MENNONITE LIFE

SEPTEMBER 1975

IN THIS ISSUE

We take a closer look at the Mennonite experience in World War I. American involvement in the war was relatively brief—from April 1917 to November 1918—but in that short time the Mennonites went through a crisis of civic identity which proved to be a turning point in their twentieth century history. The Fall Festival at Bethel College, October 10-12, will highlight and celebrate events from the war. Old timers will be present to reminisce and swap tales about experiences in the military camps. A new musical drama, "The Blowing and the Bending," will recall the war period on stage. Participants in a historical conference will hear papers on the war from a number of guest scholars, including Frederick Luebke, Elmer Suderman and James Duram. Readers of *Mennonite Life* are invited to come for the entire weekend.

The article by Margaret Entz on the Mennonite response to war bond drives in Kansas won the Bethel College Mennonite Contributions contest in 1975. She shows how the bond drives were designed not only to finance the war, but also to foster patriotism throughout the country. Mennonite reluctance to buy bonds inevitably brought down charges of lack of patriotism.

Allan Teichroew's article on the Mennonite response to the approach of conscription tells of the government duplicity and Mennonite political innocense which combined to get the Mennonite young men to go to military camp in 1917 even though there were no legal guarantees of exemption from military service. This article is a much reduced first section from a longer paper on Mennonites and the War completed as an independent study at Bethel College in 1969.

A number of Mennonites were brought to trial in civil court in 1918, in addition to over a hundred Mennonites who were court martialed in military camps. Ted Joseph tells of the trial of Samuel Miller, editor of the Amish newspaper, *The Budget*, in Ohio. Joseph's examination of U. S. District Court records and evidence in the National Archives reveals an interesting difference of opinion between the Office of the Attorney General and a District Attorney about how the Mennonites should be handled in wartime.

Featured in this issue are some stories told by eyewitnesses to crucial events for Mennonites during the war. The statements are excerpted from longer oral interviews conducted as part of the Schowalter Oral History project at Bethel College. (See *Mennonite Life*, Dec. 1971, pp. 161-162).

Popular newspapers and magazines in 1917-18 were filled with propaganda against Mennonites as well as other German-Americans. A Fairview, Oklahoma, newspaper showed special creativity by turning to drama as the art form for portrayal of the way community pressure could be used to force Mennonites into line on the bond drives. This short drama was found in an undated clipping in the H. R. Voth collection in Mennonite Library and Archives at Bethel College.

The December issue of *Mennonite Life* will be edited by Ted Regehr of the University of Saskatchewan and will focus on Mennonite life in Canada. This will be the first issue in a new cooperative arrangement with the Mennonite Historical Society of Canada under which one issue per year of *Mennonite Life* will be edited and mailed from Canada.

MENNONITE LIFE

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COVER

On the front cover is a group of Mennonite draftees at Camp Funston (Kansas) at a Sunday morning worship service in 1918. Several are holding Bibles. The variety of attire is striking for any group in military camp.
The World War I photos in this issue are from the Ferdinand Schroeder and Henry Gaede collections in Mennonite Library and Archives at Bethel College.

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War Bond Drives and the Kansas Mennonite Response

by Margaret Entz

The Liberty Loan campaigns of World War I were not designed for the sole purpose of collecting money to finance the war; they were also a means for expressing patriotism. Secretary of the Treasury, William G. McAdoo, contended that the Liberty Loan campaigns "capitalized the profound impulse called patriotism. It is the quality of coherence that holds a nation together; it is one of the deepest and most powerful of human motives."[1] Refusal to buy a Liberty Bond not only indicated reluctance to support the war; it also indicated a fundamental lack of patriotism.

Pressured by hostility and intimidation, the Mennonites were forced into an agonizing appraisal of the bond issue. For most Mennonites the issue of military service was clear-cut, but the bond issue, not previously dealt with, remained vague. Congregations looked to their leadership and to Mennonite publications for answers concerning this issue. But even among the leaders there were varying positions. Furthermore, ministers and newspapers could not freely publish their opinions because the outside world was eagerly watching and ready to pounce on any indication of disloyalty or lack of patriotism.

The Mennonite, an official publication of the General Conference Mennonite church, reflected this indecisive attitude and revealed a modification of the principle on the part of the church. On October 4, 1917 the paper announced that the church was ready to share the burden of caring for the needy and suffering, but they made "no pretensions to bearing any part of the burden in supporting the war."[2] A year later, S. M. Grubb, editor of the paper, compared buying bonds to raising wheat or wool—because both supported the government.

> It is our opinion that bonds, like money which they represent, are things belonging to the secular government. It is our duty as good citizens to render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's. We claim the protection and demand privileges of our government and are therefore in no position to be lax when it is in need of the use of our money.[3]

He cited examples of Mennonites in Holland and Prussia as historical precedent for loaning money to the government in times of war.

