic confrontation with government which Mennonites anywhere experienced during the twentieth century. In less than a decade a way of life dating back over a century came to a painful and protracted end. The changes sweeping over Russia after 1917 affected all of the Mennonites in Russia. The greatest concentration of these, however, was in the Ukraine. Here most of the Mennonite colonies lay directly in the path of the German armies sweeping into the Ukraine after the signing of the treaty of Brest-Litovsk in 1918. They were again the scene of armed conflict in the bitter civil war which followed the German withdrawal. The final stages of the civil conflict between the Bolshevik and White armies completed the devastation of the settlements and left the colonists at the mercy of bandits, disease and famine.

Rebuilding the Economic Life

In addition to the physical suffering which the settlers endured they were now confronted by a new order which economically, administratively and religiously clashed with their historic way of life. It was soon apparent that any solutions to questions of economic and religious importance were inseparably connected with the overall role open to the Mennonites within the new political structure. Mennonite leaders in the Ukraine were not slow to recognize that the key to a Mennonite identity as the past century had known it lay in the economic and agricultural spheres. If the Mennonites contributed significantly to the economic rebuilding of the Ukraine, the Soviet government might look favorably upon their minority status and the special concessions which had enabled them to develop in the past. Economic and religious independence had been basic to the century-long sojourn in Russia, and the Soviet willingness to recognize these fundamentals remained essential to the Mennonite future in Russia. For the great majority of the Mennonite colonists Soviet policy in these areas between 1922 and 1927 became the test of the new government's sincerity.

With the establishment of Bolshevik control in the Ukraine a reasonable degree of civil stability returned to the Mennonite settlements. Several major questions now emerged. Was it possible for the Mennonites to retain a sense of identity or would they face forced assimilation? How would nationalization and the redivision of land influence the Mennonite settlements? The most pressing immediate problem, survival, became crucial late in 1920 and early in 1921, when the first great famine of the Soviet era struck the Ukraine. In spite of such disheartening circumstances the Mennonites began to search for solutions to their difficulties. Before long a special agency was created to negotiate with the Bolshevik government. Its activities encompassed two areas considered absolutely necessary to Mennonite survival: religious and economic independence.

United Efforts

By 1921 the Ukrainian Mennonites became increasingly apprehensive about the induction of Mennonite young men, traditionally pacifistic, into the Red Army. In the hope of bringing this problem to the attention of the central authorities a special All-Mennonite Conference was called at Alexanderwohl, Molotschna, on February 19, 1921. Its convocation resulted in the formation of a new union known as the *Verband der Gemeinden und Gruppen des Süden Russlands.*[1] A shortened form, *Verband der Mennoniten Süd-Russlands* (Union of South Russian Mennonites), was commonly applied. Its aims and purposes were soon clarified when it became apparent that while the existence of a formal religious agency was permissible, it enjoyed no legal rights whatsoever. Upon learning this, the chairman of the new organization, B. B. Janz, decided to strive for a civil-economic institution recognized by existing law and featuring a broad functional base capable of meeting all the needs of the Ukrainian Mennonites. His strategy was well-founded. As he subsequently negotiated in Kharkov with B. Yermoshtchenko, representing Petrovsky, the chairman of the Central Executive Committee, and N. Skrypnik, Commissar of the Interior, it became clear that the Mennonite union could not have any sort of religious connotation. When the Kharkov regime finally approved the registration of the organization's charter (April 25, 1922) the scope of its privileges as well as its name had been radically changed.[2]

The new name, *Verband der Bürger Holländischer Herkunft* (Union of Citizens of Dutch Lineage), reflected the anti-religious and perhaps anti-German feelings permeating the Ukrainian Central Executive Committee. According to the charter of the now legalized *VBHH* its primary function concerned the restoration of the Ukrainian Mennonite colonies to their former level of economic prosperity. This task demanded the advancement of general education, the revitalization of agriculture, and the maintenance of welfare institutions and insurance agencies.[7]

The *Verband* was granted a broad range of economic concessions. Commercially it had the right to deal in any raw materials or manufactured goods essential to its program. It could participate in any financial and credit operation and even draw on foreign capital if necessary. Agriculturally it could initiate cooperatives, maintain storage facilities, utilize existing transportation systems, and exploit certain lands for experimental purposes. Industrially, the *VBHH* could begin the production of such items as it needed for the success of its program. In the social sphere it was given a free hand in the operation of benevolent and cultural institutions. The organizational structure provided for varying levels of authority. The village chapter was subordinate to that of the district, which in turn was responsible to the general assembly. The *VBHH* was also free to join analogous organizations. It maintained an office in Kharkov and in all of its operations was recognized as an official legal entity.

The *VBHH* charter was of deep significance to the Mennonites in the Ukraine. It distinguished them as the first national minority to obtain such broad privileges and provided them with a unique opportunity to survive as an economic and cultural group. Was the Ukrainian government sincere in sanctioning a charter for a group basically opposed to its political doctrines and policies? In an immediate sense the question could be positively answered. The liberality of the government was partly determined by the newly launched New Economic Policy (NEP) which sought to release a part of the socialistic economy to private initiative. The desperate situation in the south reflected an ineptitude which the Kharkov regime tried to minimize by stressing economic reconstruction. Any group was welcome to participate in such a venture.

From the very onset the *VBHH* became deeply enmeshed in the fundamental dangers threatening the future of the Mennonites in the Ukraine. In the economic sphere, the crisis centered about the land question: in the religious, it focused upon the exemption of Mennonite young men from direct service in the Red Army. *VBHH* interaction with the new regime in these areas became the story of the Mennonite dialogue with Communism.

Peace Concern and Selbstschutz

During the pre-revolutionary period the Mennonites had, with few exceptions, received major concessions designed to accommodate their historic peace conscience. In 1870 when an imperial decree brought universal military conscription to Russia, Mennonite protests resulted in a decree issued on May 14, 1875, providing for the establishment of an obligatory non-

The last General Conference session of the Mennonite congregations convening in Moscow, June 13-18, 1925, which was attended by delegates from all parts of Soviet Russia.

military state service for the Mennonites in the Ukraine and the rest of Russia.[4] By 1880 Mennonite state service in Russia was legally and structurally established.[5]

The new development had several direct effects on the Mennonite stability, for it actively involved them in the affairs of the Russian state. Perhaps unaware that the government's policy affected all the Russian minorities and accustomed to being left alone, many of the Mennonites felt themselves singled out for special discrimination. For the Mennonites in Russia state service was costly since it meant the loss of a valuable agricultural labor force from the settlements. The colonies also became responsible for the cost of the entire program. Unconsciously the settlers began to suspect the government and respond defensively and at times aggressively to any pressure from that source.

When Russia entered World War I as an opponent of Germany, it was not long before the anti-German attitude adopted by Russian officials directly affected the Mennonites. A nationalistic reaction soon clamored for the riddance of all foreigners from Russian economic and cultural life. Militarily, the increased pressure manifested itself in a compulsory mobilization of all eligible Mennonite young men for both forestry work or noncombatant medical service in the army in the early summer of 1914. Discrimination soon became more direct. In November, 1914, the use of the German language was prohibited in the press and in all public assemblies, while in 1915 the tsarist government decreed property liquidation laws requiring the descendants of German colonists in Russia to sell their lands. The old regime, however, hampered by its bureaucracy and primarily concerned with the war effort, was never able to implement the confiscatory laws and they were finally abolished by Kerensky's provisional government in 1917. In the face of such discrimination the Mennonites, true to their historic peace witness, endeavored to heal the wounds of war. All men to the age of forty-five were either inducted to the forestry or the noncombatant medical service. The sacrifices of the Mennonite young men and their demonstration of loyalty to Russia went unheeded by the tsarist regime.

The post-revolutionary period brought with it a complex set of circumstances designed to seriously compromise the historic Mennonite commitment to the principle of nonviolence. Already in 1918 a semi-military organization known as the *Selbstschutz* (self-protection) emerged in the Ukrainian Mennonite colonies.[6] In part it constituted a spontaneous, elementary reaction to the prevailing civil unrest and lack of public safety. When the German armies withdrew from the Ukraine in November, 1918, the anarchist partisan army of Nestor Ivanovich Makhno began a reign of terror and plunder in a large area north of the Sea of Azov. Before long *Selbstschutz* detachments actively engaged several of the roving Makhno bands. The military activity of the *Selbstschutz*, together with its tendency to inadvertently identify with the White Army in the Russian Civil War, branded the Ukrainian Mennonite constituency as counter-revolutionary in the eyes of the Bolshevik regime. The Mennonite appeal to arms ended when Red Army contingents regained control of the Ukraine. Unpardon-

A session of the All-Russian Mennonite Agricultural Union (AMLV) at Davlekanovo, Ufa, January 27-30, 1924 (P. F. Froese, third from right in second row).

able from the Soviet standpoint was the fact that the *Selbstschutz* had on one occasion mistakenly engaged Red Army units instead of the Makhno invaders. From the Bolshevik standpoint the Mennonites had deployed arms against the existing government.[7] Whatever the past legacy, negotiations with the Kharkov regime for an official recognition of Mennonite pacifism slowly progressed during the second half of 1922. The direct intervention of Christian G. Rakovsky, chairman of the Council of People's Commissars in the Ukrainian SSR, resulted in an interim arrangement whereby Mennonite young men applied for exemption from military service to the People's Court. In practice this generous concession was rarely recognized by local authorities. Continued military recruitment in the colonies and capricious local courts necessitated a settlement of the military question for the Mennonites in the Ukraine. Late in 1922 the chairman of the *VBHH,* B. B. Janz, began talks with the Revolutionary Military Council of the Republic (*Revvoyensoviet Respubliki*), the central military executive in the Soviet Union. A memorandum directed to the question of military exemption was presented to the Council by the Mennonite leader on November 30, 1922. Not long after he was granted an interview with the Chief of Mobilization. The scheme which the *VBHH* leader proposed placed all Mennonites of military age into one of two programs: a noncombatant medical service free from military jurisdiction, or a forestry service likewise under civilian control, but rather diversified in its actual implementation. The official proved surprisingly amiable to Janz's proposals, but insisted the actual form of service assigned the recruits be decided by government and military agencies.[8] The interview with the Chief of Mobilization was extremely significant. For the first time since the October Revolution, the Mennonite views on military service were openly discussed with one of the highest military officials in the Soviet Union. The encounter paved the way for interaction with a broad spectrum of the Soviet bureaucracy. By late 1922 and throughout 1923 an alternative service program for the Mennonites was given varying degrees of consideration by the Chief of Mobilization, the Commissariat of Justice, the Revolutionary Military Council, the Council of People's Commissars and the General Staff. Early in 1923 government approval of the project appeared certain to most of the officials involved.[9] The issue was not whether an alternative service plan could be allowed, but how it should be implemented. The General Staff favored noncombatant medical work (*Sanitätsdienst*) as the only acceptable form of alternative service, while the Commissariats of Justice and Agriculture advocated the legalization of both forms of service.

By the end of May, 1923, a new military law designed to clarify the status of conscientious objectors in the Soviet Union came under consideration. In drafting the law, the General Staff, apparently sensing Mennonite opposition towards any connection with the military, suggested dropping noncombatant medical service in favor of a nonmilitary agricultural or "other service" one.[10] The passage of the new military law, scheduled early in 1924, was repeatedly postponed. When the Commissariat of Justice appointed a special commission to prepare the section of the new military law applicable to all pacifist groups in Russia, it became clear that at least two principles for which the Mennonites had sought recognition would be ignored. Mennonite representatives in Moscow were given to understand that the People's Courts remained the chief agency for determining exemption from military service. It also appeared doubtful whether any other alternative service except the noncombatant military form would be recognized.

The Soviet response to the Mennonite plea for exemption from military service came when a new military law was passed on September 18, 1925, whose positions were officially published in *Izvestia* on September 23, 1925.[11] The new code was supplemented by additional laws passed on August 8, 1928, and August 13, 1930. Section XVIII of the 1925 law dealt with exemption from military service for religious reasons. Paragraph 216 allowed exemption to all religious groups whose creed forbade military participation before 1917. Such exemption, however, was left entirely in the hands of district courts and provided the pacifist receiving a negative verdict with no clear judicial means of appeal. Though paragraph 220 allowed for an alternative service program, this program involved front and rear line "services" during a war. The conscientious objector had no legal protection from direct involvement with the military machine. Later amendments to the military law of September 18, 1925, did not substantially alter its basic provisions. Even worse for the Mennonites, the laws outlined in Section XVIII found no consistent application. As the 1920's drew to a close, official reluctance to allow concessions under this section became more marked.

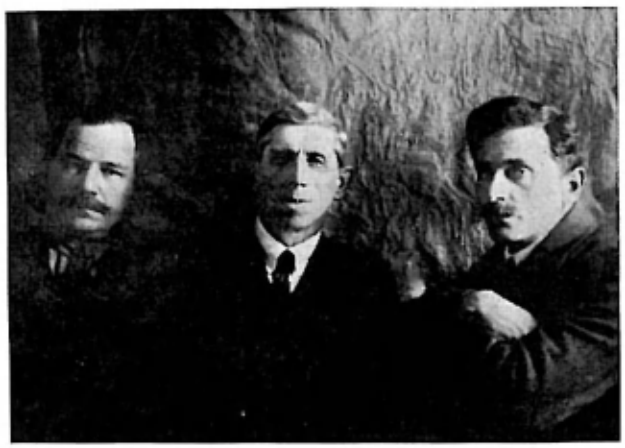
Distribution of Land

The status and activities of the *VBHH* provided an ample measure of Mennonite success in the economic sphere. As indicated earlier, the organization was initially granted broad economic privileges. In practice it soon became clear that the Soviet regime in the Ukraine regarded it as an agency of socialist reconstruction and chose to circumscribe its activities accordingly. For the *VBHH* and for the majority of the Ukrainian Mennonites, the most crucial economic issue related to land holding. The day after the Bolshevik seized power a decree on land abolished all private property. Henceforth the allotment of land was placed at the disposal of rural district land committees

and of county Soviets of Peasant's Deputies. To facilitate peasant participation in the new program a decree on June 11, 1918, established the notoriously famous *Komitety Bednoty* (Committees of Poor Peasants). Whether the peasant seizure of land was orderly or violent generally depended on the advanced or retarded state of agriculture, the distance from the center of Soviet power, as well as the character and initiative of local leadership. For the Mennonites, the division of their land was a foregone conclusion. The nature of that distribution for a time appeared to remain in the hands of the Mennonites themselves.

In July, 1921, B. B. Janz, then in Moscow, had managed to obtain an interview with the Central Executive Committee member P. G. Smidovich. The encounter resulted in the drafting of a memorandum by the CEC in Moscow which was dispatched to the Commissariat of Agriculture in Kharkov. It expressed the wish that every effort be made to preserve the historic centers of Mennonite culture in the Ukraine. The Ukrainian government proved co-operative and no further land division was attempted during 1921. Not unrelated to this forbearance was the termination of War Communism and the introduction of the New Economic Policy in March 1921. In the hope of encouraging agrarian redevelopment the Agricultural Commissariat promised the colonies every consideration even to the point of entertaining any economic projects the Mennonite *Verband* suggested.

In response to the new liberality of the Kharkov regime the *Verband* Congress meeting in Margenau (January 3 and 4, 1922) endorsed a resolution advocating the redivision of all land still in Mennonite possession among all the Mennonites in the Ukraine, refugees and landless included.[12] Why such a proposal? Most of the Margenau delegates hoped that its official sanction would end the widespread demands for Mennonite land made by the neighboring Russian population. Simultaneously this ensured the continuation of an ethnic, social and cultural solidarity within Mennonitism. Such a course of action also resolved a grave internal problem. It eliminated the economic discontent stemming from the presence of many landless Mennonites within the colonies. The adoption of the land redivision proposal by the Margenau Congress was not only conditioned by a sense of self-preservation but also by a cautious optimism engendered by two decrees passed by the Kharkov Commissariat for Foreign Trade on November 10th and December 9th respectively. These elaborated the provisions for the duty free importation of goods already incorporated into the contract signed between American Mennonite Relief and the Kharkov government. No customs were to be levied on any manufactured product entering Russia that was useful to agriculture. Under the supervision of the Agricultural Commissariat the *Verband* had the right to distribute such goods to its constituency. It, of course, depended on the Mennonites abroad for these supplies.



Peter I. Dyck, B. B. Janz and Philipp Cornies, executives of the VBHH (Verband Bürger Holländischer Herkunft).

By March, 1922, it was clear that the Mennonites would not enjoy special land-holding exemptions. Earlier Moscow and Kharkov had promised settlers land units consisting of 32.5 dessiatines. Now the Commissariat of Agriculture in Kharkov informed *VBHH* leader Janz that special legislation accommodating Mennonite interests was out of the question: for if a special concession was made to one minority, every other group might clamor for similar privileges. Landless Mennonites could only hope to obtain the maximum land parcel allowed in each province. In most of the Ukraine, in spite of assurances of at least 32 dessiatines, this amounted to only 21 dessiatines.[13] On April 11, 1922, Janz was invited to attend a meeting of the Executive Council of the Agricultural Commissariat[14] This encounter seemed to indicate that most of the colonies with moderate landholdings remained intact, though all members of the community had to be assured of an equal share. Settlers were assured use of the land for the next nine years. This period of time was in accord with the stipulation of Ukrainian land laws passed on January 22, 1920, February 5, 1920, and March 2, 1921. By these all peasants were guaranteed the right to their land for nine years, but what happened after this period elapsed was not clarified. The Commissariat of Agriculture also insisted that Mennonite colonies with excessive land had to forfeit this for the settlement of landless Russians. The *VBHH* was given the task of dividing up the land which remained in Mennonite hands.

The Mennonite constituency manifested a tactful but determined opposition to these developments. When the *VBHH* Congress met in Landskrone between May 29 and 31, 1922, it adopted several resolutions which almost suggested a censure of the government's agrarian

policy.[15] The Mennonites needed all their present lands if they were to maintain their productive norms. The reaction of the Landskrone Congress to the land question isolated a crucial area of tension as far as the relations of the Ukrainian Mennonites to the government were concerned. By mid-1922 emigration from Russia was only possible for the destitute and landless Mennonites who were classified as nonproductive segments of the population. The landed colonist, considered essential for economic reconstruction, as yet had no hope of leaving. As long as the agrarian question remained unsettled, his dissatisfaction intensified as did his mistrust of the new regime.

During the second half of 1922 the land question ran a garbled course. Though consultations were even held with Christian G. Rakovsky, the president of the Ukrainian SSR, it became clear that Mennonite families could only expect land allotments varying from 16 to 32 dessiatines.[16] Since this reallocation was in the hands of district authorities, Mennonite lands were seized with little regard for established norms or legal procedures. It seemed certain that one-half to three-quarters of the Mennonite holdings would be transferred to Russian settlers.[17] For most of the Mennonites the size of the land allotment as well as the breakup of traditional agricultural patterns meant an end to efficient production. It was this concern which led Mennonite leaders to submit a special petition directly to the Central Executive Committee in Moscow at the beginning of November, 1922, requesting that the Mennonite colonies be allowed 65 or 50 dessiatines per farm.[18] The document was passed on to the Federal Committee of Lands, which insisted upon the division of Mennonite land according to the existing laws, but allowed landless Mennonite refugees to share in the redistribution.[19] The Commissariat of Agriculture was then informed of this decision.[20]

The Soviet government remained firm in its resolve to limit the size of Mennonite farms to a maximum of 32 dessiatines.[21] For a time it appeared that some colonies might be allowed to retain their lands as a unit, but in the end the recommendation of the Federal Committee for Lands was observed.[22] By the spring of 1923 the division of land was well under way. Landless Mennonites, like all others, were eligible to apply for the right to farm any lands made available by the redistribution.[23] In practice most of the excess land went to other nationalities. Frequently not only the land between Mennonite villages, but land directly connected with residence within a Mennonite village was taken over by Russian settlers.[24] When a *VBHH* Congress met in Marienort (Kalinovo) during the first week of March, 1924, a special resolution was passed and sent to government authorities, which expressed grave concern over the caprice exercised by local authorities in implementing the land division.[25] Though representative of contemporary Mennonite concerns, it had little influence on the reallocation of the settlers' lands. In the future the cultural-economic pattern of Mennonite life would have to rest upon a reduced land quantum.