Other Mennonite leaders also encouraged their congregations to buy bonds. P. H. Richert, pastor and elder of the Tabor Mennonite Church, wrote a letter to the Marion County Liberty Loan committee chairman stating that his people had decided to buy Liberty Bonds. "The question is so difficult to decide that we had to hold a special church meeting, where I urged our people to buy, even if they had to do it under protest."[4] To buy bonds voluntarily would have been against the principle of non-resistance, but they viewed it as a demand from the government and they had no right to withhold government money.[5]

The *Gospel Herald*, the official organ of the (Old) Mennonite church, remained steadfast in its opposition to bonds. An article entitled, "Are Mennonites Slackers?" by J. E. Hartzler, appeared in the December 13, 1917 issue. The churches had not bought bonds and he suggested that every member "should do more than buy Liberty Bonds" through giving to reconstruction projects and relief agencies.[6] Editor Daniel Kauffman put bonds on the same level with military participation—both were unacceptable because they were part of an organized effort to take human life.[7] Kauffman feared that non-resistant people would compromise their convictions until nothing was left of their distinct beliefs.

The most outspoken paper on the war bond issue was the Hillsboro *Vorwaerts*.[8] Editor Abraham L. Schellenberg and columnist Jacob G. Ewert agreed that bond purchases contributed directly to the war effort. In the April 19, 1918 issue, the front page announced the campaign for the sale of Third Liberty Loan. In the same issue, Ewert denounced the local committee for "employing high-pressure tactics to force people to purchase the voluntary bonds."[9] Ewert suggested that the government impose a tax so that the Mennonites could conscientiously pay the money, instead of collecting interest from money used for war.[10]

The *Vorwaerts* carred Treasury Department releases designed to promote the sale of bonds. To refuse to print this material would have probably subjected the editor to severe criticism and legal charges.[11] Usually the press releases were in English and, interestingly enough, Schellenberg forgot to translate them into German. This same procedure was true of *Der Herold*, a paper published by General Conference Mennonites.[12] The non-American Germans who glanced through the paper were satisfied with the English announcements and the German Mennonites, who could probably understand little English, read the German section where Schellenberg and Ewert denounced the Liberty Bonds.[13]

Mennonite newspapers submitted to pressure to print war bond advertisements in 1918. This one appeared in the Hillsboro Vorwaerts, *April 5, 1918.*

Amish trial

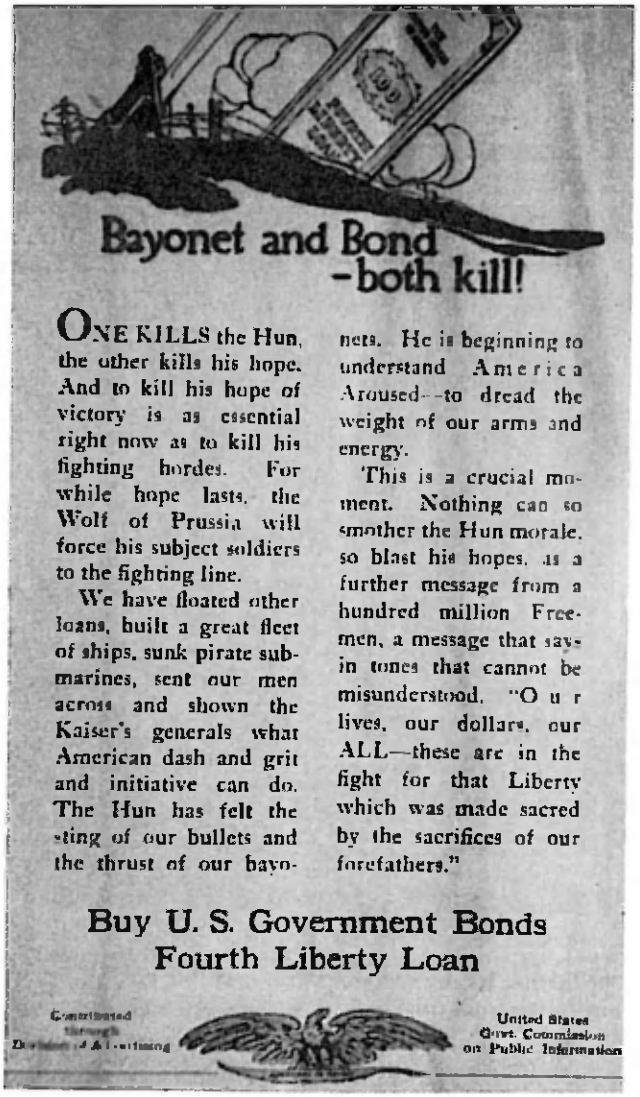
To speak out against war bonds and discourage others from buying them could bring about serious consequences. Manasses E. Bontrager, bishop of an Amish church near Dodge City, wrote a letter to the editor of the *Budget*, an Amish publication printed in Ohio. In his letter he was concerned about the compromise the Mennonites were making by buying bonds, while their sons were remaining steadfast in the camps. "Sorry to learn that some of the Mennonites have yielded and bought the bonds."[14] The letter was published. Bontrager and S. H. Miller, the editor of the *Budget*, were both indicted and fined $500 for the violation of the Espionage Act of June 15, 1917. Fines were not always based on the seriousness of the offense; they were also intended to warn others from making the same mistake.[15]