Help from Abroad

The land question was directly related to several other economic questions which confronted the Mennonites in the 1920's. After the civil war, agricultural reconstruction was fundamental to a Mennonite survival in the Ukraine. As early as 1921 the Ukrainian Commissar of Agriculture had requested the *Verband* to secure 50,000-100,000 pud of seed grain for spring planting from abroad. The proposal raised a basic question: the financing of reconstruction in South Russia. Most European industrialists had little confidence in the Bolshevik regime and were hesitant to acquire any fixed assets in Russia. Current conditions dictated that only immediate rather than long-term goals were attainable. In the Ukraine this meant the plotting of survival tactics, not the initiation of a large scale business operation. The colonies needed agricultural machinery and seed grain. The *Commissie* (or *Fonds*) *for Buitenlandsche Nooden* (*CBN*) sponsored by the Dutch Mennonites, as well as the American Mennonite Relief had promised to supply these items, but only with a view of meeting the current crisis. For many colonists, economic reconstruction meant self-preservation until it was possible to leave Russia. The letters of *VBHH* leader, B.B. Janz emphasized the poor credit risks which the Ukrainian Mennonites represented. In view of the fact that the *VBHH* charter was ratified (April 25, 1922) on the condition that Holland and America supply the colonies with material aid, Janz requested that several tractors be sent as evidence of his agency's good intentions.[26]

During the second half of 1922 it became clear that immediate emigration was impossible and that, if it occurred at all, it would only be a partial exodus. The widespread threat of famine made a definition of reconstruction tactics essential. Fortunately there was some outside encouragement. On August 13, the first twenty-five Fordson tractors, promised by the American Mennonite Relief (AMR) arrived in Odessa.[27] Willink, the *CBN* director, signed a contract providing for the shipment of Dutch grain to the Ukraine on August 21.[28] The *VBHH*, lacking funds for the purchase of seed grain, received government approval for a foreign loan on September 12-13, 1922.[29] By the terms of the agreement the *VBHH* received a 50,000 guilder credit from the *CBN*. In addition to the Dutch credit, a project designed to obtain a million-dollar loan from abroad was also launched.[30]

Any optimism engendered by the *VBHH* economic ventures in 1922 was not destined to last. Abroad it became clear that the Dutch business instinct was reluctant to participate in a large credit transaction

without sufficient guarantees.[31] When 20,000 of the 50,000 guilder seed grain credit promised by the *CBN* reached Russia, two problems limited its effectiveness: firstly, the monies came too late for the purchase of seed for spring planting; and secondly, a sharp inflation affected the Russian ruble, which brought a rapid loss of purchasing power when the money was changed into Russian currency.[32] Thus when the basis for foreign credit was almost completed during the first half of 1923, circumstances in Russia conspired against its successful implementation. During this period the *AMR* tractor program was experiencing great difficulty.[33] Though the prospect of mechanizing agriculture aroused widespread interest such problems as fuel, spare parts, ownership and distribution of use frequently limited the advantages which the machines offered.

The Religious Issues

The feasibility of reconstruction, economic or religious, became even more remote after 1925. During September, 1925, the Ukrainian Central Executive Committtee ordered a fundamental revision of the *VBBH* which was intended to destroy its autonomy and make it directly dependent on the state and the party.[34] Earlier government action had forbidden it to act in legal and emigration matters and limited its activities solely to agriculture, a move which reduced its status to that of a government-sponsored cooperative. The 1926 *VBHH* Congress was forced to meet in Kharkov and witnessed the resignation of chairman B. B. Janz. Janz had been a great advocate of *VBHH* autonomy in every possible field, and had continually fought for the preservation of the Mennonites as a distinctive national minority. There were other forebodings of change. A petition for greater religious freedom directed to the Central Executive Committee by the last General Mennonite Conference (*Allgemeine Bundeskonferenz der Mennoniten in Russland*) meeting in Moscow during January, 1925, was rejected by that all-powerful government organ. By 1927 the arrest and exile of religious leaders, frequently also teachers in the Mennonite villages, became alarmingly common. The Mennonite religious periodical, *Unser Blatt,* begun in October, 1925, ceased publication in 1928. The mass emigration occurring between 1923 and 1926 was systematically restricted. In the RSFSR, the sister organization of the *VBHH,* the *Allrussischer Mennonitischer Landwirtschaftlicher Verein* was suspended in 1928. The curtailment of religious, political and economic activity went hand in hand with the termination of the New Economic Policy and the beginning of the First Five Year Plan in 1928. Preparatory work for this ambitious program to collectivize and industrialize Russia generally discouraged economic initiative and independence by the end of 1927. The Mennonites were not exempted from the new scheme.

The Ukrainian Mennonite constituency became concerned with emigration late in 1919 and early in 1920 when it dispatched the *Russlandmennonitische Studienkommission* to Europe and America to create an organizational framework for later emigration. Efforts in Russia and abroad finally launched the emigration movement in 1923, a movement which terminated in 1928. What influence did the economic and religious problems confronting the Mennonites exert upon this exodus? Until 1923 the Soviet Government, anxious not to lose productive elements in the population, allowed only those Mennonites who were landless or refugees to leave Russia. Toward the end of 1923, however, a policy shift made private or individual emigration the only legal method of exodus. Now the wealthier Mennonites, by personally paying the fare with private capital, could leave Russia. The discontent over the land question and Soviet economic policy generally expressed itself in a mass application for private exodus. Religion, however, probably outweighed economics as a factor influencing the emigration, even though it appeared on the scene after the emigration sentiment had become well-defined by other forces. By 1922 the anarchy of civil war, banditry and Red Army occupation led the Mennonites in the Ukraine to reassert their peace witness more decisively. Concern with religion came to center almost exclusively on the question of nonresistance. After lengthy and exhaustive negotiations many of the Mennonites concluded that freedom of conscience as their past tradition had known it was not obtainable in Russia. Government authorities found it difficult to understand why religious considerations should be valid reasons for the exodus of an economically progressive segment of the population. When the economic crisis in the Ukraine became less marked after 1923, it was not surprising to find that official tolerance of Mennonite pleas for religious freedom were largely ignored. It is probably reasonable to assert that the Mennonites in the Ukraine would have been willing to adapt to the economic pressures of the new regime if some guarantee of religious freedom had been forthcoming. The focal point for most of the settlers became the question of military service, since it involved the Mennonite conscience directly. In the opinion of many of the settlers, economic and religious circumstances failed to guarantee the Mennonites a future existence in Russia. For these the only alternative was to leave their homeland.

FOOTNOTES

1. B. B. Janz Archive (FA) (Mennonite Brethren College of Arts, Winnipeg) I, C. *Die Gruendung des Verbandes in Alexanderwohl.*
2. B. B. Janz to B. H. Unruh. Kharkov, April 27, 1922.
3. A. A. Friesen Archive (Bethel College Historical Library, Newton, Kan.) *Statuten des Verbandes der Buerger Hollaendischer Herkunft in der Ukraine.*
4. A. Goerz, *Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des Forstdienstes der Mennoniten in Russland* (Gross Tokmak, 1907), p. 25ff.
5. J. Sudermann, "The Origin of Mennonite State Service in Russia, 1870-1880," *Mennonite Quarterly Review,* XVII (1943), pp. 34-42.

6. See JA, I, d: A. A. Wiens, *Anfang des mennonitischen Selbstschutzes*"; J. P. Epp, *Die Entstehung des Selbstschutzes.*

7. B. B. Janz was repeatedly reminded of the Mennonite appeal to arms in his later negotiations with officials of the Uk.S.S.R. regarding the release of Mennonite young men forcibly recruited into the Red Army.

8. P. Froese Archive (FA), B. B. Janz to the *Studienkommission*. Moscow, November 26, 1922.

9. FA, B. B. Janz to the *Studienkommission*. Moscow, December 20, 1922.

10. JA, P. F. Froese to B. B. Janz. Moscow, November 1, 1923.

11. *Izvestia*, No. 217 (September 23, 1925), Supplement.

12. FA, *Protokoll der allgemeinen Versammlung der Bevollmaechtigten des mennonitischen Verbandes in Suedrussland aus dem Saporoger Gouvernement* am 3. u. 4. Januar, 1922 in Margenau, p. 3.

13. FA, B. B. Janz to the *Studienkommission*. Kharkov, March 7, 1922, p. 4.

14. FA, B. B. Janz to the *Studienkommission*. April 7, 1922, p. 5; FA, B. B. Janz to the *Studienkommission*. Kharkov, April 27, 1922, p. 8.

15. FA, *Protokoll der General-Versammlung der Vertreter des VBHH in der Ukraine*. Abgehalten in Landskrone am 29. 30. und 31. Mai 1922.

16. FA, B. B. Janz to the *Studienkommission*. July 13, 1922, p. 7.

17. FA, B. B. Janz to the *Studienkommission*. July 25-August 4, 1922, p. 5. See also FA, B. B. Janz to *Studienkommision*. Kharkov, September 13, 1922.

18. FA, B. B. Janz to the *Verwaltung des VBHH in der Ukr. Tiege-Ohrloff*. Moscow, November 9, 1922, pp. 2, 3.

19. FA, Excerpt from Minutes No. 41 of the Presidium of the Federal Committee for Lands, November 22, 1922.

20. FA, Federal Committee for Lands of the Presidium of the All-Russian Central Committee to the People's Commissariat of Agriculture of the USSR. November 24, 1922.

21. FA, B. B. Janz to B. H. Unruh, February 24, 1923.

22. FA, B. B. Janz to B. H. Unruh and A. A. Friesen. March 29, 1923.

23. FA, B. B. Janz to *Studienkommission*, April 16, 1923.

24. JA, B. B. Janz to the Executive of the AMLV. February 10, 1924.

25. FA, *Protokoll der Vertreterversammlung des Verbandes der Buerger hollaendischer Herkunft in der Ukraine am 1. 3. u. 4. Maerz 1924 in Marienort*, (Kalinowo), Donetz Gouv., pp. 9, 10.

26. FA, B. B. Janz to A. A. Friesen. May 27, 1922.

27. FA, B. B. Janz to A. A. Friesen. August 28, 1922.

28. FA, Vertrag der Belieferung des VBHH in der Ukraine mit Saatgut fuer die Herbstbestellung 1922. Gestaetigt zwischen der Handelsvertretung der Uk.S.S.R. in Berlin und dem Direktor der hollaendischen Hilfsaktion. August 21, 1922.

29. See FA, B. B. Janz to A. A. Friesen. September 9, 1922; FA, B. B. Janz to the *Studienkommission*. Kharkov, September 10, 1922; FA, B. B. Janz to the *Studienkommission*. Kharkov, September 11, 1922.

30. It was approved by the Osterwick Congress of the VBHH meeting on September 22 and 23, 1922. FA, *Protokoll der allgemeinen Delegiertenversammlung des VBHH in der Ukraine zu Osterwick am 22. und 23. September, 1922*.

31. FA, B. H. Unruh to B. B. Janz, January 11, 1923.

32. FA, B. B. Janz to the *Studienkommission*, April 16, 1923, pp. 4, 5.

33. FA, B. B. Janz to the *Studienkommission*, March 29, 1923.

34. JA, *Protokoll des allukrainischen Kongresses des VBHH in der Ukraine vom 17. - 20. Februar, 1926 in Kharkov.*

The Mennonites in Soviet Russia

By G. H.

To REPORT ABOUT the present situation of Mennonites in Russia is a difficult undertaking. The reporter has only limited access to sources of information. It is true foreigners have made numerous visits to Soviet Russia and many Soviet citizens have been permitted to visit their relatives in the West, but neither in Russia nor in the publications abroad is statistical information available about the Mennonites in the Soviet Union. This is also the case in regard to the exact locations of most of the Mennonites.

However, certain conclusions can be drawn by a study of Soviet books and articles in the daily press of Soviet Russia. Mention should be made of Klubanov[1] and Krestyaninov[2] who present studies in the Russian language of the Mennonites to be used in Soviet Russia for anti-religious purposes. Consequently, although they are informative, they are also one-sided in their purpose. Nevertheless, one can draw valuable conclusions from these publications.

The present condition among the Mennonites of Soviet Russia is understandable only if one takes into consideration their background of the last decades. Most of the Mennonite settlements were located in the Ukraine. There were some forty daughter settlements of the original Chortitza and Molotschna settlements clustered around the mother settlements and strung from the Crimea to the Caucasus and along the Volga River and in Central Asia and Siberia. By 1910 the Mennonites of Russia were located in some 400 villages.

Revolution and Civil War

After the Revolution and Civil War (1917-1921) some 21,000 Mennonites left for Canada. During 1926-27 the migration was stopped by Soviet authorities. In 1928-29 some additional 3,000 Mennonites were permitted to leave Russia and settle primarily in Paraguay and Brazil. According to Krestyaninov these migrations are a "typical form of the class struggle of the exploiting elements who have lost ground under their feet and therefore leave".[3]

During the collectivization of the rural areas in 1930-33, the Mennonite population suffered severely. The so-called de-kulakization resulted in the confiscation of property and exile. At some places the largest number of the male population was uprooted and

exiled. Many were sent to Siberia where a large number perished of starvation and of exposure to the Siberian winter. Others escaped into distant areas to avoid deportation, while still others were attracted by industrial centers to escape starvation. The Russian population and other minority groups were all affected by it.

Most of the Mennonite ministers were either arrested or forbidden to do their work as ministers. Church buildings were taxed heavily and consequently lost. Many of them were turned into movie houses, cultural palaces or into storage rooms. By 1931 the old forms of religious worship and life had come to a close. Any protest of the believers was interpreted to be an attack on the government. Religious fellowships and the traditional cultural life of Mennonites and other religious groups was now dependent entirely on the family circle.

Another wave of arrest and exile followed in 1937 at many places. The male population between 17 and 65 was arrested. Many were shot to death without any legal procedures. The others were exiled. Seldom were the relatives informed about their fate.

The German Occupation of the Ukraine

When in 1941 the German army entered the Ukraine, the German population of Russia, including the remaining Mennonites, were evacuated to Central Asia and Siberia. This was only partially accomplished in the Chortitza and Molotschna settlements because the swift penetration of the German army made further evacuation impossible.

When the German army withdrew from the Ukraine in the fall of 1943, the German population of the villages was taken along to be settled in the Warthegau of West Prussia where they had originally come from. Most of these Mennonites were overtaken by the Red army in its westward push and returned to Russia. However, they were not permitted to settle in their homes in the Ukraine, but they were all sent to Central Asia or western Siberia. Even some of those Russian Germans who reached Displaced Persons camps in West Germany, occupied by British and American troops were returned to Russia by special commandos. Their journey on freight trains lasting for weeks and months into Central Asia and Siberia was a most dreadful experience. Those who survived were placed in the villages of the native population of Tatars, Kalmuks and others. Many were sent to Archangelsk and put into large labor camps. It must be remembered that most of these exiles were women with small children. A large number of them perished because of lack of food and hard labor under inhuman conditions.

In 1956 conditions began to change. Formerly all evacuees and inhabitants of concentration and labor camps were under rigid police supervision and not per-

Life among the Mennonites of the Ukraine continued after the collectivization of farming in the framework of the old pattern. The old well and baking oven remained in use for the harvesting of the last crop in the land of their fathers. They still used the traditional equipment and machinery (see also p. 110).

mitted to leave. In the post-Stalin era this came to an end. Official apologies were made by the government that many innocent people had suffered under severe conditions, including those of German background. Freedom to move freely was declared henceforth to be the official policy. Gradually a concentration at certain places such as Central Asia by the people who had survived in the labor camps took place.

Present Religious Life

Is an organized religious life among the Mennonites under these conditions possible today? After the decree of the separation of church and state in 1918 every local religious community had to be registered at the Department of Interior. Religious meetings in private homes were not permitted. A registration of a congregation for worship purposes depends on very definite conditions. Certain persons and a minister must be approved to function as a nucleus for a congregation. In addition a number of members must support the petition. Even if all these conditions are met can registration be refused or delayed.

Mennonite girls in the Chortitza-Rosenthal area.

Common implements—plows, sewing machines, mowers, a buggy, etc.—in the yard of a Mennonite farm after the collectivization.

For the Mennonites of the Soviet Union it has been almost impossible to meet the conditions for registration. The leading ministers during the 1930's were almost all arrested and exiled. The General Conference of the Mennonites of Russia which convened annually for the purpose of discussing religious questions was not in existence anymore and the congregations were disintegrating. The family had remained the only nucleus in which the religious life could be fostered. Consequently, family reunions for the purpose of weddings, funerals, and other occasions were of great significance wherever they were permitted to observe such occasions. At times several ministers speak at a funeral. However, it is not always permitted for ministers to attend funerals. The Mennonites in need of religious nurture take advantage of every opportunity to find an occasion for fellowship.

Krestyaninov writes the following: "The arsenal of means of propaganda among the Mennonites is manifold: family celebrations, religious and even revolutionary holidays and picnics in parks are used for religious purposes".[4]

In a letter written by a group of relatives of imprisoned members of the Evangelical Christians and Baptists of the U.S.S.R. to the General Secretary U Thant of the United Nations and the International Union of Lawyers and the Minister President Kosygin of the U.S.S.R. it is stated:

"Since some congregations have no places of worship, they are compelled to have their meetings in the woods. The police and their helpers locate such meeting places and break up the meeting. In June 1966 a whole detachment of police with dogs appeared at a prayer meeting of a Kiev congregation in the woods. The believers were ordered to sit down. All names were written up and they were forced to go with the police to the city. . . . We are being punished without mercy and discrimination without court action . . . because of our participation and observation of worship meetings".[5]

The Russian Baptists

The position of the Russian Evangelical Christians and Baptists is much more favorable than that of the Mennonites. They have a well-functioning organization, namely the Baptist Union of the U.S.S.R. Because of this they can much more easily furnish the prerequisites for the requirements of their congregations throughout the country, even though they do encounter problems as indicated.

In 1957 a meeting took place in the Molotov region (Perm) of Mennonite Brethren at which they discussed the legal aspect of their congregations that would result from an official joining of the Baptist Union. These efforts were supported by the Baptists in the October 1963 meeting of the Baptist Congress in Moscow. It was decided to accept Mennonite congregations into the Baptist Union. Thus there now exists the possibility that Mennonite congregations join the Baptist Union. Hereby they have a favorable precondition to register locally or to find aid through this contact for a registration.

However, internal difficulties prevent a full-scale realization of the registration of Mennonite congregations. Generally speaking the Baptists make baptism by immersion the condition for such a merging of Mennonites with the Baptists. The Mennonite Brethren who practice baptism by immersion encounter no problems. The Mennonites of the General Conference, however, cannot become full members of the Baptist Union because of their form of baptism. Nevertheless, it must be said that the Baptists are making efforts to solve this problem. At the 1964 Congress of the Bap-

Choir leader of the Baptist church, Irkutsk. Crowded balcony of Baptist Church in Moscow. It is claimed that 75 percent of the membership of the Baptist church in the Soviet Union are women.

tists its chairman Zidkov declared that "the Executive Committee would make provision for the strengthening of the relationship to the Mennonites of both groups." This Congress was also attended by some Mennonite representatives. In some congregations differences continue to exist. In others "all who have joined a congregation by baptism regardless of whether it is Mennonite, Mennonite Bethren or Lutheran, the individual is recognized and accepted without rebaptism if he accepts the confession of faith".

In spite of the difficulties from within and without for the believers there is a vital spiritual life at many places. Worship services take place on Sunday morning as well as in the afternoon. Usually there is a service in the Russian language followed by one in the German. Krestyaninov who maintains that he spent a longer period of time among the Mennonites in order to "study their faith, worship services, life and practices" describes the public meetings of the Mennonites in the northern Kazakhstan as follows:

". . . on Sunday they meet in the afternoon for worship purposes followed by musical presentations by the youth. The evening service is closed with a prayer meeting. On Tuesdays and Wednesdays there is special instruction for the youth and their relatives who intend to be baptized. On Thursday evening choir and orchestral practices take place. On Saturday evening musical performances are given followed by prayer meetings."[a]

The writer states that it is a mistaken assumption that the meetings among the Mennonites are attended by old people only. The percentage of young people attending services and belonging to the congregation is according to the author much higher than that found

Mennonite leaders from Central Asia and Siberia constituting a delegation to the Council Meeting of the All-Union of Evangelical Christians-Baptists in Moscow. They were as follows: P. Penner, leader of the Mennonite church, Frunze; Jacob Fast, minister of the Mennonite Brethren congregation, Novosibirsk; A. Friesen, M. B. minister, Karaganda; T. Quiring, M. B. minister, Dushambe; Johann Martens, minister of Kant; P. Heese, minister of the M. B. church, Tokmak; Viktor Krieger, minister of the Baptist Church, Moscow. These representatives were met by the Mennonite delegation from North America in 1966.

among other religious groups. About the recruitment of ministers we have no accurate information. It is definite that young men volunteer to become ministers. However, there are no "full-time" Mennonite ministers. All are engaged in some occupations unless they have reached retirement age. Krestyaninov testifies that the Mennonite ministers are in a position to master the "great changes which have taken place during the last 50 years in the realm of science and the social structure of the life and to do justice to them". He demonstrates this by quoting one of the Mennonite ministers in regard to the achievements in cosmology who said: "All sputniks which man sends into the realm of celestial bodies demonstrate the creativity and power which man possesses because he is a creation of God. How much mightier and wiser must the creator of the universe be!"

Nevertheless, the Soviet writer concludes that this reveals a weakness in regard to scientific discoveries and constitutes "an attempt to minimize the significance of the scientific discoveries in the eyes of the believers".[7] Radios and tape recorders are used for witness purposes. Worship services are put on tape as well as the radio messages of Canadian broadcasting stations. These tapes are circulated among people who cannot attend worship services. The great need for religious literature is met by copying hymns, poems, parts of the Bible and other spiritual materials for distribution as a witness and strengthening of the spiritual life.

A few words should be said about the economic conditions of the Mennonites. There are no longer severe hardships like those at the time of the war and immediately following. Those who work have their income and live modestly. It is a little more difficult for old people who have very little income and depend on additional income from relatives and friends, that is, some mutual aid in practice among relatives and fellow believers. In many instances relatives request legal rehabilitation of those out of their midst who perished in labor camps, etc. In such instances, women receive a compensation for their husbands who lost their lives.

More recent atheistic publications of the Soviet press consider the rapidly spreading Baptist congregations the most dangerous opponents. The Russian Orthodox Christians are treated like a traditional ritualistic group while the Baptists (and Mennonites) are considered a zealous religious movement which is dangerous.[8] In the presentations of the anti-religious press "Mennonitism, like any other religious group, is considered to be a remnant of the reactionary capitalistic past and constitutes a harmful element in the society of the Soviet Union."[9]

The real need of the Mennonites in the Soviet Union is found in the fact that everything in their background is considered to be evil. They are constantly facing the presupposition of dishonest and illegal intentions and motivations in their Christian life. Their striving towards a loyal relationship to the state, their biblical concern for peace and love of the neighbor or their effort to develop a Christian philosophy of work and even their Christian ethics expressed in their life and in society are suspect.

FOOTNOTES

1. Klubanov, *Mennonity* (Moscow, 1931).
2. Krestyaninov, V. F., *Mennonity* (Moscow, 1967).
3. Krestyaninov, *op. cit.*, p. 71 ff.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 84.
5. *Ostprobleme*, 6/7, 1968, p. 162 f.
6. Krestyaninov, *op. cit.*, p. 159.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 87 f., 167.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 84.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 218.

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The Contemporary Russian Mennonites

By G. Lohrenz

When in 1941 the German army penetrated the European Soviet Union, the Soviet government decreed the removal of all citizens of German nationality from western Russia. This included the Mennonites. They had to leave on a few hours' notice with whatever they could carry. Most of them were sent into Asiatic Russia.

As the German army retreated westward in 1943, they in turn took all remaining Russian citizens of German background along. Some 35.000 were thus removed from their homes and of these about 23.000 were overtaken by the Red army and repatriated. None were sent back to their homes, but they were scattered over the Siberian and Central Asian plains. They were not free to move around, but confined to designated places and work. The Mennonite settlements on the eastern fringes of European-Russia, such as Neu Samara, Orenburg and the large Siberian settlements near Omsk, Novosibirisk survived in some form.

After World War II

Under Stalin even after World War II no citizen of German origin was permitted to move from the place assigned to him. Under Khrushchev in 1955 this restriction was lifted. The exiles and inhabitants of labor camps were now permitted to go anywhere except to their former homes. Many moved on to be reunited with their relatives. Others, poverty-stricken and discouraged, remained where they were. Among the centers of concentration of Mennonites now are the regions Karaganda, Kirgizia and other areas of Central Asia. Individual families and groups are to be found from the Afghanistan border in the south to the northern snow regions of Kolymsk.

The search for new places of settlement has not ceased to this very day. Some Mennonites have moved even to the Baltic areas of Riga, Kaunas and Moldavia. Individual families, particularly those who have intermarried with Russians, can be found in Odessa, Zaporozhe, Nikopol, Kharkov, Moscow, Orenburg, Slavgorod, Omsk and many other places. Many go to the cities for study or to get a job and become integrated with the population.

Economic Life

The majority of the Russian Mennonites are still living in rural areas or in small towns as laborers on collective farms or state farms; often they make this choice because there will be less interference with their religious life. They do this knowing that their income here will be less than that of an industrial laborer.

Those who have moved to cities or industrial centers are rapidly replacing their language and culture with the Russian. Although few may have joined the Communist party, the number of those who have accepted the materialistic Marxian philosophy is growing. Many have ceased to resist the influence they are undergoing.

The salaries are not high. A laborer earns 90 to 120 rubles per month and a doctor and teacher about 120 to 150. The highest-paid scientist with the highest degrees will earn as much as 500 rubles per month. The rent for lodging is very low, but food and clothing are expensive.

Cultural and Religious Life

Since most of the Mennonites are scattered, their children attend schools with those of other nationalities. The language of instruction is Russian, and German is taught as a second language. Some German books and papers, such as *Neues Leben* (Moscow) and *Freundschaft* (Zelinograd) are available. Other books and papers are imported from Germany. A radio station in Kazakhstan brings a German program twice weekly. In many areas the German language and culture are disappearing rapidly among the Mennonites. This means an acceptance of the Russian language and way of life. Thus there are and will be more people with traditional Mennonite names who will be fully Russianized.

The name "Mennonite" can have a bad connotation in the Soviet Union. At some places they are considered religious fanatics. A Mennonite or German child in the school is sometimes referred to as "Fritz" with a negative connotation in regard to his German background. This leads many to disassociate themselves from the German heritage and strive to fully become a part of the Russian environment.

Russian Baptist delegation visited Canadian Mennonite and Baptist congregations from coast to coast in June 1969. From left to right: B. Fedichkin, V. Krieger, Claudia Pillipuk, N. Melnikov and S. Timchenko.

On the other hand, many Mennonites are treated quite well individually because of their quiet nature and their conscientious work habits. There are now more and more intermarriages with partners of other nationalities. For the Mennonite or German this means an adjustment to the culture and language of the Russian partner. Mennonite young men are serving in the Red army like all other citizens. The idea of nonresistance is practically unknown in the Soviet Union, and very few Mennonites have some knowledge about their history.

Krestyaninov in *Mennonity* speaks of the Mennonite ability to retain the loyalty of many young people. This is only partly true. A large number of the young people accept the atheistic, materialistic teaching of Marxism to which they are subjected from childhood on. Only a few are members of the Communist party, but many accept the world they are living in. The great majority are religiously indifferent and uninformed. Simple biblical facts are unknown to them. This naturally also has a bearing on their moral and ethical standards.

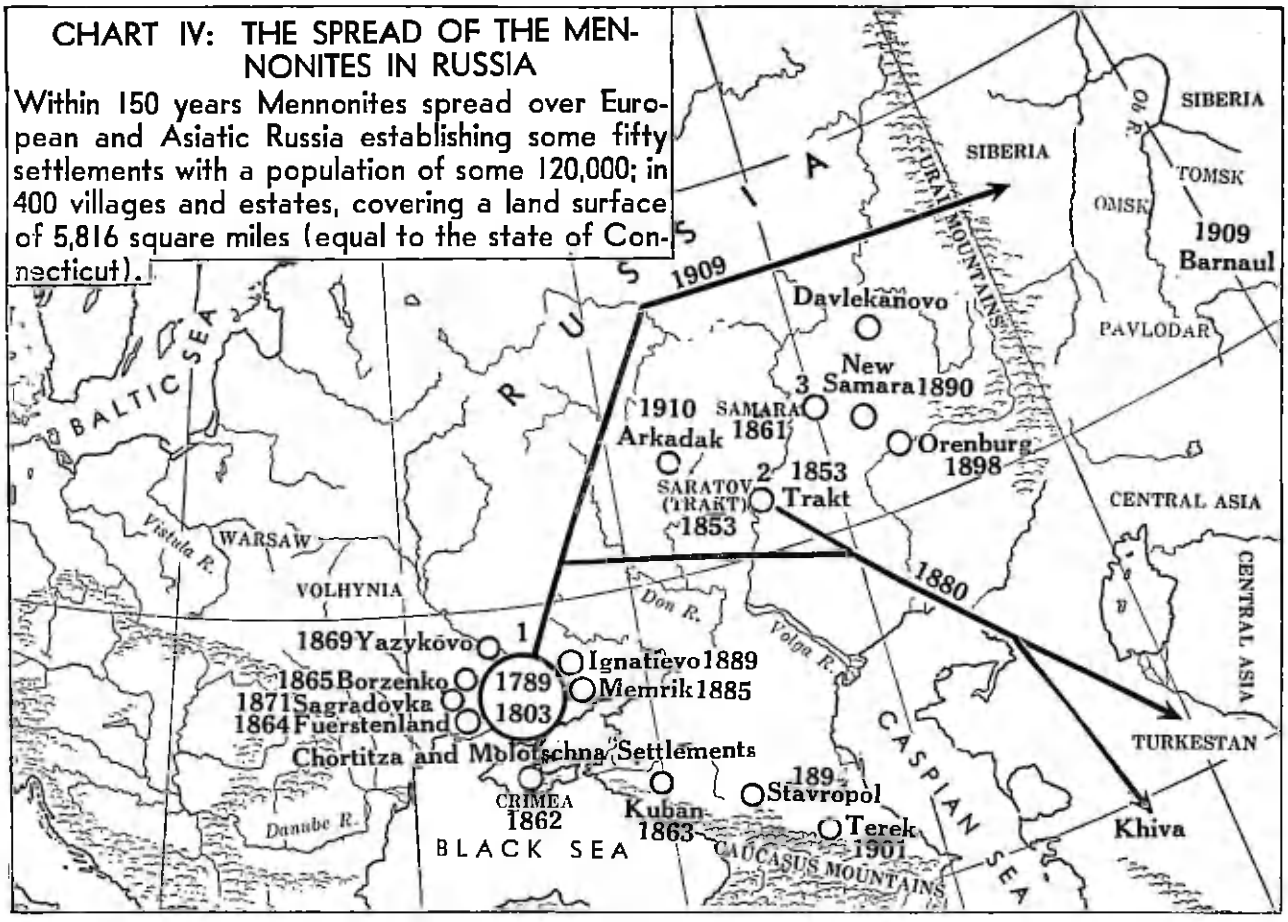
After having said this, one must also say that proportionally more God seekers exist among the German Mennonites in Russia than among any other nationality or denomination. There are a few Mennonite congregations in Russia and many Mennonites, including the Mennonite Brethren, join Baptist congregations, while others just simply meet in small groups in private homes for devotions. There also exist separate groups known as "Mennonite Brethren" who mistrust the Baptists as well as the Mennonites and practice aloofness. In spite of these human limitations, there is some genuine Christian faith, life and witness among all these groups. Many have paid dearly for their witness—some by loss of freedom, others by working hard in isolated areas where they can nurture their souls without molestation.

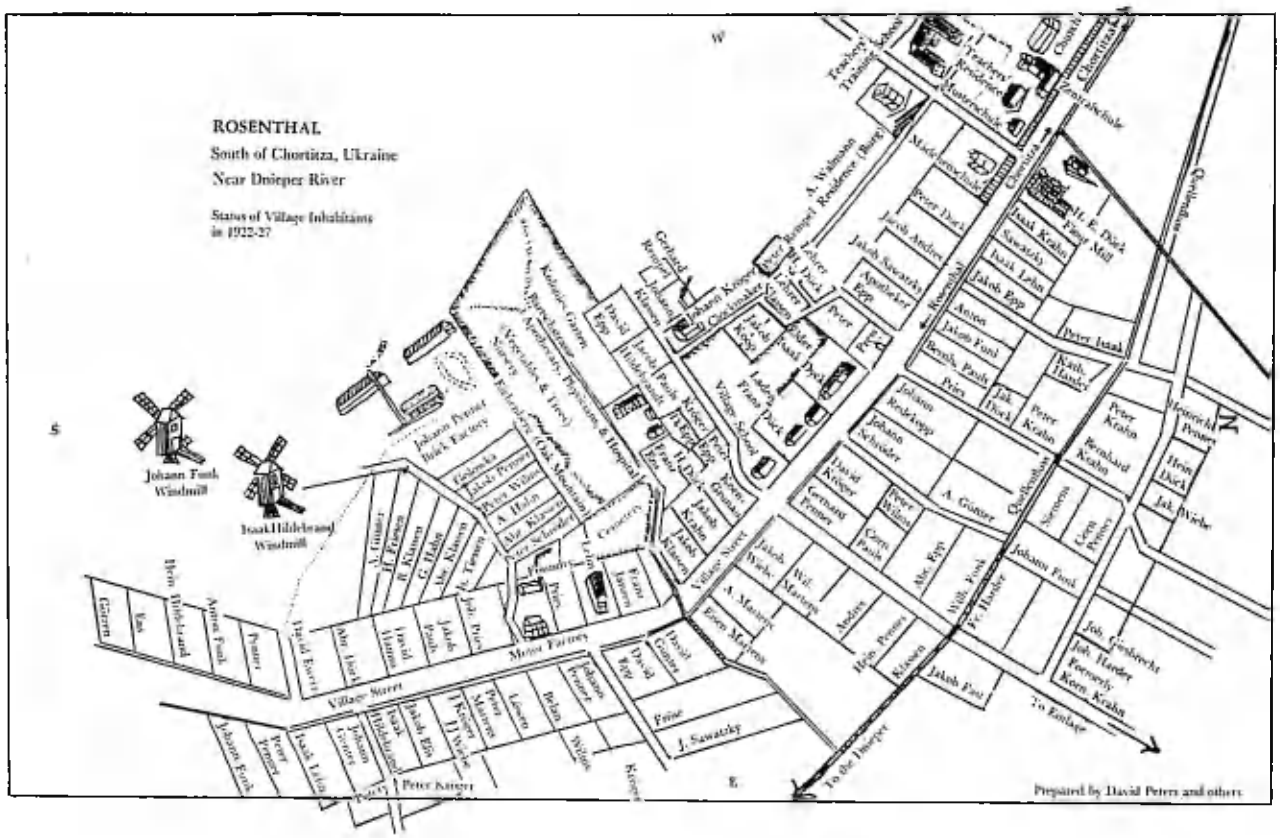
The Mennonites of Russia Today

By Cornelius Krahn

World War II terminated the existence of all German settlements in the Ukraine. Most of the Germans, including the Mennonites that had come to Russia since the days of Catherine the Great, who settled in rural areas, were located along the shores of the Black Sea in the Ukraine. During the waves of deportation in the Stalin era, the removal of the German population from this area was introduced. Many were sent into labor camps and perished. With the invasion of Russia by Germany in War II, the next step in the removal to Siberia and Central Asia took place. The Soviet government evacuated as many eastward as possible. The final chapter in the history of the German settlements in the Ukraine took place when the German eastern front collapsed in 1943 and the German army took the German remnant along to Germany. Many of the evacuees to Germany were returned to Asiatic Russia by the Red army immediately after the war in 1945 when Germany collapsed. This means that Germans from the shores of the Black Sea and the foothills of the Caucasian Mountains, or along the Dnieper, Don and Volga rivers had been removed from the places at which they had lived for generations. Many of them had been transported to the Archangelsk area

This chart shows the spread of the Mennonites from the Chortitza and Molotschna settlements in the Ukraine and beyond. The total Mennonite population from the Ukraine has been removed.





Rosenthal, adjacent to Chortitza, was the oldest Mennonite village in the Ukraine. The map shows the village during the years 1922-27 (see April issue, pp. 68-69).

or other parts of European Russia and to the eastern foothills of the Ural Mountains in Siberia or to Central Asia. The fate of the Mennonites was that of the other Germans.

The two major settlements Chortitza and Molotschna and the numerous daughter settlements of the Ukraine were completely depopulated and destroyed. Those within European Russia that were outside of the war zone such as the settlements in the province Samara (Kuibyshev) on the Volga River and the provinces of Ufa and Orenburg (Chkalov) at the foothills of the southwestern part of the Ural Mountains survived in some form. The Asiatic or Siberian Mennonite settlements near Omsk, Pavlodar, Slavgorod and Akmolinsk (Zelinograd) remained more or less intact during World War II. They had been established at the turn of the century and have undergone all the changes caused by the revolution and socialization and effects of the war. However, the population had not been totally removed as was the case in southwestern European Russia. Mennonite settlements had also been established in Central Asia around 1880 at Auli-Ata and Ak-Metchet partly under the leadership of Klaas Epp. These settlements also remained more or less intact. Correspondence with relatives from these settlements was resumed by Mennonites in North and South America after World War II

More recently Mennonite visitors from various parts of Russia have come to see their relatives in western Europe and even in North America. There has also been a steady increase in Mennonite tourists to Russia, many of whom have been able to visit with their relatives, either at agreed-upon places or in their villages, such as in the province of Orenburg (Chkalov). The latter settlement most likely belongs to those best preserved physically. A high government representative visited this settlement some years ago and reported about his findings in *Neues Leben* published by *Pravda* in Moscow. He praised the economic progress, the electrification and modernization of the collective farms, the large number of private cars and many other signs of progress he found. The only question he had was why there was so much emphasis placed on economic progress and not as much on cultural interests and involvement. Visitors from abroad who spent some time in the community confirm the reports about the status of the Mennonites at this place.

Freedom and Equality Restored

On December 13, 1955, the Presidium of the Soviet government issued a decree which revoked a former decree about the evacuation and exile of the German

population which took place during World War II. It is stated that those who were exiled and found themselves in concentration camps or restricted to certain areas were now free to go where they pleased. This caused great joy among those who had survived the extreme hardships, not only because they were able to leave confinement and find more suitable places to live, but above all because they could begin to search for relatives from whom they had been separated and from whom, in many instances, they had not heard.

The official statements of 1955 make it a point to emphasize that the decree of 1941 that caused the wholesale exile of the total German population had been in many instances unjust and the overwhelming majority of the German population helped in the defeat of Hitler. It was also pointed out that many thousands of men and women of German descent had distinguished themselves by making excellent contributions in the upbuilding of the country.[1] All those who suffered under this unjust treatment were promised help on economic and cultural levels. They were encouraged to preserve the linguistic and cultural characteristics of the German minority by introducing appropriate language courses in the educational system.[2]

In the following search for relatives and homes, it was impossible to find them at the places where they had come from. In fact, it still remained illegal to return to the villages from which they had been expelled or to claim any property rights of possessions they had left behind. Many of the Mennonites from the northern European Russian concentration camps now moved to the Siberian and Central Asian areas of concentration of Mennonites to find their relatives and to make a living.[3]

Some Present Occupations

We have some indications in what occupations Mennonites can be found, however, it is difficult to draw any final conclusions. The range must be wide between farm and factory work, nursing and medical professions, elementary teaching and academic work, research and engineering. Many of the young people attend secondary schools and are found in graduate studies. The weekly German paper, *Neues Leben* referred to previously, is a fairly good source of information in regard to some occupations. Some time ago, A. J. Wall was featured as an educator holding a high position in the department of education. Dietrich Friesen was referred to as an influential educator in the language division of the Department of Education in Kazakhstan. He was also in charge of the broadcasting program, *Deutsche Stunde,* at Alma-Ata. It was Elli Warkentin who was announcing over this broadcasting station the rehabilitation program of minority groups on *Deutsche Stunde.* Another person referred to is Heinrich Reimer of Kirgizia. It is related that he has a large German library and is the director of a German choir which regularly broadcasts its program at Frunze, the capital of Kirgizia. Some time ago, *Neues Leben* featured Dorothea Friesen on the cover of the paper as "one of the best nurses of the district hospital of Alma-Ata," who was enrolled in a televised medical course which was to enable her to study medicine at the University of Alma-Ata.