H. P. Krehbiel, a leader among General Conference Mennonites, was more cautious in defining his position. At a Minister's Conference in April 1918 he presented a paper in which he suggested that war bonds could fit under the category of taxes and Christ commanded us to pay our taxes.[16] However, it seems as if he himself did not hold to this position.[17] In December 1918 he received a letter from the Harvey County War Council which informed him that his quota for the Fourth Liberty Loan was $25 and so far he had contributed nothing.[18] At the bottom of the letter, Krehbiel penciled a note— "I contributed $30 to be used for religious purposes"— which evidently took care of the matter for him.[19] Further evidence that Krehbiel refused to buy bonds is indicated by the letter he received from W. R. Rowe, Assistant Director for the Tenth Federal Reserve District.[20] Rowe reprimanded Krehbiel for not suporting the government during the war and suggested

> now that the war is over and there can be no question of the diversion of your money to direct support of War activities, we feel that it is entirely proper to expect from you in the coming Government Loan [Victory Loan] . . . such a degree of support as will compensate for the aggregated nonsupport of previous loans.[21]

No response to this letter could be found, but one could surmise that Krehbiel's action would be no different than in the first four campaigns.

Although most Mennonites could not conscientiously purchase Liberty Bonds, most wanted to show their loyalty in some other way that was not a violation of their faith. The official position of the government was that "since there is no law compelling anyone to contribute to such war measures as Liberty Bonds . . . , there is not ground for any agreement, officially, whereby certain classes may be excused for such contributions."[22] However, Mennonites found that quotas were not always voluntary and alternative giving could not substitute for the quotas.



This advertisement from Survey, *September, 28, 1918, p. 742, shows how the wartime financial and military efforts were part of one destructive cause. Bayonet and Bond were both killers.*

Unsuccessful attempts were made to work out alternative proposals. Mennonites from Lehigh visited Governor Capper in Topeka to ascertain if there was a way they could avoid purchase of bonds. Capper told them that there was no other way they could "help financially than by the direct purchase of liberty bonds and other government securities."[23] Three Holdeman ministers visited Charles L. Davidson, chairman of the Kansas Loan Drive, and offered to sell wheat to the government at pre-war prices if they could be excused from buying bonds. Again the reply was that they should "aid the government which makes possible their prosperity" by loaning it in money.[24] The ministers promised to buy bonds and give them to the Red Cross or other such agency, thereby not violating their beliefs.

Mennonites who bought bonds against their will usually donated them to some type of charitable institution. J. G. Ewert suggested that Mennonites give the Liberty Bonds to the Red Cross and, by doing this, they would excuse themselves from profiting from the war.[25] Arrangements were also made to send bonds to the Armenian-Syrian Relief Fund.[26] Many Mennonites donated their bonds to their churches or to the mission outreach of the church. P. H. Richert, in charge of collecting an endowment fund for Bethel College, found his job "considerably lightened by the ready donation of Liberty Bonds by persons, who often under duress, had purchased them."[27]

With the opening of the war, it was generally agreed among the Mennonite leadership that participation in the war effort through the purchasing of bonds was wrong. But with increased pressure, "practically all Kansas Mennonites bought a few bonds."[28] Local newspapers were thrilled to report when a predominantly Mennonite community oversubscribed their Liberty Loan quota. The front page of the McPherson *Freeman* carried this news item:

> While much is being said in regard to the disloyalty of the Germans in McPherson county, the fact must not be overlooked that the German (sic) in Turkey Creek township, most of whom are Conference Mennonites have come thru splendidly and have more than subscribed, their quota of $14,000.[29]

The same newspaper also reported that McPherson county was proud of Moundridge for its "splendid patriotic spirit" expressed through its subscription to Liberty Bonds. No community in the United States had its allegiance more severely tested than Moundridge, but "when it comes to loyalty Moundridge stands true to Old Glory and the home of their adoption."[30]

The Third Liberty Loan campaign brought a burst of patriotism from Hillsboro. In previous campaigns, records showed that not one bond had been sold, but in this campaign the entire town went patriotic.[31] Church leaders bought bonds and solicited for the campaign. One of the leaders in the church was reported as having said:

> You see this button. It represents $4,500 in bonds. I have three brothers in Germany and all their sons went to war. Two of my boys are in the Ameircan army. This is my country and I love it.[32]

The last part of the article mentioned that Hillsboro was one of the Mennonite capitals in America and that the town's only newspaper was published in German.

Bethel College also got on the bandwagon. A parade was held in downtown Newton and leading the parade were about seventy-five people, including Bethel College students and faculty.[33] The Mennonites who exhibited patriotic enthusiasm met the approval of their non-Mennonite neighbors and made it more difficult for the small minority who refused to purchase bonds.[34]

Some Mennonites compromised their non-resistant position by buying bonds. Joseph Weaver, a boy in Harper, Kansas during the war, remembers that community felt that "if you can't go to war, you can at least spend all the money you've got in buying Liberty bonds."[35] It seemed to be a question of how far one could go in living peaceably with fellow men without defying his own conscience. Numerous Mennonites bought one bond, so as to placate the community, but they usually gave much larger sums to the Red Cross or some other relief organization. In the Whitewater community, for example, Franz Busenitz bought one $50 Liberty bond and posted it in his window.[36]

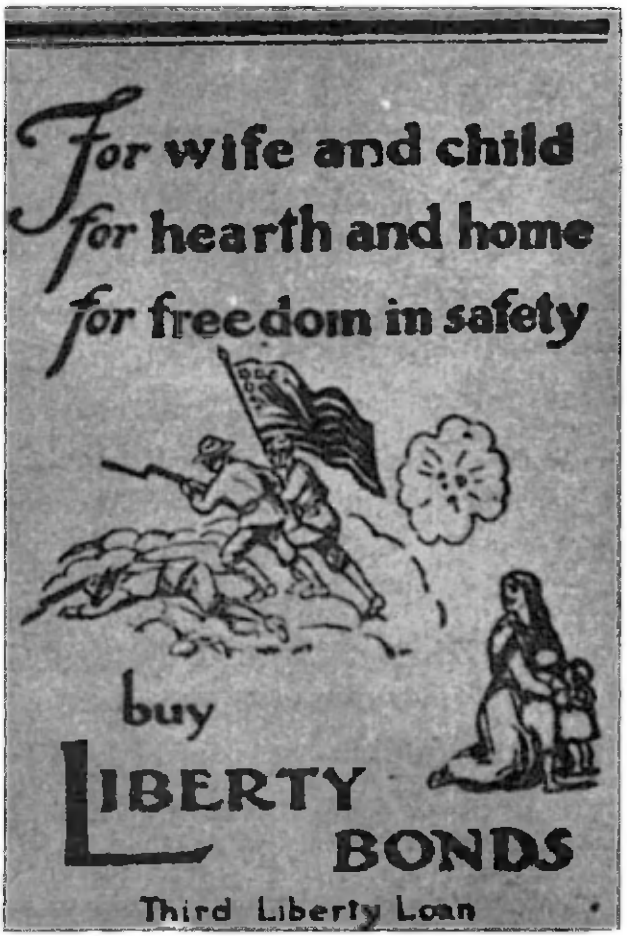
Only a few Mennonites stood firm and refused to buy any Liberty Bonds. Some were merely threatened. But others were the victims of mob violence and, in some cases, suffered physical injury. Mobs, concerned that all citizens carry their share of the burden of the war for democracy, obliterated that same ideal by the means they used. Coercion now would ensure freedom later.[37]

Victims of repeated mob brutality were D. A. Diener and his son, Charles, both ministers of the (Old) Mennonite Spring Valley Church near Canton. Although Rev. D. A. Diener never publicly preached against war bonds, his entire congregation understood his position and only after he and his son were forced to buy did the congregation take similar action.[38] The Dieners bore the brunt of the hostility inflicted by the patriotic community because they held them responsible for the entire church.

On the night of April 22, 1918, the mob came for the first time to both homes. Rev. D. A. Diener was tarred and feathered for refusing to buy war bonds and his son was given the same treatment because he had taken down a flag that had been placed on the Spring Valley church. [39] On June 3 another mob visited the home of Rev. Diener and demanded that he contribute to the Red Cross.[40] Diener opposed contributions to the Red Cross because they supplied the soldiers with cigarettes but in this case he yielded because of his wife's poor health. The next morning he stopped the check at the bank and on the following day he worked out an arrangement with his banker and county drive officials, whereby he gave $75 to the Friends Reconstruction Service. The matter was seemingly over.