Among the writers of German textbooks for German elementary and secondary schools are the following names: A. Reimer, J. Wall, J. Warkentin, and V. Klein. Among the many writers with apparent Mennonite names appearing regularly in *Neues Leben* are: J. Janzen (poetry) and Professor D. Penner (science).

Among the universities that have strong German departments preparing students for the teaching of the language on various levels of the educational system are Novosibirisk, Barnaul (Altay), Omsk, and Orenburg (Kuibyshev). The secondary schools at Slavgorod, Orenburg and Issil-Kul near Tomsk, prepare teachers for the teaching of German in the elementary schools. One is under the impression that a tremendous effort has been made to preserve the linguistic and cultural heritage among ethnic minorities by providing the school facilities and other cultural outlets for this purpose. After all, there are nearly a million German-speaking people in the five republics of Central Asia. Many teachers are needed on all levels to make the program effective.[1]

How wide spread the interest in the learning of the German language and literature is, is illustrated by Ingrid Parigi in *Die Sovietdeutschen* (1963). During a visit she found that next to Russian, the native languages of the area, including German, were taught in the schools in the Komi Republic located at the extreme northeastern corner of European Russia, which formerly had a number of concentration camps. In the libraries she found classical and contemporary literature, not only of Russia but also of Germany and other countries.

How Many Mennonites?

No definite figures are available regarding the present Mennonite population in Soviet Russia. Nevertheless much more information about the total number of the German population and the areas in which this population is concentrated is available today than a few years ago. The last census of Russia taken in 1959 is helpful. Although no provision is made for information regarding religious affiliation, it does provide information about the linguistic and ethnic background of the population. The census of 1926 indicated that the total German-speaking population in Soviet Russia numbered 1,238,539 at which time there were about 120,000 Mennonites in Russia. In 1959 the Russian census revealed that the population of German background was 1,615,000. If the Mennonite population has increased accordingly, there should be some

Dietrich Friesen of the Department of Education in Kazakhtan in charge of the broadcasting program Deutsche Stunde, *Alma-Ata.*

160,000 Mennonites or people of Mennonite background in Russia today.[5] This is a much higher figure than has usually been estimated. However this is at present the only way to draw some conclusions in regard to the number of Mennonites in the Soviet Union.

We can draw another conclusion from this census. If the trend among the Mennonites is the same as that among the German-speaking population in general, about three-fourths of them still consider German their native tongue while one-fourth named Russian as the one language they know best. About two-thirds are still living in rural areas and one-third in an urban environment.[6]

We have no way of knowing how many among these 160,000 "Mennonites" would identify themselves religiously with their Mennonite background. The fact that some consider another language their mother tongue indicates that they grew up in an environment where they normally spoke Russian or another language. Another observation gathered from other sources is that before World War II about three-fourths of the Mennonites lived in European Russia and one-fourth in Asiatic Russia. Now the reverse will likely be true. As a result of exile and World War II about three-fourths of the Mennonite population is found in Asiatic Russia and only one-fourth in European Russia. Only very few of the latter are located in their former settlements (Orenburg, Ufa, etc.).

Great changes have also taken place in regard to religious life, in general, and also as far as the Mennonites are concerned. An official series of fifteen books devoted to contemporary religions in Russia published in Moscow by Political Literature (1966-69) indicates that "religion" is not dead in Russia. These books are designed to convey information about the history and the present status of the various religions. The primary purpose, however, is that these handbooks be used to provide a source of information for those who intend to bring an end to the era of "religious prejudices." The book on the Russian Mennonites (1967),[7] does not only provide helpful information concerning the Mennonites in Russia but also about how their history and their religious convictions appear to a contemporary Soviet scholar and propagandist.

It is possible for Christians to organize churches and attend worship services. The Mennonites who became uprooted prior and during World War II lost these privileges because of their transfer to other areas and because of their German background. Since the establishment of their full rights as Soviet citizens, great changes have taken place as far as their religious status is concerned. They are meeting in small groups and homes. Many of them are engaged in religious work although few official organizations and registrations as well as ordinations for the ministry take place. However, there is a very close bond between the Russian and German Baptists and the Mennonites, and particularly with the Mennonite Brethren because of the similarity of views and practices including the mode of baptism. Mennonites affiliate and worship together with the Baptists at numerous places particularly in Siberia and Central Asia.

In Novosibirsk east of Omsk in Asiatic Russia, a Baptist church was built a few years ago with a seating capacity of 2,000 which is being used by Baptists in the morning, by Mennonites in the afternoon, and by Lutherans in the evening. Similar arrangements are made at many places in the republics of Kazakhstan,

Elli Warkentin broadcasting the announcement of the rehabilitation of the German minority groups.

Kirgizia, etc. Mennonites sing in the choir and serve as choir directors in Baptist churches. Victor Krieger serves as one of the ministers of the large Moscow Baptist church. The worship and devotional aids available to the believers in Russia are very limited. In 1968, however, 20,000 Bibles and 30,000 hymnaries were published and distributed among the believers. The Russian Orthodox Church has been publishing its *Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate* and the Union of Evangelical Christian - Baptists their *Bratskiy Vestnik* (Brotherly Messenger) for many years. Other aids are expected to be published. The efforts made in broadcasting sermons in the German language for the listeners in Russia are much appreciated. This is likely the best possible channel of communication exploited more fully by American groups such as Jehovah's Witnesses, etc. The Christian faith has been more severely tested during the last decades than ever before. Many were strengthened and others lost the little they had.

Olga Dyck, formerly of Köppental, Samara, wrote an article in *Neues Leben* (No. 46, 1965) entitled "The Bible Helped Me" in which she explained that the "contradictions" in the Bible "opened her eyes" and she consequently gave up all religious beliefs. When asked by two readers whether she ever had been a true believer she responded in the affirmative relating about her experiences as a believer in God. She continued by stating that a secular book with contradictions such as those found in the Bible would not be taken seriously. How much less should this be the case with a book which claims to be the Holy Word of God containing eternal truth. She states that many thousands of people are giving up their belief because of similar experiences.

On the other hand, letters and testimonies illustrate that the traditional faith does not always shatter. In many instances it becomes founded on the eternal rock that has withstood all attacks and disappointments of life of the centuries and even in our day leads to a strengthening of the faith in God.

FOOTNOTES

1. H. Roemmich, "Die heutige Rechtslage der Volksdeutschen in der Sowjetunion." *Heimatbuch*, 1965, 7-16.
2. H. Roemmich, "Der muttersprachliche Unterricht fuer deutsche Kinder in der Sowjetunion," *Heimatbuch*, 1965, 26-29.
3. H. Roemmich, "Die heutige Rechtslage. . .", 8.
4. H. Roemmich, *op. cit.*, 2-4; H. Roemmich, "Der muttersprachliche Unterricht. . .", 26-34.
5. Karl Stumpp, "Ergebnisse ueber die Gesamterhebung des Deutschtums der Sowjetunion," *Heimatbuch*, 1964, 38-44; "Russia," *Mennonite Encyclopedia*, vol. 4, 390-393.
6. K. Stumpp, "Das Deutschtum in der Sowjetunion nach der Volkszaehlung 1950," *Heimatbuch*, 1964, 78-83.
7. W. F. Krestyaninov, *Mennonity*, (Moscow, 1967).

Khortitsa Today

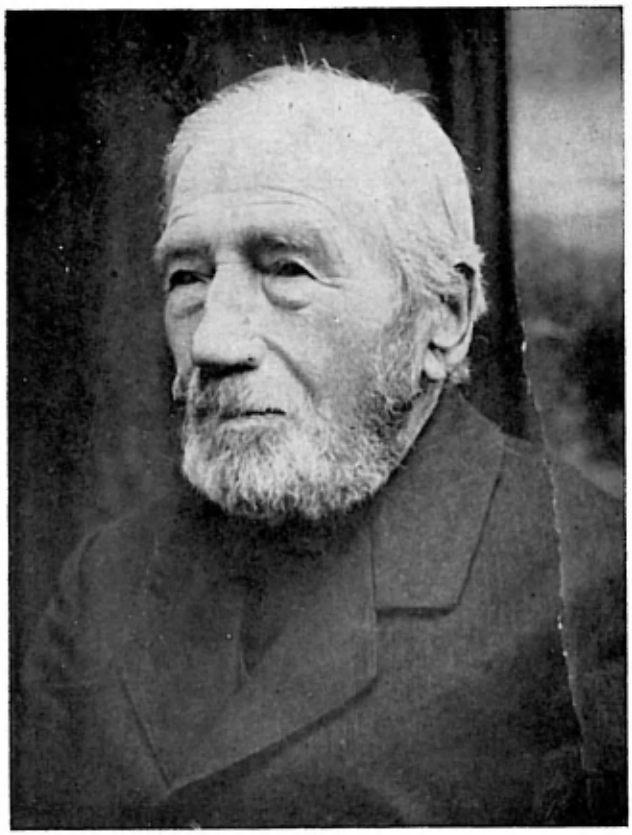
COMING FROM THE north by boat on the Dnieper River one approaches Zaporozhe on the Lenin Lake created by the dam of Dneproges where formerly there were the porogi (rapids). Before the October Revolution of 1917 this was an agricultural territory occupied by large estate owners and Kulaks who raised wheat and barley says the contemporary guide, "Along the Dnieper River." At that time the industry was confined to a few flour mills and factories of agricultural machineries. Great progress has been made during the last decade. Iron ore and coal are being mined in this district. In 1958 the Zaporozhskaya Oblast received the Order of Lenin for the great achievements in agriculture. The new industrial city of Zaporozhe was established some seven to eight miles from old Alexandrovsk. They have now grown together. The harbor of Zaporozhe is one of the most important on the Dnieper River. Locks of the Dneproges made the Dnieper navigable. Already Peter the Great had dreams about doing this. Alexandrovsk (Zaporozhe) was established in 1770 as a fort against the Turks and Tatars. In 1897 the town had a population of over 18,000 which increased to 56,000 by 1926 and to 571,000 by 1966. In 1964 a Lenin Monument was erected here.

The electricity produced by Dneproges is being used by many industrial enterprises, among which Zaporozhsteel is most significant. In 1963 the present automobile factory "Kommunar" observed its centennial. Since 1960 the car Zaporozhets has become a significant product which has not only won popularity in Russia but also abroad particularly in Scandinavia under the name "Yalta" (see April issue, p. 57). Zaparozhe has also become a well known cultural center with numerous educational, musical and theatrical institutions.

South of the dam of Dneproges, the Dnieper is divided into the "New" and the "Old" Dnieper creating


Фирма существуетъ съ
1864
50
1914
Заводы
земледѣльч.
машинъ
и
орудій.
Gesellschaft
A. J. Koop
Fabriken landwirtschaftlicher Maschinen
in Chortitza, Gouv Ekaterin
(Süd-Russland)
Адресъ для телеграммъ
Заводъ Копъ, Хортица
Т-во
А. Я. Копъ


Телефонъ No 6
Основанъ въ 1869 г.
Торговый домъ
Свья К. ГИЛЬДЕБРАНДА и ПРИСЪ
Заводы земледѣльческихъ орудій
Хортица и Александровскъ, Екат. губ.
Хортица
19 года



A. J. Koop, founder of the Chortitza-Alexandrovsk Mennonite industry in 1864. The top letterhead on p. 121 commemorates the fiftieth anniversary of the establishment. Below is the letterhead of the K. Hildebrand and Pries factories at Chortitza and Alexandrovsk (Zaporozhe). At the bottom of p. 121 the dam of Dneproges at Zaporozhe, formally Alexandrovsk, is shown. On p. 57 of the April issue of Mennonite Life *and on the preceding page* ("Khortitsa Today") *some details about the development are given.*

the "Little" and the "Big" Khortitsa. During the twelfth century Khortitsa was a stronghold of the Kiev rulers against their enemies in the south. Later it became a hiding place for escapees from various oppressions in the north and west. In 1789 the Mennonites settled here establishing the Chortitza Settlement, consisting of a number of villages of which Rosenthal is featured in this issue. Khortitsa is now the center of the All-Union Research Institute for Electrification and Mechanization of Agriculture. An interesting landmark in Upper Khortitsa on the right bank of the Dnieper River is the Oak Tree dating back to the 13th century which is 40 meters high and is now legally protected as a historic monument. (See April issue, 1958 p. 57).

Summarized from *Po Dnepru* (Along the Dnieper River—A Travel Guide) by B. A. Muroshnichenko (Moscow, 1967), pp. 163-178.

Religious and Ethnic Groups
Laws, Decrees and Actions

Church and State

From the Constitution (1936)
Article 124
In order to ensure to the citizens freedom of conscience, the church in the U.S.S.R. is separated from the state, and the school from the church. Freedom of religious worship and freedom of anti-religious propaganda is recognized for all citizens.
(Spector, *An Introduction to Russian History and Culture,* Princeton, New Jersey, 1965, p. 508).

From the Penal Code of the Soviet Union
Article 122
The giving of religious instruction of children or minors in public and private educational institutions or schools or a transgression of laws in regard to it shall be punished by forced labor up to one year.
Article 125
Preventions of religious activities in as far as they do not endanger public order and do not interfere with the rights of the citizens are punishable up to 6 months of forced labor.
(A translation from the German, Stupperich, *Kirche und Staat in der Sowjetunion,* Witten, 1962, p. 24).

Religious Feelings

About Mistakes Made in the Execution of the Scientific-Atheistic Propaganda
(Decree of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union)

The Communist Party conducts a scholarly and enlightening propaganda in accordance with its program with its materialist world view which is directed towards the steady increase of the consciousness of the working masses and their gradual freeing from religious prejudices. The party has always aimed to avoid hurting the religious feelings of believers.

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union possesses information which proves that during recent times at a number of places, serious mistakes have occurred in the conducting of scientific-atheistic propaganda among the population.

Instead of developing a systematic detailed work program in the promotion of scientific knowledge and for the ideological struggle against religion, it has happened that offensive attacks have been made against the ministers and believers who participated in religious activities in some central and local papers as well as in the speeches of lecturers and informants. . . .

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union decrees that the area and district committees of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union make it a duty of the Central committees of the Communist parties of the republics of the Union and all party organizations to definitely abolish all errors in the atheistic propaganda and that in the future in no case any kind of offense of the feelings of the believers and the servants of the church as well as administrative interference of the church be permitted. It must be kept in mind that offensive actions against the church, the ministry and the believing citizens are against the line of the party and the state in their execution of the scientific atheistic propaganda and also the Constitution of the U.S.S.R. which guarantee religious freedom to the citizen of the Soviet Union.

The Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. N. Khrushchev. November 10, 1954.
(Translated from Stupperich, *op. cit.*, p. 23 f.)

A German Minority

A Decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R., December 13, 1955

Concerning the Abolishment of the Limitations of the Legal Status of the Germans and their Families who are now located in Special Settlements

In view of the fact that the existing limitation of the legal status of the German settlers in special localities and their family members that have been sent to various regions of the country is not necessary anymore, it is decided by the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R.

1) that Germans and their family members who were sent into special settlements during the great national war are now dismissed from the special settlements and the administrative control of the organs of the MWD. The same is true in regard to the German citizens of the U.S.S.R. who were sent to a special settlement after their repatriation from Germany.

2) It is decreed that the abolishment of the limitations through the special settlements for the Germans does not include the return of their property which was confiscated when they were exiled nor a permission for their return into the areas from which they were exiled.
(Translated from *Heimatbuch*, Stuttgart, 1965, p. 8.)

The Volga Germans

Decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet in regard to the Change of the Decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of August 28, 1941, concerning the Resettlement of the Germans of the Volga Area

In the decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. August 28, 1941, "Concerning the resettlement of the Germans who reside in the rayons (cantons) of the Volga area" large groups of Soviet citizens of German nationality were accused of having given active help and aid to the Fascist German conquerors.

Life has proven that these general accusations were unfounded and an expression of indiscriminate accusations caused under the conditions of Stalin's personality cult. In reality in the years of the great national war, the overwhelming majority of the German population contributed and participated with the whole Soviet people through their work to the victory of the Soviet Union over Fascist Germany and they have also contributed in the post-war years to the Communist reconstruction.

During the last years the German population has established itself at the new places of residence and enjoys all rights of the citizens of the U.S.S.R. thanks to the great aid of the Communist Party and the Soviet State. The Soviet citizens of German nationality work conscientiously in factories, Sovkhozy, Kolkhozy *and offices and particularly in the social and political life. Many of them are representatives of the Supreme Soviets and of the local Soviets of R.S.F.S.R., the Ukrainian, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kirgiz and other union republics occupying leading positions in industry, agriculture and of the state and party apparatus.*

Thousands of Soviet citizens of German nationality have been decorated with orders and medals of the U.S.S.R. and honorary titles of the Union Republic because of success in their work.

In the regions of a number of areas and republics with German population, schools have been established in which the German language is taught and which regularly broadcasts in the German language, and German-speaking papers are published and cultural presentations are offered for the German-speaking population.
(Translated from *Heimatbuch*, 1965, p. 9)

The Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. decrees:

1. *The decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet*

of the U.S.S.R. of August 28, 1941, concerning the resettlement of the Germans who lived in the Volga area (Minutes of the Session of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R., 1941, Nr. 9, Article 256/1) is nullified in regard to the indiscriminate accusations against the German population residing at that time in the Volga area;

2. *In view of the fact that the German population has established a foothold at its new residences in the territories of a number of republics, regions and districts of the country, and in view of the fact that their former places of residence have been occupied and in the interest of a future development of the German population in these rayons, the Soviets of the Union republics are instructed to help and support the German population in these republics in their economic and cultural reconstruction taking into consideration their national characteristics and interests.*

The Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviets of the U.S.S.R., Anastas Mikoyan

The Secretary of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R., M. Georgadse

This decree dated December 13, 1955 was published in the news release of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. in 1964, no. 52, released on January 5, 1965.

(A translation from *Heimatbuch*, 1965, p. 9f.)

The Mennonites—A Marxist View

A Book Review

By Abram Wallmann

The Publishers of Political Literature, Moscow, are publishing a series of books on "Contemporary Religions" in Russia. The series consists of the following books: The Russian Orthodox Church, Catholicism, the Protestant Church, Islam, Buddhism, Judaism, Baptists, Pentecostals, Mennonites, the Orthodox sects, the Jehovah's Witnesses, the Adventists, the Dukhobors, and the Old Believers. The purpose of this series is to inform the Soviet reader about the "believers and the cults of the major religious movements and widespread religious organizations, including their structure, their ethical teachings and their activities in our day." The book under consideration in this review was written by W. F. Krestyaninov entitled, *Mennonity* (Moscow, 1967).

In an introductory note it is stated that during "the last thirty years no books on the Mennonites in Russia have been published. Very little information about them was available in other literature. The author of the book, a candidate in the philosophical sciences, spent a number of years acquainting himself with the beliefs, cult, life, tradition and the history of the Mennonites, not only by using the literature from abroad and at home, but also by obtaining direct information in personal contact with Mennonite believers." The hope is expressed that "the book will be read with benefit to all those interested in the history of religions, atheism, social and political ideas and the contemporary ideological struggle." This book consists of 223 pages and 55,000 copies were printed.

The book is divided into five chapters. The first deals with the origin, ideological background, and the contemporary organizational setup of world Mennonitism (I), which is followed by a treatment of the Mennonites under the Communist rule and their present status (II). In the following two chapters, the ideological or theological foundation and worship and ethical views of the Mennonites of Russia are presented (III, IV). The final chapter (V) deals with the educational methods in trying to win and influence the Mennonites so that they will become fully integrated into the Russian Communist commonwealth. Consequently, the author has two basic purposes in mind, the first is to inform the non-Mennonite as well as the Mennonite reader about the background of the Mennonites and the second is to help the Mennonite and the non-Mennonite atheist agent in making the Mennonites an integral part of the contemporary Communist society.

By way of introduction, the author illustrates how Lena Thiessen, brought up in a very orthodox and conservative Mennonite family, met a young man named

Arthur Krause at a communist youth meeting. They fell in love and wanted to get married. When the Father, D. D. Thiessen, found out about it, he beat up his daughter and did his best to prevent the union of his Christian daughter with an atheistic young man. This story is related in order to set the stage for the problems which the orthodox Mennonites of Russia face in a day when integration is to take place.

The author continues in his introduction by pointing out that the number of Mennonites in Russia is small but it does not belong to those that are dying out. This is particularly the case since they have affiliated with the Baptists in 1963. The significant question is not how large a number there is, but their influence on the other German population in Russia. The author sees in the religious views of Mennonites a serious hindrance in the formulation of a "scientific world view" (meaning Marxian world view) among the German population. What makes a critical analysis of the ideology of Mennonitism so urgent is the fact that the contemporary leaders of the international Mennonite centers of the "bourgeois" West make use of all possible channels of communication in order to delay the spread of a communist consciousness among the Soviet citizens of German background. For this reason, the author considers it important to uncover the "reactionary character" of the ideology of the Mennonites so that a blow can be extended on the "bourgeois" ideology (p. 7f.).

The Background

In the first chapter, the author deals briefly with the Swiss and Dutch Mennonite background pointing out that the Reformation and the birth of Anabaptism was in accordance with Lenin, "an expression of political protest in a religious garb which is characteristic of all nations at a certain period of their development" (p. 10). Having thus set the stage, the author devotes some space to the revolutionary Thomas Müntzer who did not find acceptance by Luther, but won a hearing among the Anabaptists. Thomas Müntzer's religious philosophy, the author claims, resembled atheism and his political program, communism. The short-lived revolutionary Anabaptist kingdom of Münster is referred to as a positive effort. After it was crushed Menno Simons and Dirk Philips taught their followers that "no other condition of the world can be expected except the one that exists and that we have to adjust ourselves to it" (p. 12). Thus those incidents in early Anabaptist history from which later generations aimed to disassociate themselves are presented as genuine and real efforts to usher in a new society.

The author relates briefly the Mennonite movement from the Netherlands to West Prussia and Poland and ultimately to Russia. Unique is his claim that Menno Simons himself, not only visited his followers in West Prussia, which is the case, but he is also supposed to have "spent five years in the western Russian territory" (p. 13). The author has used some common sources and writings such as S. D. Bondar, P. M. Friesen, A. Ehrt[1] and the less-known earliest efforts of two "Mennonites" to bring their co-religionists to the insight that they thus far have been "Under the Curse of Religion" which was written in the Russian language by A. Reimer (Reinmarus) and G. Friesen (Moscow, 1931). He also quotes German and American Mennonite sources.

The first chapter closes with a presentation of the "foreign Mennonite Centers and Organizations," which play a significant role in the total treatment of Mennonites. The author maintains that the Mennonites have a closely-knit world organization trying to influence their brothers, particularly those in Russia and to lure them either to Canada or to help them remain steadfast in their faith in Russia.

The statistical information, the names of conferences, the aid and missionary organizations and so on are, generally speaking, accurate. Occasionally a slip occurs such as in the statement that the "German Mennonites have the highest theological institutions in Hamburg and Karlsruhe and that the center of meeting and of the spiritual life in Western Germany is Karlsruhe" (p. 47). After having dealt with the impressive outreach program of the Mennonites of the Western hemisphere, the author concludes that "the religious philosophy of the motto 'to help your neighbor' leads the lower class Mennonite to see in him who exploits him 'a well-doing brother'." He continues by saying that "well-doing prevents the believer from seeing that the relationships among people are based on factors of a socio-economic nature and not on the realization of certain plans prescribed by God" (p. 51).

A detailed account is given about American Mennonite delegations that came to see the Russian Baptists and Mennonites in Central Asia. Reference is made to secret meetings, the delegates carrying with them a long list of addresses of Russian Mennonites and some of them taking along some soil supposedly to study it in regard to its radioactivity.

The Mennonites in the U.S.S.R.

In the second chapter, "The Mennonites in the U.S.S.R.," it is pointed out that the Mennonites at the time of the Russian Revolution (1917) were prosperous but that 95 percent of the prosperity belonged to a few rich capitalist representatives. It is claimed that normally 20,000 Russian workers were employed by the Mennonites which was considerably higher during the summer season. This is the reason why Mennonites as a whole opposed the revolution and the introduction of a communist society and why they cooperated with the occupational authorities following the Russian

Revolution (p. 57 f.). The Mennonite effort to maintain a certain religious education, worship and nonresistance, as expressed in a Memorandum to the Central Committee of the U.S.S.R. of 1925, is interpreted to mean that the main concern was to maintain the economic status of the Mennonites in the days of the socialization of all property. The activities of the Association of Citizens of Dutch background (*VBhH*) played a significant role in the years 1921-26 (p. 44ff.). This effort is being detected by the author even among the Mennonite ministers to the present day. Reference is made to H. Voth, Ph. Cornies, Ph. Pauls, who travel from place to place in the cities and villages of the Ural Mountains, Siberia and Kazakhstan to preach, baptize, and ordain ministers. They are trying to establish the legalization of these fellowships and the registration of congregations. The Kazakhstan Mennonites have joined the Baptists and constitute 40 percent of the congregations there.

The Mennonites and the Baptists

The Evangelical Christian Baptists decided at the congress in October 1963 to accept Mennonites into the Baptist Union. Thus the practice of cooperation among the Mennonites and Baptists in Kazakhstan, West Siberia and Kirgizia, started in 1959-61 was now officially recognized. As far as the Mennonites are concerned, it included primarily the Mennonite Brethren. However, J. Zhidkov, the chairman of the Baptist Union, stated in September 1964 that the plan was "to work out the necessary arrangement for a strengthening of the ties with both Mennonite groups" (p. 79).

The author relates that some of these Baptist Mennonites practice feet washing, abstain from the eating of pork, believe in the baptism by the spirit and invoke the spirit upon themselves by shouting "Baptize, baptize!" This would indicate that some of the Baptists and Mennonites have undergone strong influences coming from the Russian Molokans in regard to pork and the Pentecostals in regard to the baptism by the spirit (p. 78).

Krestyaninov concludes that for "most of the Mennonite congregations uniting with the Baptists spells out a legalization of their status which will enable them to strengthen their activities." In 1927, the Mennonite congregations in Siberia had 5,229 members of which 2,280 were Mennonite Brethren and 1,809 belonged to the Mennonite Church (p. 79).

The Ideology of the Mennonites

In the chapter, "The Ideology of the Mennonites," the basic beliefs of the various groups of Mennonites in Russia are presented under such topics as Bible, salvation, Christology, eschatology, relationship to the government, pacifism, nationalism, and morality. Having emerged during the Reformation as radical revolutionaries, the Anabaptists turned into a conservative, reactionary group. Personal faith is the exclusive means of salvation for them and the Bible, the only source of faith. Ph. Wiebe is quoted as telling his audience, "Accept our teaching, approach God and you will understand that the going to a movie and the reading of books is a waste of time. You must hurry, death follows you constantly and you must get ready for the life hereafter." This the author presents as a sample of an otherworldly conservatism of Siberian Mennonitism.

The observer relates that "among all the existing Christian sects in the U.S.S.R., the Mennonites and the Baptists are the most active promoters of the witness and content of the Bible." He states that the Mennonites use family celebrations and religious and revolutionary holidays for this purpose. Picnics in parks, Bible "hours" for young people and many other occasions are utilized (p. 84).

Efforts are made to make the biblical truth and content "relevant." The author heard a man named Neufeld state in 1963 at a meeting in a sermon: "All sputniks which man releases to the heavens are a witness of the power of man who is a creation of God. The creator must be much more powerful than the wisest of men." Often when the believers are questioned about the basis of their faith, they simply answer that "you read and believe what is in your books and we believe what is said in the Bible" (p. 87f.).

In War and Peace

The question of the Mennonite relationship to the government and pacifism is dealt with at length. It is pointed out that the Mennonites went out all the way to prove their loyalty in the days of the tsarist government. They believed at that time that "all power is given by God," however, there was a sudden change in the days of the Revolution when they realized that they would have to get along with a few less earthly possessions.

Krestyaninov states that "some Mennonite theologians, particularly Jacob Quiring, maintain that the armed units for self-defense among the Mennonites were brought into being for the protection of women and children against the attacks of the Russian bandits." To this he responds that the deprived Russian population was simply rising up to revenge the acts of Mennonite exploitations. They made the Mennonites aware of the class struggle going on on a national scale. He gives a long list of arms found in five districts of Tokmak in Mennonite possession in 1921. Most of the time the author quotes sources, in this case he fails to do so (p. 106).

Krestyaninov relates that in 1928 a work battalion was organized in the Ukraine consisting of a thousand young men who refused to do military service; fifty percent of them were Mennonites (p. 110). Startling

are the reports about contemporary Mennonite efforts to maintain and instill in their young people the idea of nonresistance. The author sites numerous cases of Mennonite young men objecting to serve in the Red army during World War II. P. J. Klassen advised young men, "Do not take up arms." P. J. Dyck, a factory employee is quoted as saying, "Do not take a gun into your hands." Even the young men of the Mennonite Church of Karaganda are supposed to have agitated against "preparation for service in the Red army and stated that to take up arms is sin." The minister, D. Klassen in Novosibirsk is supposed to have said to those called upon to serve in the army, "Do not serve in the Red army, do not take up arms. God will not forgive you." Ewald Freimann (Friemann) in the Pavlodarsk Oblast, must have told the selective service that he "according to the law of God and his faith had no right to take up arms," and thus refused to serve in the Red army. In the district of Alexandrovsk, Orenburg Oblast, J. Braun, J. Keller and J. Thiessen also refused to take up arms. Some of the ministers even discouraged young people from participating in the sports preparatory to military service (p. 111ff.) However, during a visit in June 1969, the Russian Baptists stated that in Soviet Russia all young men are serving in the Red army unless they are exempted for medical reasons.

The author contrasts this decline to serve in the Red army with the willingness of some to serve in the German army. He states that during the occupation of the Ukraine by the German army in 1941-43 some Mennonites volunteered to serve in the ranks of the army or as interpreters. J. M. Neufeld is cited as an outstanding case of one who volunteered to serve in the German army, visited in the home of B. H. Unruh in Karlsruhe and congratulated Hitler with his success in Russia. Later he fell into the hands of the Red army and was sent to Tomsk where he became minister of the Mennonite Church. In Hitler's army he had the inscription on his belt buckle "God is with us." Now in Tomsk, he was again preaching an "All suffering Christ" (p. 113f.).

These incidents of the practice of "nonresistance" and its breakdown among the Mennonites in the Soviet Union are seemingly cited to prove the inconsistency found in the Mennonite faith and tradition. Briefly, it runs like this: in the earliest stage of Anabaptism, the genuine idealism was of a revolutionary nature with the design to overthrow the exploiting bourgeois of the 16th century. Under the leadership of the withdrawn apostles of peace, the justice-demanding idealism of the Anabaptists was domesticated. From there on, "nonresistance" was used as an excuse and device to refuse to serve in the army when it was not directly advantageous for the bearers of arms. When during the Revolution, the property of the Mennonites was in danger of being taken from them, they fought to protect it. They refused again to serve in the Soviet army but were included to change their attitude when the Germans occupied the Ukraine once more. After this was over, nonresistance was again in vogue. Thus runs the argument of the author. That there was any conscientious objection to war registered prior, during and even after World War II was not known.

Christianity, Marxism, Humanism

Let us clarify what the promotion of peace in the world means to the author of *Mennonity*. In closing the chapter, he states, "The Communist ethics, the highest form of morals, represents the true humanism in the widest and deepest sense of the word" (p. 147). At another place he states that the peace and happiness the Mennonites seek is truly found in Communism: "We consider that a person is truly happy who brings happiness to the greatest number of people around him. Thus the professional revolutionaries found their personal happiness in the struggle for the national happiness" (p. 145). In this struggle there is no place for a "Mennonite" or "Christian" nonresistance. The Mennonite basic views are, according to the author, "of an anti-humanistic, mystical character" in which the "happiness of the people is transferred from the earth to heaven" (p. 143).

The author states "in the writings of the theologians among the Mennonites in foreign countries much is found about peace and love for peace. Under the influence of the contemporary public opinion in behalf of the preservation of peace, the leaders of the general Mennonite centers participate in international conferences of representatives of Christian churches and religious organizations with the purpose of establishing and maintaining peace on earth. However, we are not violating the truth by saying that in the articles known to us written by Mennonite authors in capitalist countries, they completely fail to present realistically acceptable proposals for the solution to our problems and the establishment of peace . . . in spite of the fact that it is maintained that the activities of the Mennonites everywhere at all times in history have been in the direction of peace and against war" (p. 120ff.). The author continues, "the history of Mennonite 'peace-making' as it seems to us, has been sufficiently described based on the facts of the activities of Mennonite congregations". . . . "However, we are interested in their contemporary theory pertaining to the question of war and peace." To this they respond that their views are in harmony "with the general Christian and biblical statements." Krestyaninov maintains that the Mennonites fail to see the real reasons for the causes of war when they ascribe them to the "activities of the devil." Instead of "uncovering the causes of the social signs in the world of capitalism, they find them in the subjective factors and the imperfect state of the souls of men."

The Marxist, on the other hand, sees the only answer to the question of peace in the establishment, spread, and the maintenance of Marxism in the world. Everybody who is truly interested in peace must join in the class struggle and help in the establishment of a classless socialist society where the exploitation of men has ended and all prerequisites for lasting peace have been established.—With this in mind it is easily understood that the traditional historic peace churches cannot be taken seriously by the Marxist since they are operating in the "capitalistic" context. This leads to the view that a country or society that has the full truth and the full answer in regard to the establishment and maintenance of peace cannot tolerate any lack of cooperation in the achievement of its goal. We will return to this question later.

Worship and Practices

In the chapter, "Worship and Practices," information is presented pertaining to the function of congregations, the activities of the minister, prayer meetings and other details. It is related that ministers who are too successful or are accused of being anti-Soviet propagandists, such as D. J. Klassen, move from one place to another and continue their work (p. 152).

A worship service is described as follows: Opening prayer, singing, reading of the scriptures and preaching. The believers usually refrain from large meetings. Eight or ten meet in a home of a brother or sister. On Sunday they meet in the afternoon after which the young people sing together. In the evening there is a prayer meeting. On Tuesday evening there is a Bible study for those who are interested in membership and are being prepared for baptism. Every evening offers some opportunities for religious exercises (p. 159ff.). Special effort is being made to reach the young people (p. 167f.). Of those who participate in religious activities in Siberia twenty percent are young people, fifty percent are middle aged and thirty percent are aged (p. 177f.).

During the preaching the ministers are not only presenting their basic views, but are also trying to make them relevant to the questions of the day. They make use of the radio, tape recordings and other equipment. They exchange tapes with other groups; particularly popular are taped sermons from foreign countries. In some areas, one can find the German paper, *Neue Zeit* which comes from West Germany in exchange for *Neues Leben* (p. 164). It contains a column, *Sonntagswort für das christliche Haus.*

The Mennonites and Baptists are constantly in search of "seekers of the truth." They get aids for this purpose from the Moody Bible Institute (p. 165). In the homes of the families one finds religious mottos, such as, "Where there is love, there is peace" (p. 175). These *Sprüche* are very popular.

The author closes the chapter with the observation that "the tradition bound heritage of the Mennonites constitutes the religious characteristics of the Mennonite psychology" (p. 185). Significant in the effort to maintain the Mennonite faith and tradition is their contact with relatives in Canada and South America. The author claims that they send them Bibles or parts of Bibles and religious instructions.

The last chapter (V) deals with "Educational Efforts Among the Mennonites." The author shares information about progress and problems encountered. In closing, the author claims that the German ethnic group in the U.S.S.R. has equal rights and is a part of an organism of a family consisting of millions of Soviet people. In the Soviet schools, the German language has always played a significant role. The German paper *Neues Leben* helps German-reading and speaking families to preserve their language and culture. The Soviet Germans do their utmost in factories, collective farms and in other walks of life and are treated with respect. Many of them have received orders and medals for their accomplishments. In 1962 of the 303 deputies from the Slavgord Rayon, 147 were German. The Soviet party and government are very much interested in raising the economic and cultural level of all nationalities of the Soviet Union including the German. In the Altay district, numerous public facilities were erected in 1960-62 to be used primarily by the German population. The author states that only those who are blinded or misled by foreign propaganda will not take note of this progress (p. 216).

Krestyaninov states that the Mennonite religious faith continues to prevail partly because of a low level of education among some of them and because of a tendency of the Mennonites to segregate on the basis of their ethnic background. The strong family ties and traditions which are even extended to foreign countries, the influences of the religio-political Mennonite bourgeois centers in the West and the lack of strong groups of qualified propagandist atheists coming from the Mennonite population are responsible for the surviving religious interests among the Mennonites.

In conclusion, the author makes the observation that a faith of a Soviet man in God is not so much his fault as his misfortune. For this reason all who help man to free himself from religious prejudices accomplish a humanistic deed for the present and future of mankind (p. 221).

Some Questions and Remarks

The following are some questions and remarks directed to the author, Victor Fedorovich Krestyaninov. It should be permissible to raise some questions pertaining to scholarly pursuit, methodology, objectivity and fairness. First of all, it appears that the attempt to create a tool or a handbook for propaganda purposes was the strongest motivating objective of the author. This has a strong bearing on the outcome and method of his

scholarly pursuit.

1. There seems to be an unwillingness or a lack of ability to precisely formulate the philosophical or sociological or theological motivation and driving force of Anabaptism in the context of the Reformation during the sixteenth century. Marxism has developed a school of historiography as has been evidenced in a growing number of books of general history and monograms of various phases of history including the Reformation. We name only some scholars, as S. S. Smirin[2] in Russia and Gerhard Brendler[3] in East Germany who have done some substantial research and publishing within the framework of Marxian historiography. This book falls short as far as these standards of scientific research are concerned.

2. In narrating the history of the Mennonites in Russia the author points out many weaknesses in the life, system and the contribution of the Mennonites in their chosen fatherland. Anyone familiar with the history of the Mennonites of Russia is painfully aware of many inconsistencies and shortcomings. But would it be fair to write a history based on glaring shortcomings? The author has often chosen to follow this path.

Here are some examples: The Mennonites came to Russia partly to be exempted from military service. They opened their homes and were willing to help the wounded during the Crimean War. Instead of acknowledging this fact as an effort to become responsible citizens of the country they are being accused of a "substantial support of tsarism" (p. 37). The progressive farming methods of the Mennonites which could and did serve as models in an environment with backward practices find nothing but a negative observation by the author. It is true that some employed laborers but what else could and should they have done in the days when the freed peasants were permitted to seek employment? Would it have been better to let them starve? Most of the Mennonites were not prosperous and had difficulty finding available land for their sons. There were, comparatively speaking, a few large estate owners and operators of factories. That they established an industry in the days when most of the machinery was imported was not all on the negative side. They helped in developing a Russian industry and furnished an additional income for small-scale Russian farmers (p. 21ff.).

The communal living of the Mennonites was in no way perfect, but it was unusual in the environment in which they lived. This was particularly the case with a branch of Mennonites known as "Hutterites" who have from the days of Anabaptist origins to the present the longest history of the practice of a complete communal living. A reference to the struggle of the landless Mennonites and the communal life of the Hutterites would not have been out of place. (See this issue of *Mennonite Life*.)

A number of writers of Mennonite background in the U.S.S.R. have reacted to the book in *Neues Leben* published by *Pravda*, Moscow (June 12, 1968, p. 6 and preceding issues). Among them are Prof. D. Penner, K. Penner and Willi Goerz. Willi Goerz of Kirgizia maintains that the Mennonite part in constructive and wholehearted participation in the collectivization program and in other endeavors of the upbuilding of the socialist society of the Soviet Union was much more substantial than Krestyaninov leads us to believe. Among other things Goerz points out that by 1930 all Mennonite villages of the Molotschna settlement had been collectivized and such leaders like Braun received the Order of Lenin in 1936.