But on June 10 another masked mob of about 25 men visited both homes.[41] After Dieners refused to contribute to the Red Cross, they were given the standard 'slacker' treatment. According to a newspaper account, both were tarred and feathered, the interior and exterior walls of the house were daubed with the word 'slacker' in yellow paint, and the car was painted yellow.[42] The article failed to mention something that Rev. D. A. Diener included in his account:

> They tore off my underwear, struck me a dozen times or more with a large strap, bruising my flesh and cutting the skin open. I was dragged to the barn and abused, after which they applied carboline roofing paint to my body followed by feathers. The carbolic acid in the paint made me very sore, and my body, face, and hands were badly swollen. I was left with the threat that they would hang me next time.[43]



The protection of women and children was a favorite theme in World War I advertising. From the Hillsboro Vorwaerts, *April 5, 1918.*

After this treatment and threat, the Dieners finally bought bonds. Rev. Charles Diener, looking back at those days, says "when we bought the bonds, we bought them under protest."[44]

On the same night the mob first visited the Dieners, they first stopped at the home of Walter Cooprider and demanded that he buy Liberty Bonds.[45] However, he refused to buy, stating "that he would not buy until the government forced him to."[46] The crowd threatened to tar and feather him, but because of his ill-health his son, George, took his place. On April 26, 1918, the McPherson *Freeman* carried this item in the "Personal and Local" information column: "Walter Cooprider was in town yesterday and invested in Liberty Bonds."[47]

Whitewater mob

The Whitewater community was a good example of diversity in opinion among the Mennonites concerning this issue. Jacob J. Regier, a member of the Emmaus Mennonite Church, not only bought bonds, but he also "went from home to home advising them [Mennonite citizens] to do so and wrote a strong article for a German newspaper advocating the purchase of Liberty Bonds."[48] However, Regier was not held in high esteem by most Mennonites in the community and his advice had little influence on the rest of the congregation.[49]

A mob came out from Whitewater and demanded that Rev. B. W. Harder, pastor of the Emmaus Church, raise a flag on his place. Harder complied and then led the group in singing four stanzas of "America."[50] Several days later a letter appeared in the Whitewater *Independent* written by prominent men in the community who regretted having been a part of the mob. According to this letter, Rev. B. W. Harder and Rev. Gustav Harder "have not only purchased liberty bonds but the church of which they have charge sent thirteen hundred dollars to the Red Cross."[51]

In further extolling the patriotic qualities of the Mennonites, the letter stated that Rev. B. W. Harder preached a sermon "advising the members of the congregation to purchase Liberty Bonds." Another promotional device used by the Treasury Department was an appeal to the pastors to encourage members of their congregations to buy bonds. In connection with the third campaign, McAdoo sent a letter to all clergymen, designating April 21 as 'Liberty Sunday' and begged ministers to make a "special address on that occasion."[52] According to the letter written by the Whitewater citizens, Rev. B. W. Harder obeyed this request; however, Mr. and Mrs. B. G. Harder, both in the congregation at this time, do not remember this sermon and suggest that perhaps it was only a short sentence in the sermon.[53]

Bernard W. Harder was the assistant pastor of the Emmaus Mennonite church in 1918. A patriotic mob from Whitewater, Kansas, came to his farm home and forced him to nail an American flag onto the porch. Harder led the group in singing four verses of "America."

Not everyone in the community bought war bonds. One such man was Henry H. Wiebe, father of Mrs. B. G. Harder. Considering that the pastors and many members of his church had purchased bonds, it was notable that he avoided purchase. Mrs. Harder explained that:

> He had gone through a lot of tribulation to get here, just on account of nonresistance. They moved to Asia and lost all their money . . . it was really a matter of conscience with them. He was willing to suffer for it if he had to.[54]

Another person who did not buy bonds was John Regier. His daughter, Marie Regier Franz, claims that he was a quiet man and in this way he could get by without buying.[55] At any rate, both of these men did not have obvious leadership roles and therefore were not subject to the close scrutiny of the non-Mennonite world.

The cause of mob violence against the Dieners, Coopriders and Harders were all in connection with

the Third Liberty Loan campaign in the spring of 1918. There were cases of mob violence in connection with the fourth campaign, but not as frequently as in the third campaign. One such incident occurred in Burrton on Armistice Day. A group of patriotic citizens drove eleven miles to bring John Schrag to town and to force him to buy war bonds or bear the consequences. He was beaten, smeared with yellow paint, imprisoned, and taken to court for disrespect to the American flag.[56]

Refusal to by war bonds was one of the standards by which the American patriotic community judged the Mennonites to be unworthy of their citizenship. Bonds were not only of monetary value; they also symbolized patriotic support of America's war effort along with her ideals of democracy and liberty. By attaching these values to the Liberty Loans, the Treasury Department succeeded remarkably in selling bonds. In light of the fact that the war economy was not a matter of consumer choice and was imposed upon people involuntarily, this achievement was even more notable.[57] Necessary war financing was done through voluntary means in order to gain the support of the American people, but with demanding methods that necessitated compliance from all.

Mennonites were caught in this contradictory government policy. If bonds were truly voluntary, then purchasing them was an intentional contribution to a cause the Mennonites abhorred. However, the Treasury Department undermined the principle of voluntarism by urging the necessity of bond purchases on the local level. Mennonites were scorned, intimidated, threatened, and physically harmed until they bought bonds. The war that failed miserably to make the world safe for democracy, also failed to perpetuate democracy at home.