3. The matter of Mennonite nonresistance and its inconsistent application in daily life from time to time is strongly emphasized by the author. In the beginning the revolutionary armed effort is hailed as a positive characteristic of early Anabaptism. Later on incidents of inconsistency are emphasized. The author makes no effort to truly present the basic philosophy of pacifism found among some religious groups such as the Mennonites, the early Russian Baptists, the Dukhobors and the followers of L. N. Tolstoi.

He also fails to point out that the Mennonites being of German background, as he justly maintains, were suffering as a result of the hostilities between Germany and Russia at the time of World War I which influenced the anti-German atmosphere among the local population where the German Mennonites lived. This and the conditions during the Civil War caused attacks and the destruction of Mennonite villages. It is not an unusual human characteristic for a minority to be attacked in such a situation nor for it in turn to take up arms in self-defense, as was the case in the Ukraine. It was the Red army that crushed the pockets of mobs and bandits in the days of the Civil War and established order (p. 102ff.).

The author states that Mennonites were unwilling to serve in the Red army but willing to serve in the German army. By the time Hitler's army invaded Russia all Mennonite young men were expected to and did serve in the Red army. The exemption from full military service had been terminated by the Soviet government. The Mennonites were serving in the Red army like any other citizens; this fact the author ignores. He relates about some cases where some Mennonite leaders encouraged young men to remain consistent with their original nonresistant views. They must have been rare exceptions. Why did the author not tell us what happened to the few ministers and young men who declined to serve? (p. 110ff.) A personal right to a conscientious objection to war, any war, is recognized in most western countries.

4. The author repeatedly contrasts the orthodox traditional Mennonite view with the socialist Communist humanism. The emphasis on humanism in this book and Soviet philosophy and literature in

general is refreshing. Humanism traditionally puts man in the center of its philosophy and concerns. Humanism emphasizes the dignity and freedom of man in opposition to dogmatism and any enslavement by a system, be this imposed by the church or society in general and capitalism in particular. We would like to go a step further and include the system of Communism, if humanism is to be more than a phrase added to the vocabulary. This brings us to a very basic question addressed to the author of *Mennonity*.

The book, as do all narrations within the Marxist historiography, asserts and reasserts that human exploitation is a characteristic of "capitalism" and is impossible in the Communist society. There is absolutely no doubt about it that world history has proven that one man tends to exploit the other and that combinations of exploiting men can be harmful and detrimental to an exploited layer of society. Preventions and corrections of such situations must be made to "humanize" society. There is no question in the reviewer's mind that socialism in Western Europe prior to the emergence of Communism and Communism itself have contributed tremendously to the humanization of conditions for mankind, particularly in the Western world. The challenge and the influence of socialism and the idealism of Communism now reach far beyond the Western world and will continue to do so.

However, the social philosophy and basis of Communism must be deepened and humanized. Many Marxist philosophers are aware of this. Soviet Russia itself has moved in this direction since Stalin. Russian Marxism has not only introduced a system, ideology and doctrines that ended one era of exploitation and ushered in a classless society but it has also shown that exploitation and deprivation does continue in some form within a system that was determined to do away with it. We need not to go into detail about this during Stalin's era. No system is more important than man himself, regardless of how good it may be. The humanization of society and the system of government is a continuing process in all social and political systems.

A final word may be in place. The Marxism of Krestyaninov lacks a philosophy of the nature of man. His philosophy expects the solution of man's problems from the application of a (Marxian) theory. A theory, even the best, does not automatically change man and society. The emphasis on humanism is a move in the right direction. There may even be an ingredient in the Christian theology which could be accepted. At least a more tolerant attitude toward those who have different views, be this in the realm of religion or social and economic thought, would be helpful.

The book by Krestyaninov has many good features. It is the first book in the Russian language published in Soviet Russia conveying information about the Mennonites to those who belong to them and to those who would like to know about them. It is also a good source of information to all those outside of Russia curious about their present status. It is the product of diligent research and hard work which will be used widely.

FOOTNOTES

1. S. D. Bondar, *Sekta mennonitov v Rossiv*, Petrograd, 1916; A. Ehrt, *Das Mennonitentum in Russland*, Berlin, 1932; P. M. Friesen, *Die Alt-Evangelische Mennonitische Bruederschaft in Russland (1789-1910)* Halbstadt, 1911.
2. M. M. Sirin, ed., *Weltgeschichte*, Band 4. Berlin, 1964.
3. Gerhard Brendler, *Das Taeuferreich zu Muenster 1534/35*, Berlin, 1966.

The Hutterites During World War I

By John D. Unruh

When the United States became involved in World War I in April 1917, there were nineteen Hutterian Brethren colonies in this country, seventeen in South Dakota and two in Montana. There were several reasons why these people quite early in the war became the object of considerable apprehension in the eyes of local authorities. While the colonies maintained schools for their children and conducted them in English, their everyday communication and their formal religious services were all in the German language. Their adherence to the principle of nonresistance also caused concern. Not only did they object to military service on the part of their young men but they refused to participate in the support of the war through the purchase of government bonds and contributions to the Red Cross.

When the Brethren first came to Dakota Territory in the 1870's they were welcomed just as were the Mennonites who came during the same period. There was plenty of land and state authorities were happy to get settlers to farm it. By the time of the war the colonies had become rather prosperous and really lived peacefully and generally isolated from the rest of society. Most people could ignore them except for an occasional visitor who wanted to see how these "queer" people lived. Once the country was at war,

however, the story was different. Here were people who spoke German, refused to loan money to a benevolent government, and tried to withhold their young men from military service. So the attitude of the public quickly shifted from an easy tolerance to hostile intolerance.

The Selective Service Act, which was passed on May 18, 1917, presented the Brethren with their first and most important problem. The Act called for all physically able men between the ages of 21 and 31 to be liable for military service. While there were provisions in the Act for exempting conscientious objectors, they were not to be exempt from service that the President would declare noncombatant. This the President did not do until March 20, 1918, and then he limited it only to noncombatant military service. This, of course, meant that men who claimed conscientious objector status would have to become members of the armed forces, naturally wearing the uniform. In June 1918, Secretary of War Newton D. Baker finally allowed conscientious objectors to be released for farm labor.[1]

However, by June 1918, many things had already happened to Hutterite men who were drafted. Anyone who wanted to be exempt on religious grounds had to present himself at a mobilization point designated by the local draft board. This meant that the Hutterian man who was sent to such a center already faced harassment on the way to the center. Since his clothes were usually homemade and he wore a beard (if married) he was easily singled out by other draftees.

Long before the first men were called, the various colony leaders had mutually agreed that their men could register and report for their physical examinations but once having arrived at an induction center they would become uncooperative. This not only meant that they would refuse to wear the army uniform but would also refuse any work on command that had any semblance of helping the war effort. For all practical purposes this meant virtually no work at all, save for making their beds and keeping their quarters clean.

Hutterites in Washington D. C.

In August of 1917 the various colonies sent a delegation of ministers to Washington to present their concerns to President Wilson. While the delegation did not get to see Wilson it did have a hearing with Secretary of War Baker, who received them in a very friendly way. His counsel relative to their men who might be called into service was to let them go to the respective training camps when called and to "do what their conscience would allow them to do." Since President Wilson had not defined noncombatant service at that time Baker could make no promises to the delegation and for this reason probably used this rather flexible approach to the problem.[2]

This then set the stage for all of the unfortunate experiences the Hutterites encountered once they arrived in camp. To the immediate army officers in charge, it became a determined game to see if they could make the Hutterite man make one false move and thus prove him inconsistent. Every conceivable method was resorted to in the process all the way from argumentation to ingenius physical torture. The persuasive oral attempts of colonels, majors, and chaplains, on down to sergeants, corporals, and mere privates were all to no avail. The Hutterite draftees had invariably the same answer which basically rested on their being members of the Hutterian Brethren Church whose creed forbade taking part in any form of military service. Jacob S. Waldner, a draftee from one of the Montana colonies and now living in a colony at Headingly, Manitoba, gave this written statement to his captain at Camp Funston when asked why he refused work:

"I am against being persuaded to take part in any of the military services that President Wilson has outlined as noncombatant service. The reason for this is because I am a member of the Hutterian Brethren Church whose creed forbids taking part in any form of military service."[3]

Nor did ridicule, foul language, and physical torture accomplish anything. The results were invariably the same. Jacob S. Waldner who arrived in Camp Funston on October 7, 1917, and was finally released on December 18, 1918, says that the Brethren were almost continuously pressured to accept work of some kind during that time. He himself consistently refused, even though the harassment was almost unbearable at times.

From available records it would appear that some fifty Hutterite men were drafted into service. Quite a few of these men were married at the time, some having as many as four children. The story of the four from Wolf Creek colony near Freeman has often been told. John, David, and Michael Hofer, all three brothers, and Jacob Wipf left home in early June of 1918 and in the following months spent all of the time in the guard house, the military prison on the Island of Alcatraz in San Francisco Bay, and finally, Fort Leavenworth military prison in Kansas. Here John and Michael Hofer died from the inhuman treatment they had received. David was released on January 2, 1919, and ultimately Jacob Wipf was also released from the Disciplinary Barracks at Leavenworth on April 13, 1919.[4]

C. O. Treatment

The following are but a few of the ingenious schemes resorted to by both commissioned and non-commissioned officers:[5]

A man would be asked to put on the uniform which, of course, would be refused. A sack would then be

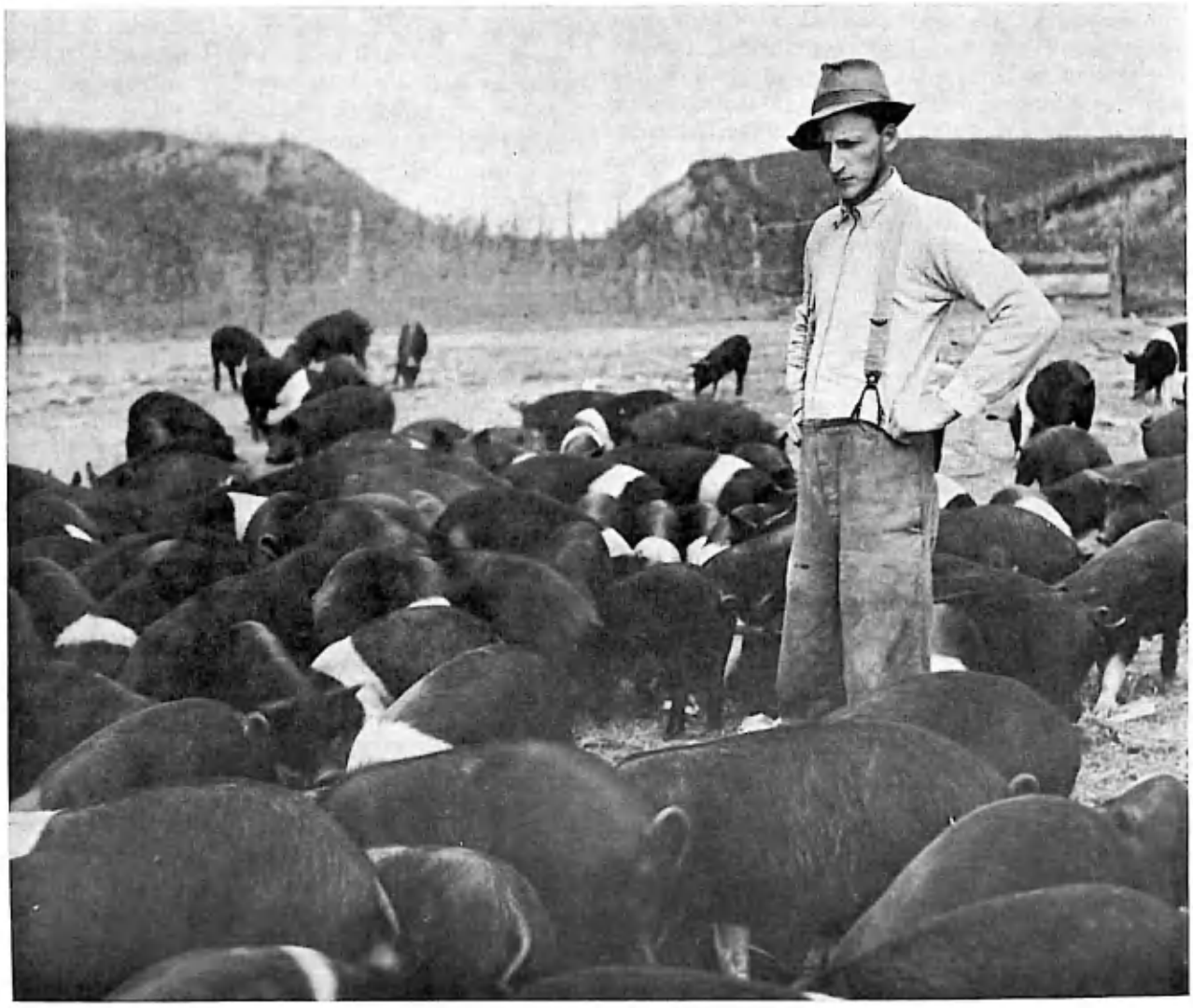
put over his head and he was told that he would be shot for disobeying an order. The officer would then command a soldier to get ready to fire. The already intimidated man would hear distinctly the cocking of the trigger in preparation for firing. Upon the command to fire another soldier would strike two boards together with a loud noise.

Or a couple of soldiers would take a Hutterite by his legs and hang him in a tank of water head first until he almost choked and repeat the procedure once he caught his breath. The threat to carry on the harassment in boiling water was never actually carried out.

A Lieutenant once ordered Jacob S. Waldner to be thrown into a cold shower for twenty minutes after he had refused work. Men were sometimes thrown into the showers with their clothes on and then thrown out through the window where other soldiers would take them and pull them around on the ground, sometimes by the feet and sometimes by the hair. Another variation of the shower ordeal was to hold the man by his feet and stand him on his head until the water ran into his nose.

The three men who arrived in Camp Funston on June 29, 1918, John Waldner, Jos. Glanzer, and John Wipf, were all manhandled. All were struck

The "Pig Boss" of the Hutterite Bruderhof *in South Dakota is pleased with the progress of the porkers. Youth are shaven until married. This one has the sign of a married man.*



by fist both in the face and the back. Their clothes were torn. They were pulled around on the ground by their hair and feet, and their beards were trimmed to make them look ridiculous.

Paul Kleinsasser, now 76 years old and living at Blumengard colony near Iriquois, South Dakota, was drafted late in August, 1918. He, along with three other Hutterite men, arrived in Camp Funston after provisions had already been made to furlough the men for farm work. In spite of this they experienced plenty of harassment. First, they were denied the privilege of eating in the mess hall. Instead, they were given daily rations of bread, some raw beans, raw bacon, and some coffee and were directed to a ravine about a fourth of a mile from the mess hall. They were given no cooking utensils except two pails. Nor was there any provision to cook the raw food they were given. They improvised a makeshift cooking facility from "dumpground" materials which were placed over a hole in the ground. They also salvaged empty cans from the same place and finally could do their own cooking. This arrangement was continued from September through the middle of November. At that point they were thrown into the guardhouse for disobeying an order to build a sidewalk out of stones from their tent to the mess hall. Paul Kleinsasser, being a spokesman for the others, said they would not touch a stone, that the war was already over, and besides they could not eat in the mess hall anyway, that the whole scheme was merely to trick them into working. This refusal not only landed them in the guardhouse but also led to their court-martial and ultimately being sentenced to the disciplinary barracks at Leavenworth for five years.[6] (See p. 134).

The Hutterite men generally chafed under the continued bombardment of cussing and foul language. They resented the frequent physical examinations where it was necessary for them to apear in the nude. They objected very strenuously to the periodic inspections for venereal disease, always contending that they were "clean." Army officials usually accepted their contention and exempted them from this embarrassing ordeal.[7] They were unhappy, too, when their books were taken away from them. Those were mostly German devotional books that they had taken along from home. In some instances, however, some books were not surrendered but hidden and used secretly.[8] Nor was it easy for them to forgive the Lieutenant at Fort Dodge who forced them to witness the hanging of three Negroes who had been charged with attacking a white girl. While there were many at this hanging Jacob S. Waldner says that there were many more Negroes than whites; all the whites had their firearms while the Negroes who witnessed the event were all unarmed![9]

Aside from the four men from Wolf Creek who were severely tortured in Alcatraz and two of whom actually died from this treatment as already alluded to, it cannot be said that the treatment on the whole for the rest was unbearable. It was embarrassing; it was decidedly uncomfortable at times, both emotionally and physically; it was terribly boring; and, of course, it was unnecessary and futile. It does not appear that months of harassment on the part of camp officials ever made a dent on the unwavering faith and stubborn resistance of the Hutterian draftees.

Camp Life

But if a Hutterite refused to do work of any kind directed by the military, how did he actually spend his time in camp or in prison? Here are a few typical days as recorded in Jacob S. Waldner's diary: (I have taken liberty to paraphrase here.)

February 9 (1918). The men were asked if they were willing to work—this was a routine question—and when they, as usual, refused they were marched around the various streets of the camp with an armed guard behind who prodded them with the gun occasionally. This lasted from 8:00 in the morning until noon. The guards changed off every hour and some guards merely stood in the center while the men circled them.

February 19. Refused work when asked and then forced to stand around until 11:00. Were not allowed to go inside.

March 23. Sat on hill and watched regular soldiers drill.

April 9. Captain ordered them to march to the top of the hill and stay there.

April 12. Sat around on top of hill.

May 1. From 9:00 to 11:00 had to stay out on yard.

May 6 to May 21. Aside from an occasional roll call the routine was invariably the same. Out on the yard—either sit or stand around!

June 13. Asked to mow the lawn—refused. Had to stay out in the yard—could not enter their tent.

June 14. Asked to mow the lawn—refused. Asked to sweep the street—refused. Had to stay out in yard—could not enter tent.

June 15. Captain asked them to work—refused. Sent to hill from 8:00 to 11:30—sit in hot sun.

June 17. Upon refusal of work assignment were sent to hill from 8:00 to 12:00 and from 1:00 to 5:00.

June 28. Back on hill.

July 1. Back on hill.

On July 3 the Hutterite men were all transferred to Camp Dodge in Iowa. Here the routine was virtually the same. Apparently there was a hill in this camp, also, for the entry for July 17 says that they went back on the hill.[10]

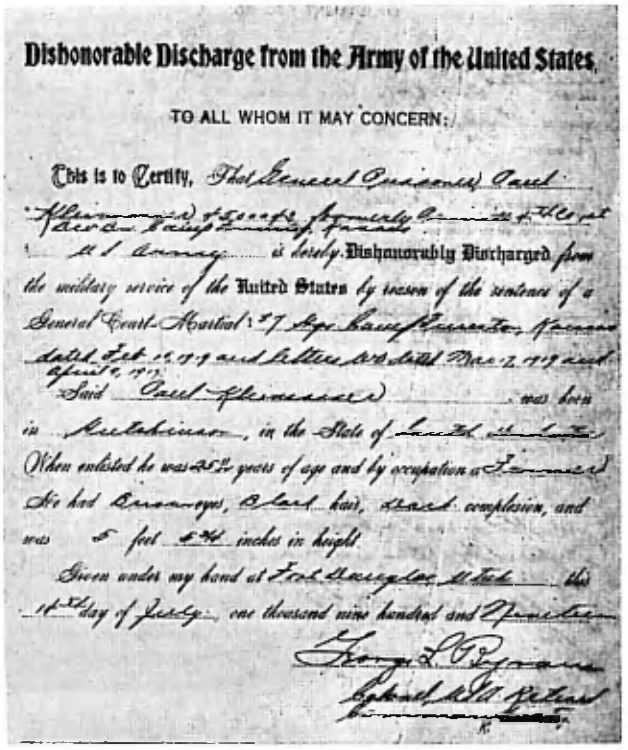
On August 12, 1918, an officer informed the men that provisions had been made for them to be furloughed for farm work. Such work was to be at least thirty miles from home and was to be paid for by themselves. However, each man was to retain only thirty dollars a month and everything beyond this

was to be given to the Red Cross. It was not until the end of the month that the men were actually assigned for farm work. Some of the men were assigned to farms in Iowa, while a few were actually sent back to colonies other than their home colonies in South Dakota. This arrangement continued until most of the men were released on December 18, 1918. This meant that they arrived home in time for a most joyous Christmas. This did not apply, however, to the men who had been sentenced to disciplinary barracks.

Farm furloughs were not given to Paul Kleinsasser and the three others who had arrived at Funston with him, as suggested above. These men were court-martialled and sentenced to the disciplinary barracks at Leavenworth. Here they did no work either but on the whole the treatment was much better than in Camp Funston—at least they got their meals at tables as did all the other prisoners. They were transferred finally to an internment camp near Salt Lake City, Utah, where in June 1919 they were released with "dishonorable discharges." Paul exhibits this framed paper with considerable pride, saying that if he was confronted with the same circumstances again, he would react similarly.[11]

Nor did the farm furloughs apply to the men from Wolf Creek who were serving time in the disciplinary barracks at Leavenworth, having been transferred there from Alcatraz in November 1918. As already indicated two of the men died here and the other two were released from prison in the spring of 1919.

Thus from August 1917 when the first men were called until the end of August the following year, the efforts of camp officials to make the Hutterites conform to military ways were utterly futile. Either the men were court-martialled and imprisoned or they boringly sat around in camp doing nothing. It was only during the last two and a half months of the war that the constructive program of farm furloughs was inaugurated. In retrospect it would appear that it took the government an unusually long time to resolve this problem. One can also ask the simple question: Why did the Hutterites not bend just a trifle—say to do menial tasks around the camp? Many Mennonite draftees, of course, did and received much more wholesome treatment. When Paul Kleinsasser was asked this question he replied without hesitation that if they had bent just even a trifle their whole case would have broken down. He felt that many of the Mennonites had compromised too much and, as already indicated, his course would be exactly as it was in 1917 should similar circumstances confront him.[12] And Paul very likely reflects the thinking of all the men still alive who went through the ordeal. It should be interpolated here that one is conscious of an apparent paradox in the position of camp authorities. While on the one hand they were extremely severe and at times almost inhuman they were rather



Dishonorable Discharge from the Army of the United States

TO ALL WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

This is to Certify, That [illegible] Paul [illegible] is hereby Dishonorably Discharged from the military service of the United States by reason of the sentence of a General Court-Martial [illegible] and Letter dated [illegible]

Said Paul [illegible] was born in [illegible], in the State of [illegible] When enlisted he was 25 years of age and by occupation a Farmer. He had Brown eyes, Black hair, Dark complexion, and was 5 feet 8½ inches in height.

Given under my hand at Fort Douglas, Utah, this 1st day of July, one thousand nine hundred and [illegible]

[illegible]

Paul Kleinsasser received in 1919 a Dishonorable Discharge from the Army of the United States "because of a court-martial at Camp Funston, Kansas. This is an illustration of what happened to most of the boys.

liberal with furloughs. In Waldner's diary there are frequent references to men being given leave. (For instance, when Zacharias Hofer's child died he was given ten days leave, while Jacob S. Waldner was given five days when his mother was not expected to live.) Also, there were frequent visits to the camp by colony ministers.[13]

Before turning to the problems on the home front, a word should be said about the unfortunate and futile attempt on the part of the brethren at home to bribe officers at Camp Funston to release some fourteen members then serving in the camp. This occurred in November of 1917. The three brethren so charged were Jacob Hofer, John J. Wipf, and J. B. Entz from Alexandria, South Dakota. Specifically, the federal grand jury at Topeka, Kansas, on April 9, 1918, brought the following indictments: against Jacob Hofer for actual payment of $120 to Lieut. C. C. Roy; against John J. Wipf for having written a letter to Lieut. W. P. Jones offering to pay $2000; and against J. B. Entz for having knowledge of both transactions. All three of the men were released on bond and held for trial at the October 1918 term of the federal court at Topeka, Kansas. Actual disposition of the cases did not come until June 7, 1920, however, when the records show that Jacob Hofer and John J. Wipf were

found guilty and fined $100 each, while J. P. Entz was judged not guilty.[14]

While the men in camp and the disciplinary barracks were having their problems, the colonies on the home front faced severe trials as well. Newspapers of the period were generally not friendly to the Hutterian colonies. Most of them were obsessed with the responsibility of ferreting out the unpatriotic, the slackards, the cowards, the pro-Germans, the Kaiser supporters. It was relatively easy for them to single out the colonies as being unpatriotic. An editorial in one of the daily papers ended with this caustic statement: "Conscientious objectors we call them, fools is a better definition. Theirs is a religion that seals the eyes and ears, closes the heart, destroys the soul."[15]

To make the Hutterites appear as supporters of the Kaiser, a superpatriot deliberately hid a box with ground glass in a sack of flour which was milled at the Bon Homme colony flour mill. The Deputy U. S. Marshall closed the mill for several days while investigations were made. No action was ever taken even though it was quite clear that the ground glass was brought to the mill by the superpatriot.[16]

The general public impression was that the colonies were wealthy and should have made more liberal donations to the Red Cross and purchased more Liberty Bonds. The local Liberty Bond committees were especially conscious of this lethargy. The colonies, of course, paid taxes as did all other property owners. The State Council of Defense had specified that whenever the colonies sold land, five percent of the proceeds would have to be invested in Liberty Bonds and one-half of one percent was to be donated to the Red Cross. Since the Brethren contemplated selling out and moving to Canada this regulation proved disturbing. It was circumvented by reducing the price of land so that the buyers could make these investments. By this process their indirect contributions to the war effort amounted to $25,000 in Liberty Bonds, $4,000 to the Red Cross, and $1,000 to the State Council of Defense.[17] But there were also some direct transactions on the part of the colonies. The representatives of the Bon Homme colony came to Tyndall on May 30, 1918, and arranged to purchase $5,000 in Liberty Bonds. Their comment was that while their religious beliefs were against war "it would not be a great sin to help the government."[18] A colony near Huron turned in $512.85 to the Red Cross.[19]

Patriots in Barns and Cellars

But in some counties the local officials were still unhappy with the response of some of the colonies. This was particularly true in Yankton County where the Jamesville colony was located. In this instance the Liberty Loan Committee of Yankton, consisting of prominent business and professional people, established a quota of $10,000 for the colony. When the colony leaders refused to comply with this demand the Yankton Committee rounded up one hundred head of cattle and one thousand sheep and drove them off to Utica nearby and from there shipped them by train to Yankton. Here the livestock was ultimately sold at auction and the Committee realized approximately $16,000. The Brethren contended that the actual value of the livestock taken was around $40,000.[20] From this point on the story is not very clear. The most plausible version is that the local committee bought Liberty Bonds ($15,000 more or less) with the money realized from the auction sale and held the bonds in a safety box in the Dakota National Bank at Yankton. When the Jamesville colony sold its land and moved to Canada the bonds were accepted as partial payment for land in Canada by the land agent.[21] The feeling among colony people still persists that some money changed hands among the raiders![22] In a long editorial on the incident the *Sioux Falls Press*, May 10, 1918, concluded in this manner:

"Irregular? Yes, by ordinary peace standards of conduct. But these infernal ideas that are cropping up here and there in this country that an American citizen claiming the benefits of this land can choose for himself whether or not he shall help the nation protect itself against destruction are somewhat irregular too.

"If the Mennonites do not like the idea let them pack up what they can carry away and return to that part of Europe whence they came. We shall ask them to be so good as to leave behind the land this nation practically gave them."[23]

That the Brethren in the colonies used wine for medicinal, religious, and festive purposes was commonly known. Their wine was usually made from wild grapes in the fall of the year and stored for use throughout the rest of the year as occasion demanded. Nor did they stop making it even after the war time food control act became effective. Not much was said about this, however, until the summer of 1918. During June of that year someone broke into the wine cellar at the Jamesville colony and got away with 82 gallons of wine. The colony leaders then hired a man from Mitchell who had bloodhounds in hopes of retrieving the loss. The culprit was soon found—he was slated to be inducted and rationalized that "I wanted to have a riproaring good time before I went off to fight."[24] Since he was about to be inducted anyway no charges were pressed against him. However, the colony received unfavorable publicity because it had no legal right to have wine in the first place and ultimately had to give up its entire supply. The *Aberdeen Daily News*, June 21, 1918, made this observation on the incident:

"The Mennonites of Yankton County are about to lose a large stock of wine which they are said to have accumulated. The Mennonites have many points of excellence, but they seem to be utterly unable to com-

prehend the fact that they are subject to the laws of the land in which they live, and must obey these laws or suffer the consequences."

In November of the same year a band of roughnecks from Yankton raided the wine cellar of the Bon Homme colony and brought large quantities back to the city. Here on the steps of the courthouse it was freely distributed to the citizens and proved an added stimulus to the Armistice Day Parade. Even the Mayor of the city, who was later to become a federal judge, appeared in an inebriated condition from the wine![25]

But more was to follow. In May 1918 the State Council of Defense brought suit against the Hutterische Brüder-Gemeinde of Bon Homme County. Dissolution of the corporation was asked for on the following grounds: transacting business while claiming to be a religious corporation; undue influence of the leaders over the members to the extent that the members were asked to obey regulations that were contrary to federal as well as state laws; the refusal to supply either men or money for the defense of the country. The defense contended that the state knew of the practices of the Brethren since their incorporation in 1905, that they lived together to practice and teach their beliefs, and carried on agriculture primarily as a means of support. The ruling of Judge A. E. Taylor was against the colony; a later appeal to the Supreme Court of the state brought no relief.[26] After Judge Taylor's decision, the secretary of the State Council of Defense intimated to newsmen that in his opinion ". . . this decision will absolutely exterminate the Mennonites in South Dakota."[27]

The case illustrates clearly how differently people look upon particular problems. Here are two quotes from the proceedings of the case before the Supreme Court of the state:

First, from the prosecuting attorneys in the case:

". . . that the existence of such corporation is a menace to society and to the government of the state of South Dakota and of the United States; that to permit said corporation to continue its corporate existence in its business is and will be contrary to public policy and good morals. . . ."

The second is from Judge J. Smith, who dissenting from the majority opinion, said this:

"Under the blessings of free government, every citizen should be permitted to pursue that mode of life which is dictated by his own conscience, and if this, also be exacted by an essential dogma or doctrine of his religion, a corporation organized to enable him to meet the requirement of his faith is a religious corporation, and as such may own property and carry on enterprises appropriate to the object of its creation."[28]

The almost continual harassment during the war persuaded colony leaders to rely on an old escape route: emigration. Canada offered the most promising prospects. Colony representatives had been assured that while Canada had a draft law the Hutterites would not be molested.[29] They also conferred with State Department officials in Washington relative to sending agents to Canada. They, too, were concerned if there might be objection to the colonies leaving the United States. They were informed that the State Department would hold nothing in the way of their departure.[30]

In retrospect it can be said that the almost continual harassment both in the military camps and on the home front by misguided superpatriots made life so unpleasant that the Hutterites left South Dakota. The first colony left in the summer of 1918 and all the others, except Bon Homme colony, followed so that by 1933 the move was complete. But there is a sequel to this unhappy sequence of events—within three years after the leaving of the last colony for Canada one had already returned from there. Others were to follow so that by 1950 thirteen had come back. The fact that some returned during World War II is indicative that public opinion was quite different from the first World War and perhaps also that the colonies had been rather hasty in leaving in the first instance. Or, to put it still another way, the atmosphere in Canada, especially in the Province of Alberta proved less friendly than the Brethren had anticipated.

FOOTNOTES

1. See more complete discussion of this in Guy F. Hershberger, *War, Peace, and Nonresistance* (Scottdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1944), pp. 114-122.
2. In the entry for April 8, 1918, of the "Diary of Joseph S. Waldner", an unpublished manuscript in German located at the Hutterian colony near Headingly, Manitoba. There is also a copy of this available at Pearl Creek colony, Iriquois, S. Dak. The copy at Pearl Creek was copied from the original by Rev. Michael Waldner.
3. *Ibid.*
4. For a detailed coverage of this tragic episode see C. Henry Smith, *The Coming of the Russian Mennonites* (Berne, Indiana: Mennonite Book Concern, 1927), pp. 277-282.
5. This material is all taken from the *Diary of Jacob S. Waldner.*
6. Personal interview with Paul Kleinsasser, October 19, 1968, at Blumengart Colony, Ipswitch, S. Dak.
7. *Waldner Diary*, July 8, 1918.
8. *Ibid.*, July 6, also July 26.
9. *Ibid.*, July 5.
10. *Ibid.*, July 17.
11. Personal interview (Paul Kleinsasser).
12. *Ibid.*
13. *Waldner, Diary.* I have made no serious attempt in this paper to ascertain the number of men from the colonies who may have gone into the regular service during the war. There is a record on one such man who was born in a colony near Mitchell. He was a Robert Kleinsasser who reasoned that it was "God's war and if God don't win the world is doomed to destruction". He wanted to join the infantry or artillery but because of poor eyesight the medical corps was the only one for which he could qualify. See the *Aberdeen Daily News*, May 1, 1918, for the story.
14. *The Daily Huronite*, April 27, 1918; See also issue of May 1, 1918. Also a letter from Frank Lilly, Feb. 18, 1969, Chief, Reference Service Branch of the Federal Records Center, 2306 East Bannister Road, Kansas City, Missouri.
15. *The Sioux Falls Press*, May 26, 1918.
16. *Madison Daily Sentinel*, Feb. 18, 1918. See also Norman Thomas, "The Hutterian Brethren", in *South Dakota Historical Collections and Report*, vol. 25, p. 277. The patriot is reported to have committed suicide later.
17. Gertrude Young, "The Mennonites in South Dakota", *South Dakota Historical Collections and Report*, Vol. 10, p. 498.
18. *The Onida Watchman*, May 30, 1918.
19. *The Daily Huronite*, April 4, 1918.

20. *Yankton Press and Dakotan*, May 4, 1918; also May 6; May 7; May 11.
21. John A. Hostettler and Gertrude E. Huntington, *The Hutterites in North America* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1967), pp. 92-93. See also letter from H. C. Danforth, President of the First Dakota National Bank, Yankton, S. Dak., Oct. 19, 1968.
22. Norman Thomas, *Op. Cit.*, p. 278. Also personal interview with a prominent octogenerian businessman of Yankton who bought one of the sheep at the sale!
23. The word Mennonite was used invariably by papers in the state during that period when in fact they meant Hutterian Brethren.
24. *The Onida Watchman*, June 27, 1918.
25. A. J. F. Zieglschmid, *Das Klein-Geschichtbuch der Hutterischen Brueder*, p. 487. Also a letter to the writer from Dr. H. J. Schell, the University of South Dakota, Oct. 23, 1968.
26. *The Sioux Falls Press*, May 31, 1918; *Report of the South Dakota State Council of Defense* 1917-1919, p. 60; also Zieglschmid, *Op. Cit.*, p. 489.
27. Young, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 501-502.
28. *South Dakota Reports, Supreme Court*, 1922-23, Vol. 46, pp. 197-217.
29. *The Daily Huronite*, March 7, 1918; also April 23, 1918.
30. *Ibid.*

Multilingualism Among the Old Colony Mennonites

By James R. Jaquith

It is probably well known that Old Colony Mennonites use two kinds of German: *Plattdeutsch* in their everyday lives and *Hochdeutsch* in their religious activities. The cultural ramifications of the use of these languages are probably not as fully appreciated. Nor is the fact that two other languages function in important ways among the Old Colony Mennonite settlements in Chihuahua, Mexico. The ways in which four languages are differentially used by this large group of Mennonites—and the different effects this usage has—is the subject of the discussion which follows.

Mennonite Apartness in Mexico

Chihuahua OC Mennonites, numbering at this time in excess of 30,000, began to come into the Valle de San Antonio in 1922. This immigration was effectively stopped in 1948. Thus, most present members of the group were born in Mexico. The Old Colony Mennonites do not, however, regard themselves as Mexican citizens. Nor, for that matter, do they regard themselves as citizens of any country. Their commitment to apartness from national identity is one expression of a more general Anabaptist tradition of self-conscious isolation from "the world". This refers to what they regard (in principle, not always in practice) as the inevitable, ritually contaminating consequences of participation in the mainstream developments of any national culture.

It seems to this author—a non-Mennonite anthropologist—that Mennonite culture generally is not comprehensible except in terms of the organizational theme labeled "apartness" above. The fact is, however, that any culture, at any time and in any place, can from a certain point of view be thought of as comprising two interdependent part cultures. These are what anthropologists call "ideal" and "behavioral" cultures. Ideal in this context refers to the series of prescriptive and proscriptive patterns of behavior that any culture manifests—the "thou shouldsts" and "thou shouldst nots" with which we are all familiar. It is the case, however, that the actual observed behavior of all peoples manifests some degree of divergence from the ideals referred to above. It is the behavior which they actually observe and record that anthropologists call "behavioral culture". From this point of view, world Mennonites reflect a rather broad range of degrees of conservatism, which here refers to divergence between stated ideals and observed practices. In this sense it is probably not difficult to demonstrate that the Chihuahua Old Colony Mennonites are the most conservative of all Mennonite groups today.

High German and Low German

The routine in-group vernacular of these people is a Low German dialect called in High German *Plattdeutsch*, but which the people themselves call *Plotdiyts*. (The spelling of this and other italicized *Plattdeutsch* terms follows the conventions of the alphabet referred to in this article. This *Plotdiytset Obaytsay* (ABC) will be the subject of a subsequent report to *Mennonite Life*.) It is the interesting fact—and one of the bases of this article—that three other languages function significantly in the OC. These are what the people call High German (*Hochdeutsch*), English and Spanish.

Hochdeutsch is the ritual language. This is consistent with the fact that Mennonite sacred writings (e.g., the Luther Bible, the *Märtyrer-Spiegel*, the *Gesangbuch*) are in High German. Mennonite boys and girls attain some command of this language in their own schools, which have no connection with Mexican schools. Indeed, Canadianization of schools following World War I constituted one of the prime motivations for Mennonite emigration, and the privilegium extended by the Mex-

ican government of Alvaro Obregon explicitly exempts Mennonites from attending other than their own schools.

Two factors combine to make it rather difficult to generalize about how fluent Mennonite children become in *Hochdeutsch*. These are, in the first place, that schoolteaching as a way of making a living enjoys rather negative prestige in the OC and thus it might be that teachers come to be selected for qualities other than substantive knowledge and teaching ability. The second of these factors has to do with the way in which the OC has defined its schools. Generally, they are not thought of as institutions for the inculcation of techniques and ways of interpreting the world so as to maximize the child's ability to adapt to the environment which surrounds him. Rather, schools are regarded as the most appropriate way of preparing children for successful participation in the religious life of the community.

In ideal culture terms, apartness demands that the languages of host societies not be used since such use constitutes, *ipso facto*, intercourse with "the world". The historical facts, however, are that Mennonites have never lived in real isolation from other people and that their farming economy necessitates continuous buying and selling relationships with non-Mennonite host societies. Indeed, it would appear that conscious consideration of the availability of established non-Mennonite markets has entered into decisions affecting at least one Old Colony migration, that from Mexico to British Honduras. Thus, all men informally learn sufficient of the host language to conduct market operations. It is of some interest to speculate that if any one of the important Old Colony migrations had been to a truly isolated and uninhabited area and if they had remained essentially uncontacted for several generations, not even the men would have learned the language of the host country.

From a strictly ideological perspective nonuse of host languages is insulating and thus positively functional if sustained integrity of the group is thought of as a desirable goal. This continues to be accomplished in the OC, but at the considerable price of generating divisive friction within the group by consciously denying access to the single most important aspect of the host culture, its language. And the undeniable social fact of the Chihuahua OC is that many of its members want precisely to make some kind and some degree of accommodation to the Mexican culture that surrounds them.

Consistent with apartness is the expectation that women not learn host languages at all, since the traditional division of labor does not require that women participate in the market. And it is indeed the case that OC women have not learned Spanish in the Chihuahua scene. Nor did they learn Russian in the Chortitza-Molotschna scene or English in the Canadian scene.

English and Spanish

All men who came to Chihuahua from Canada—

Typical Old Colony children on the village street on their way to the school built of adobe and surrounded by an adobe fence. The use of adobe brick in pioneer days goes back to the days of Mennonite pioneering in Russia.

In a plain Old Colony Mennonite school in Mexico.