FOOTNOTES

1 William G. McAdoo, *Crowded Years* (Port Washington: Kennikat Press, 1931), pp. 278-9.
2 *The Mennonite*, 4 October 1917, p. 2.
3 *Ibid.*, 10 October 1918, p. 4.
4 Letter from P. H. Richert to C. M. Nussebaum, March 10, 1918 (Richert file, MCC, Bethel College Historical Library, hereafter BCHL, folder 20).
5 *Ibid.*
6 *Gospel Herald*. 13 December 1917, p. 683.
7 *Ibid.*, 30 May 1918, p.146.
8 An interesting letter is found from J. J. Entz (Hillsboro) to Dudley Doolittle, Representative of the Fourth District, on July 13, 1918. It reflects the opinionated reporting of the paper. "The Hillsboro *Vorwaerts* a germa (sic) language paper, again this week prints Admiral von Cappeles (sic) opinion of the effectiveness of the U boat . . . , does not come with the spirite (sic) of Americanism, but with the spirite of satisfaction, which leaves a bad impression on the reader, as most of the people around here take it for granted that most of the soldiers that are sent across, are drownded (sic) in the Atlantic." General Records of the Department of Justice, Records Relating to Mennonites and World War I, (National Archives, microfilm, roll 185, BCHL).
9 Gregory J. Stucky, "Fighting Against War: The Mennonite Vorwaerts from 1914 to 1919," *Kansas Historical Quarterly*, 38 (Summer 1972), p. 182.
10 *Vorwaerts*, 19 April 1918, p. 1.
11 Carl Wittke, *The German-Language Press in America* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1957), p. 267.
12 *Der Herold*, 4 April, 18 April, 6 June 1918.
13 Stucky, "Fighting Against War," p. 182.
14 Letter from M. E. Bontrager to S. H. Miller, General Records of the Department of Justice, Records Relating to Mennonites and World War I, (National Archives, microfilm, roll 185 BCHL).
15 J. S. Hartzler, *Mennonites in the World War* (Scottdale: Mennonite Publishing House, 1921), p. 165.
16 *Der Herold*, 2 May 1918, p. 1.
17 For a different opinion, see James C. Juhnke, "The Political Acculturation of the Kansas Mennonites, 1870-1940," Diss. Indiana University 1966, p. 165.
18 Letter to H. P. Krehbiel from Harvey County War Council, December 7, 1918 (Krehbiel files, MSS, BCHL, folder 147).
19 *Ibid.*
20 Krehbiel had the habit of penciling notes on letters. On this one he wrote: "An insulting letter."
21 Letter from W. R. Rowe to H. P. Krehbiel, February 8, 1919 (Krehbiel files, MCC, BCHL, folder 147).
22 *Gospel Herald*, 29 August 1918, p. 1.
23 McPherson *Freeman*, 26 April 1918, p. 7.
24 The Wichita Eagle, 21 April 1918 (Voth files, MSS, BCHL, folder 88).
25 Stucky, "Fighting Against War," pp. 182-3.
26 Letter from Phil Eastman to P. H. Richert, June 27, 1918 (Richert files, MSS, BCHL, folder 84).
27 Peter J. Wedel, *The Story of Bethel College* (North Newton: Bethel College, 1954), p. 250.
28 Parish, *Kansas Mennonites*, p. 50. See also C. Henry Smith, *The Story of the Mennonites* (Newton: Mennonite Publication Office, 1957), pp. 804-5.
29 McPherson *Freeman*, 26 April 1918, p. 1.
30 *Ibid.*, 21 June 1918, p. 1.
31 See P. H. Richert letter, March 10, 1918 (Richert files, MSS, BCHL, folder 20).
32 McPherson *Freeman*, 19 April 1918, p. 3.
33 Newton *Evening Kansan-Republican*, 6 April 1918, p. 1.
34 See Henry Cooprider interview October 1, 1969 (Schowalter Collection, BCHL, no. 37).
35 Interview of Joseph N. Weaver by Grant Stoltzfus, May 25, 1972 (Schowalter Collection, BCHL).
36 Interview with atie Busenitz Entz, February 16, 1975.
37 See Hartzler, *Mennonites in the World War*, p. 150. Some non-Mennonites recognized this fact also. A report in the McPherson Weekly *Republican* on April 26, 1918 said that Henry A. Walker was in town shortly after an incident of mob action and reported that the people of his township (Groveland) were not a part of the mob and they "certainly would not countenance the very lawlessness that this country is fighting to destroy."
38 Interview with Charles Diener, February 15, 1975.
39 Personal note in Charles Diener's copy of Hartzler's *Mennonites and the World War*. McPherson Weekly *Republican*, 26 April 1918, p. 1.
40 Hartzler, *Mennonites and the World War*, pp. 153-155.
41 *Ibid.*
42 McPherson Weekly *Republican*, 14 June 1918, p. 1.
43 Hartzler, *Mennonites and the World War*, pp. 153-155.
44 Interview with Diener.
45 Henry Cooprider interview, October 1, 1969 (Schowalter Collection, BCHL, no. 37).
46 McPherson Weekly *Republican*, 26 April 1918, p. 1.
47 McPherson *Freeman*, 26 April 1918, p. 7.
48 Whitewater *Independent*, 2 May 1918.
49 Interview with Mr. and Mrs. B. G. Harder, February 19, 1975.
50 Ernest Claassen interview, October 14, 1973 (Schowalter Collection, BCHL, no. 271).
51 Whitewater *Independent*, 2 May 1918.
52 Letter from William McAdoo to all clergymen, April 10, 1918 (J. W. Kliewer files, MSS, BCHL, folder 24).
53 B. G. Harder interview.
54 *Ibid.*
55 Marie R. Franz interview, July 24, 1974 (Schowalter Collection, BCHL, no. 272).
56 See James C. Juhnke, "John Schrag Espionage Case," *Mennonite Life* 22 (July 1967), pp. 121-22.
57 Charles Gilbert, *American Financing of World War I* (Westport: Greenwood Publishing Corporation, 1970), p. 1.