Symbolic of an endless journey: Russia, Canada, Mexico, British Honduras.

now a minority because of age—and those who have spent some time in Canada or the United States command some English. This is significant in that English facilitates continuing exploitation of Canadian- and U.S.-based resources and in so doing decreases dependence on Mexico as a nation. To this end considerable numbers of Chihuahua Mennonites maintain Canadian passports which facilitate the brisk traffic between Mexico and Canada that does take place. And many members of the Chihuahua OC encourage their male children, in one way or another, to learn English. One way is to spend time in Canada or the United States. Another is to encourage children to interact with such English-speaking Mennonite groups as the Church of God in Christ, Mennonite, a group which lives in a village surrounded by the OC. On one occasion the author was approached by an OC preacher (*preydya*) in the hope that he would give the latter's sons a series of English lessons.

These interests—whatever else they represent—run significantly counter to OC ideal prescriptions. To the extent that conscious involvement with English diminishes OC feelings of dependence on the host nation, on the other hand, it manifestly *is* consistent with the general and pervasive theme apartness.

It seems worth observing that prior knowledge of English in the case of the move to British Honduras and Spanish in the case of contemporary moves to Bolivia and Paraguay constitute a kind of preadaptation. To the extent, that is, that Mennonite immigrants to these areas can commence immediately to exploit the surrounding social environment via prior knowledge of a host language, they are clearly in a better position to adapt more quickly than their brethren who in other times and other places have had to undertake the awesome demands of adaptation with no knowledge of the host language.

Host languages of the direct ancestors of the Chihuahua OC have been Low German, High German, Russian, English and, currently, Spanish. During the 16th century Dutch Mennonites settled in West Prussia where they exchanged the Dutch language for Low German and High German before migrating to Russia. There seems substantial reason to believe that Spanish will be a more significant medium of culture change than have the first three. Reference is made here to the fact that traditional OC response to intolerable internal and/or external pressures have been mass outmigration. Internal pressure takes the form, primarily, of overpopulation, given that the culture encourages very large families. Land thus becomes economically overpopulated faster than contiguous accretions to the original base can be acquired. External pressure takes the form of demands by host governments that Mennonites participate in such national activities as military service, schools, jury service and social security programs. In point of fact these are the kinds of issues which have triggered OC moves from Russia to Canada and from Canadian to Chihuahua. Much more recently some OC families have been moving from Chihuahua to Bolivia and to Paraguay. The latter moves have not been undertaken on any mass or even large scale and represent to date a very small percentage of OC families.

Disposition of OC members to outmigrate is conditioned by the availability of a rather complex set of conditions in any potential host country. Prominent among these are affordable lands of sufficient quality and quantity and the willingness of the host government to guarantee blanket exemptions from nation-linked activities objected to by the OC Mennonites on ideological grounds. It would appear at this time that conditions for traditional outmigration from Mexico are only minimally available. In fact, reports now circulate in the OC that recent migrants have found

Girls clad in typical Old Colony Mennonite garb playing in the yard of the school house in a Mennonite village near Cuauhtemoc, Chihuahua, Mexico.

Bolivia and Paraguay mixed blessings at best. Thus, it is becoming increasingly apparent to many younger OC Mennonites that responses to current overpopulation must take forms other than outmigration. (External pressures are at this time minimal and for the most part latent.) With increasing frequency they are experimenting individually with more comprehensive involvement with Mexican society. And the medium for this augmented involvement is the Spanish language.

Business Contacts in Mexico

From the time of the initial move to Mexico (1922) the principal relations between Mennonites and Mexicans have been commercial. That is, Mennonites sell some crops to Mexicans and Mexican merchants sell tractors, fertilizer, seed, cloth, certain food products, etc., to Mennonites as well as making maintenance and service facilities available to them on a commercial basis. From a business point of view Mexican merchants generally have felt frustrated in their desires to increase trade with the OC via advertising. For the past several years advertising directed by merchants to potential Mexican customers has taken the following forms: block ads in the local weekly newspaper, "flyers" issued on newsprint and circulated through the town and surrounding areas and spot commercials on the local radio station. None of these techniques is felt to be effective in increasing business with Mennonites however. Block ads and "flyers" are felt to be nonrewarding because Mennonites in the vast majority do not read Spanish. Several attempts have been made by Mexican merchants to circulate advertising "flyers" in *Hochdeutsch*. There is no evidence that these attempts have been successful commercially. This may be due to the fact that articles advertised, e.g., synthetic fertilizers, are traditionally proscribed in the OC. It may also be due to negative reactions, conscious or otherwise, to commercial secularization of what to the OC is a sacred language. Spot radio commercials have not been considered worthwhile because although a very large number of OC Mennonites do actually listen to radios—in principle strongly proscribed as contrary to apartness—those who do listen are primarily interested in music and seem to pay relatively little attention to advertising and other announcements. This may relate to their

limited control of Spanish and to the fact that announcers speak very rapidly in order to maximize the number of deliverable words within the time limits of a purchased commercial spot. It may also relate to guilt perceived by Mennonites as a consequence of engaging in behavior which not only is strongly proscribed but which can result in excommunication.

New Means of Communication

Within the past two years two innovations have been introduced which may serve as bases for increased culture change among those OC Mennonites who are disposed to tolerate relatively wide gaps between currently stated ideals and nascent behavioral readaptations to the Mexican scene. One was the development by the author of a Roman-letter-based alphabet for *Plotdiyts*. (OC Mennonites traditionally write *Hochdeutsch* in Gothic and do not write *Plotdiyts* at all.) This alphabet is based on linguistic analysis of the language and thus is highly efficient. In addition, it incorporates several features which can serve as aids for subsequent acquisition by Mennonites of written Spanish. Employing this alphabet, a small number of Mexican merchants have had "flyers" printed in *Plotdiyts* and circulated to Mennonite villages (not a difficult task, since most villages maintain post office boxes).

A second innovation was the recording on magnetic tape of a number of spot commercials in *Plotdiyts* and the subsequent broadcasting of these recordings on the local radio station. While results from both of these innovations seem inconclusive from a commercial point of view, word seems to have spread rapidly that, for a change, Mexicans are willing to use *Plotdiyts* rather than insisting that Mennonites use Spanish. Several people from the OC have expressed to the author considerable interest in this development.

A major organizational problem with OC Mennonites (as with most religion-oriented groups) has been how to translate what the group regards as God's will into a series of internally consistent and practicable rules for everyday behavior. In so doing the group must satisfy simultaneously demands of two kinds: everyday behavior must be congruent with (or at least not conspicuously divergent from) interpretations of religious ideals, but it also must result in successful adaptation to the environment in which the group exists. That is, people must at the same time be religiously satisfied and able to make a living. When the OC Mennonites first came to Chihuahua they were faced with a series of rather stern adaptive challenges. Wheat grown on well-watered Canadian plains was not successful on the high, arid Mexican intermontane. And the OC Mennonites soon learned that the practical building material was not the wood they were accustomed to but Mexican adobe bricks. So it is that almost from the beginning the OC in Chihuahua was influenced by adaptations already made by Mexicans. Thus there never was a question—insofar as behavioral culture is concerned—of remaining totally isolated from "the world". The question, rather, has been how much and what kinds of influence from the outside can be assimilated into OC ideals (particularly the apartness notion) and still generate a seemingly integrated picture of the universe. This view of the world tells of man's relation to the earth, to other men and to God. And for the OC to sustain itself through time, its view of the world must be such as to satisfy members and their children that theirs is truly the way.

One of the most powerful strategies employed by OC leaders, past and present, has been the proscription of national languages. There is no barrier more effective to meaningful communication and influence between two peoples than ignorance of the other's language. As a matter of fact OC men enjoy at this time a particular kind of advantage over Mexicans from this very point of view. While Mennonites command varying but considerable amounts of Spanish, the reverse is not true. Thus Mennonites are in a relatively better position to select the circumstances of their interaction with Mexicans than are the latter with Mennonites. That is, a Mennonite can approach a Mexican in Spanish with nearly 100 percent probability that communication will be established. A Mexican who goes to a Mennonite village to conduct business approaches a Mennonite with reduced expectation of communication being established in that the latter has the option—should he choose to use it—of presenting himself as a monolingual *Plotdiyts* speaker.

Some minimal confirmation of the idea that OC leaders recognize at one level or another the powerful potential for change in *Plotdiyts*-Spanish bilingualism comes from an incident in one village's school. The *preydya* was able to persuade the teacher that in teaching *Hochdeutsch* a certain letter should not be pronounced in the conventional German way "because Mexicans have the same sound." On this basis the *preydya* was able to prevail upon the teacher to encourage a quite arbitrary and non-German pronunciation of the letter. Mennonites in that village are to this day troubled in their reading of *Hochdeutsch*.

It is the author's view that the single most impressive sign of the disposition of significant numbers of the OC to accept fundamental change relates to *Plotdiyts* literacy. Traditionally this language has not been written in the OC at all (although a few know and enjoy the writings of Arnold Dyck). Some Mennonites have gone so far as to assure the author that *Plotdiyts* cannot be written at all.

Responses to the possibility of introducing vernacular literacy in the form of a newspaper have been in gen-

eral encouraging. And there are reasons related to OC geography and prevailing modes of transportation which make the idea of a weekly newspaper not unappealing to many. A reasonable question at this point would be: why not publish the newspaper in *Hochdeutsch* since Mennonites are already literate in that language? From one point of view (once the idea of a newspaper had been accepted in principle) *Hochdeutsch* could indeed be used and precisely because literacy in that language already exists. Another argument, however, is that to use *Hochdeutsch* would be putting the *fowatex* (*foatich*) before the *piyet* (*peed*) and that the point is not so much to introduce a newspaper as to introduce written *Plotdiyts*. Another argument against the use of *Hochdeutsch* is that it already functions as a ritual language and that to secularize it in a newspaper would engender more resistance than if *Plotdiyts* were used. The most important issue of all, though, relates to the nature of the medium used. That is, if some such device as the alphabet referred to above were adopted for the newspaper, conditions would be, *ipso facto,* established which would facilitate subsequent acquisition of written Spanish by those Mennonites who chose to do so. The impact of this latter development would be nothing short of revolutionary in terms of OC ideal culture. It is probably significant in this context that some Chihuahua Mennonites have followed local broadcasts of the Mexican government's literacy program for Mexicans.

It seems appropriate to conclude by observing that *traditionally* OC leaders have exploited language to perpetuate apartness. To a considerable degree these efforts continue to succeed. The suggestion is here offered, however, that given the circumstances which now exist (and which reasonably can be foreseen) relative to outmigration, the traditional role of the host language must be reexamined. It would appear that the ability of *Plotdiyts* and *Hochdeutsch* effectively to isolate the OC from the non-German-speaking "world" is a function of relative freedom to outmigrate. To the extent that this freedom is frustrated by changing circumstances—and its increasing frustration at this time appears inevitable—the role of the OC's current host language as a medium of important culture change seems assured.

The Spirit of the Risen Lord

By Eberhard Arnold

CHRISTIANS HAVE often been attacked on account of their call to repentance. They are told that the unceasing accusation of the conscience paralyzes man's initiative, takes away his freedom, and destroys his personality. Certainly one would have to come to this conclusion if one were to experience only the consciousness of sin by itself in its unfathomable depth. But the repentance called for by the living proclamation of Christ cannot be separated from the proclamation of faith. The message of the cross is inseparably one with the proclamation of the risen One.

Luther called for daily remorse and repentance because he experienced again and again the unconditional certainty of possessing the gift of salvation. It was his ever renewed experience of faith that no one could accuse or condemn God's elect. He knew himself to be justified by God himself. He experienced the presence of the Christ who interceded for him with all that His death signified and with all the powers of His resurrected life.

One of the things that cannot be explained in the experience of a Christian is that the deepest recognition of sin and the absolute freedom from all condemnation are completely one within him. The source of all inner freedom and of all joyful faith lies in God and Christ, while the murky depths of remorse and repentance are

found only in ourselves.

It is the soul's instinct of self-preservation which holds man back from complete honesty about his moral condition. Without the strength of the Gospel, the unrestrained insight into our own helplessness and badness would lead us to despair; for it is just when we attempt to apply the strictest self-discipline and firmest moral code that we are faced with the absolute impossibility of justifying ourselves before our own conscience and in the eyes of God. The Gospel wants the truth about our condition to come completely out into the open. At the same time, it offers us the one and only possibility of having a clear and joyful conscience and a merciful God in the midst of the deepest self-recognition. What we are unable to do with our moral and religious efforts, God has done: He has sent His Son.

Faith in this greatest fact of God's love cannot be shaken by anything, once we have grasped and experienced it. Even though all men speak against us, even though they accuse and condemn us, we believers in God and in Christ still cannot be discouraged. In such a situation we feel more than ever what it means to have a firm support for our trust and what He, in whom we cannot despair because He is the unclouded manifestation of the love of God, is to us.

However hard the times, however low the ebb of moral and religious powers, this one fact remains: God gave His own Son for us. If, in the ebb and flow of the struggles emerging from the demands for justice and moral regeneration, we cannot find any people who in their actual lives realize God's nature through the spirit of pure love, still Jesus remains the only One whose living and dying was love become deed, and whose living and dying was real redemption for the whole man and for every man.

This historical fact has become our spiritual experience of the present. An active proof of love, it means for us the certainty that God, in giving us Jesus, gives us everything. Because perfect love once became a deed and a man—in history—fellowship with this man means the firm guarantee that the spirit of His love will become life and reality everywhere—hence here and now as well. Once we experience the life and death of His Son as the redemptive act of His love we can no longer despair of God's love, we can no longer question His intercession for us.

However, we would misuse and belittle the certainty of this love if its experience did not go hand in hand with the complete destruction of our own vanity and self-will. The collapse of our national pride, our self-accusation because of our guilt in history, the disintegration of our cultural values in state and church, and the repeated evidence that it is impossible to produce with purely human powers the conditions of peace and justice we long for: all these experiences are part of God's strategic plan to convince us that we need grace.

Grace is the sovereign gift; we can do nothing to acquire it. That inner state in which it seems to us that everything we were clinging to has broken down is the preparation we need before we can receive the Christ. Only when everyone accuses us, only when we condemn ourselves in the sharpest way, are we in a condition of inner readiness for the message of salvation: "Christ Jesus is here, He who died, yes, He who rose again; He is at the right hand of God, He intercedes for us." (Rom. 8:34.) When Christ manifests His powers of life in us, everything that burdened and oppressed us is overcome.

The invincible power of the early Christians sprang from the fact that they believed in the presence of that same Christ who rose from the grave and ascended to the Father. We can believe in the powers of Jesus' death and the strength of His resurrection only when we experience the joy of the immediate presence of Christ.

The first Christians lived by the promise of the risen One: "I am with you always, even to the end of the world." All their meetings were permeated by this certain faith. The fact that the risen Lord was experienced through His personal presence brought His moral earnestness and His commitment to love so close to the early Christians that they lived completely under this influence. The awareness of Jesus' presence was the secret of their strength. They experienced the risen One as the spirit present among them. It was the sanctifying effect of this spirit which manifested Jesus to them, from His resurrection on, as the Son of God, for it was through Him that they were freed from all bondage as one can only be freed by the Son of God. This spirit brought a complete freedom in the use of all man's gifts and powers, because the influence of the spirit is direct. He awakens the soul to its vocation without making it dependent on others. He makes himself one with our spirit to assure us of His witness concerning God's Son. In this spirit every Christian movement and every active Christian possesses the personal presence of the risen One, the eternal power of His action, and the boundless love of His heart, in the knowledge that His teaching is valid and will never pass away.

Faith in the risen One and in His spirit, then, leads to a new attitude in everyday life. This faith leads to the unfolding of the spiritual powers that were at work in Christ. The Lord is the spirit. He molds our lives according to His image. Therefore the ethical question of how we actually stand to selfishness and how we put love into action is ultimately identical with the question of faith, whether we know the resurrected Christ and whether we have His spirit.

(Translation of *Der Geist des Auferstandenen* in *Die Furche*, Berlin, April 1919.)

Books in Review

Beryle Gould-Marks, *Eating the Russian Way*. New York: Gramercy Publ. Co., 1968, 128 pp.

Eating the Russian Way is a delightful and practical guide to typical Russian recipes. Next to the Pirozhki, are the Blini, the Tvorozhniki, the various ways of preparing Caviar, not to speak of the varieties of hot and cold Borshtsh with meat, with and without Kasha. When it comes to meats, we are able to find out how to prepare and eat Shashlik, stuffed cabbage, roast stuffed pig and all sorts of Pilaf.

Naturally there are various vegetables, sweets, cakes and Easter eggs prepared the Russian way. This delightful book should help those with some interest in "eating the Russian way", to keep up the good old tradition, or even add a meal to the traditional dishes of a kitchen.

Lambert Schneider and Peter Bachem, *Russiche Sprichwörter: Aus vielen Landschaften u. Völkern*. Köln: Jakob Hegner, 1968, 124 pp.

This German edition of Russian proverbs has unique characteristics. The author has put forth some effort to collect them from various parts of Russia, such as Petersburg, Moscow, and numerous villages, including monasteries and minority groups. The following are some samples:

Hat man eine Gans genug gelobt, so schlachtet man sie.
Auch die Wolga wäscht nur von aussen rein, nicht von innen.
Es gibt viele Flüsse, aber nur eine Wolga.

Bethel College — *Cornelius Krahn*

Russian Proverbs. Newly translated. With illustrations by Aldren Watson Mount. New York: Peter Pauper Press, 1960, 61 pp.

These proverbs translated from the Russian into the English are unusually delightful, sometimes a little too true and at others times a little salty. Proverbs express characteristics of humanity in general and peculiar national or racial peculiarities in particular. The illustrations are excellent. Here are some selections:

"Great is Holy Russia, but the sun shines elsewhere too."
"You can't talk to a judge empty handed."
"You never get change from a priest or remnants from a tailor."
"A woman is an evil no household should be without."
"Long whiskers cannot take the place of brains."
"In a fight the rich man tries to save his face; the poor man, his coat."
"Noble men make promises and peasants have to keep them."
"The church is near but the road is all ice; the tavern is far but I'll walk very carefully."

Hans-Werner Gensichen. *We Condemn How Luther and 16th Century Lutheranism Condemned False Doctrine*. Trs. by Herbert J. A. Bouman. Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, (1955) 1967. $7.50

We Condemn is a peculiarly Lutheran preoccupation with creeds and the controversies over doctrine. The study surveys four periods to try to understand what led to the formulation of the condemnations in Lutheran symbols. The first period covers the history of condemnation up to 1521. The second deals with the conflict between Luther and the Roman church. The third treats the period of the Augsburg Confession (1530-1566) and includes the Lutheran condemnations of the Swiss. The final period is the Era of Concord (1565-1583) and deals largely with internal disputes among Lutherans.

The historical Lutheran approach to condemnation assumes that the Christian faith can be reduced to rational propositional statements which embody the truth absolutely. A good example of such a statement of truth in propositional form is found in chapter nine. Luther could argue very positively for the direct correspondence between his interpretation of the Lord's Supper and God's Word.

Condemnation is the device to protect the purity of doctrine. The Anabaptists had a somewhat different approach. On page 50 Gensichen reports Luther's affirmation that "Doctrine and life must be distinguished." The Anabaptist would contend that the test of true doctrine was the life which proceeded from it and so would not posit such a distinction as real.

The complications of debate over church issues when the Constantinian church-state union is accepted is also illustrated. The Anabaptists recognized that doctrinal issues should not be decided by political considerations. Lutherans and Calvinists both had to contend with such influences because they still sought to retain the Constantinian synthesis. The effects are indicated in chapter 12.

The author could have accomplished his purposes better if he would have gone beyond the mere descriptive presentation of what happened. He could have drawn conclusions and summarized what the issues are if ecumenical dialogue is to lead to union without loss of doctrinal purity instead of leading to the divisions which occurred in the sixteenth century. In this respect the author seems to have stopped short of the purposes as announced in the introduction.

Bethel College — *William Keeney*

Robert Cromie, ed., *Where Steel Winds Blow; Poets on War: A Collection*. New York: David McKay Co., 1968. 192 pp.

This anthology of war poetry encompasses a broad range of approaches, including lyric sorrow, brutal description, and political satire, although not extending to glorification of war. Preference is given to twentieth-century poets writing in English and to fairly straightforward selections in traditional forms. The volume contains many excellent poems, but their arrangement seems to be random and they are undated. The only aids to the reader are an index of authors and brief biographical notes.

Bethel College — *Anna Juhnke*

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