Mennonites and the Conscription Trap

by Allan Teichroew

The coming of the war in Europe in 1914 stimulated an unprecedented interest in political developments among some of the more recently immigrated Mennonites from the General Conference Mennonites and the Mennonite Brethren. Their interest, however, stemmed less from a critical Anabaptist appraisal than from German patriotism.[1] Mennonite opinion among these groups, especially in the early part of the war, tended to sympathize with Germany. Abraham Schellenberg, Mennonite Brethren editor *Der Hillsboro Vorwaerts*, flaunted his pro-German attitude with reports from German-American newspapers which defended Germany against atrocity charges and glorified war as a moral purifier, and builder of brotherhood and love for the Fatherland.[2] The more temperate C. E. Krehbiel, editor of *Der Herold*, published in Newton, Kansas, carried accounts of the savage treatment inflicted on the Germans by the French, and listed the causes of the war as "the expansionism and lust of power of barbaric and despotic Russia, the desire for revenge of France and the economic jealousy of England."[3]

For all of Schellenberg's and Krehbiel's literary heroics in behalf of the German cause, Mennonite support never approached the enthusiasm engendered by most German-Americans. There was no Mennonite counterpart to the well organized German-American Alliance. Nothing could have been more foreign to Mennonite sobriety and reserve than the mass political rallies and propaganda campaigns launched by the Alliance. Besides, Mennonites were historically nonresistant. War to them was evil no matter who the participant and they felt uneasy in associating themselves with the kind of justification for war avid pro-Germanism required.[4] Then too, the degree of German sympathy depended on the particular Mennonite branch or community. The Daniel Graber family of Wayland, Iowa, was probably typical of many from the Mennonite Church (MC). They considered themselves Swiss—and neutral.[5]

In the one test of tangible German support, German Red Cross contributions, the General Conference Mennonites of the Western District far outdid their eastern brethren of the same conference. On October 29, 1914, *The Mennonite*, official organ of the General Conference, listed donations totaling $1000.61, designated for the "German Red Cross and Widows and Orphans of German Soldiers." Except for sparse amounts from Pennsylvania, this contribution came entirely from the western Mennonite communities, almost half from three congregations in Kansas.[6]

Impressive as the first fund appeared, it was not equalled for the duration of the war. As the fighting droned on and American public opinion, prodded by government spokesmen, turned increasingly anti-German, General Conference giving dwindled in spite of encouragement from the Emergency Relief Commission and official notes of thanks from the German Red Cross.[7] Thus, even as other German-Americans grew progressively more fanatical in defense of Germany and in attempts to keep America neutral, Mennonites drew back in their support.

Mennonites were an isolated people in World War I. The average Mennonite, General Conference, (Old) Mennonite, Amish, or other, paid scant attention to the problems created by the failure of international diplomacy.

Mennonites were more concerned about what the threat of war might mean for their nonresistant convictions. Since 1915, Mennonite leaders had been aware of the trend toward militarism in the country. Mennonite Church (MC) leaders indicated their concern first. In a letter sent to President Wilson on August 20, 1915, the MC's took note of the rising spirit of militarism and expressed the hope that they would be exempted in case of war.[8] A year later the All-Mennonite Convention in session at Carlock, Illinois, issued a similar statement. In a petition addressed to the President, the Convention deplored recent propaganda for compulsory military training and reiterated the Mennonite scruples regarding military service.[9]

As the war drew closer, Mennonites began writing the President as individuals and representatives of Mennonite congregations. In March of 1917, one month before America entered the war, the elders of the Bruderthal, Hillsboro, and Johannestal Churches of Hillsboro, Kansas, wrote Wilson urging him to exert his influence to discourage military legislation in the next session of Congress. The petition's tone was characteristic of Mennonite pleas for government recognition of their nonresistant beliefs. It reminded the President of the patriotism of Mennonites but warned that they would conscientiously object to any military service. Significantly, the petition made no mention or criticism of the policies which were drawing America into the war; nor did it protest the passage of a compulsory military service act as such. Thus, it objected to legislation which would "make military training compulsory *even for*

those churches that conscientiously object to the same." (Italics added.)[10]

Once war was declared the General Conference Mennonites of the Western District were the first to take action. In a special session on April 11 in Newton, Kansas, with representatives of the Krimmer Mennonite Brethren, Defenseless Mennonites, Mennonite Brethren, and the Hebron and Neufeld Churches present, the Western District nominated a special committee to communicate with Washington officials in order to influence any military legislation.[11] Even before this meeting the Western District had sent P. H. Unruh and P. H. Richert of Goessel to Washington to safeguard Mennonite nonresistant claims. The encouraging reports these representatives gave of their trip probably influenced the meeting to dispatch a delegation consisting of Richert, Maxwell Kratz, Philadelphia lawyer, and Peter Jansen of Nebraska, to Washington to interview senators and congressmen in order to obtain military exemption for Mennonites.[12]

The Selective Service Act of May 18, 1917, shattered the illusion of some Mennonites who had hoped no universal conscription law would be passed. The optimism of April had been well-founded, considering the talk of a volunteer army which abounded and the fact that, to the public's knowledge, at least, the issue of compulsory military service had not yet been fully determined.[13] Now, however, Mennonites were struck with a realization of the magnitude to which the nation's efforts would be geared to winning the war. Some were dismayed and shocked. To Kansas Mennonites who equated a military draft with Junker militarism, the law was shockingly un-American. C. H. Krehbiel expressed their sense of betrayal: "We did not believe that that was possible in the United States."[14]

As Mennonites clamored for a clarification from Wilson on the definition of noncombatant service, no word came. The government waiting game was on. Letters poured in from the different conferences, but the responses remained evasive. Could the young men of the Mennonite Brethren Church stay on the farm to till the soil, asked H. W. Lohrenz? From Washington came the standard reply: "No person so exempted shall be exempted from service in any capacity that the President shall declare to be noncombatant," answered E. H. Crowder, repeating the special provision of the exemption clause, and reminding Lohrenz that until the President's definition was made no commitment would be forthcoming.[15] And when a Holdeman delegation, accompanied by Aaron Loucks of the Mennonite Church (MC) attempted to see Wilson on June 25, they were rebuffed and sent to Crowder's office to meet with a lesser official. Again the news was the same—no new information on the meaning of noncombatant service.[16]

The passage of military conscription legislation in 1917 took the country by storm. A cartoonist named Ireland showed in the Columbus Dispatch *what happened to the anti-conscriptionists and their "treasonable literature."*

Registration Day brought no difficulty from any Mennonites. None of the Mennonite groups opposed registration on principle and it stood as the first example of general Mennonite acquiescence to military requirements. Even the Hutterite colony leaders in South Dakota and Montana "mutually agreed" their men should register.[17] And while the Exemption Committee considered registration to be as innocuous as a census, *The Gospel Herald* reasoned that to obey it was in accord with the Biblical teaching which taught that Christians should be subject to the powers that be. It provided, moreover, according to the *Herald*, an opportunity to make an important public witness on the issue of nonresistance.[18]

Undoubtedly, the surface arguments presented in favor of registering expressed a part of the Mennonites' real attitude toward registration. Mennonite statements on the relation of the Christian to the

State always emphasized that citizens of the Heavenly Kingdom should be subject to civil governments in matters which did not conflict with Christ's teachings. Certainly, they reflected, not wishing to probe too deeply into the consequences it might lead to, the act of registering in itself could not be construed as an evil to which Mennonites could not in good conscience conform; they preferred to relate submission to registration with the injunction of Romans 13 to obey governments. But a partial explanation of the Mennonite attitude also lay in their conviction that Wilson's definition of noncombatant service would exclude their young men from any participation in the military—registration or not. Thus, they waited patiently for the President's order, their strategy still directed towards complying with the government as long and as far as possible—a fact that Baker and Wilson were probably quick to realize. Motivated by a desire to keep the number of conscientious objectors[19] as low as possible, the aim of the government was to bring the nonresistants into the military service so as to expose them to indoctrination and to transform them into fighting men.[20] Its goal in the summer of 1917 was not to drive the Mennonites away but to engender a rapport with them and draw them in. The policy of both the Mennonites and the government was not to alienate the other. Government spokesmen never failed to appear sympathetic to Mennonite appeals, and Mennonites shrouded their petitions for exemption in patriotic language. They even requested agricultural work on the grounds it would be the best possible way their expert rural experience could be turned to the service of the nation.[21]

The problem of the humbled, obedient attitude of the Mennonites at this early stage was that it weakened the strongest of their demands for absolute exemption. The privileges the Mennonites were seeking were inherently radical; they were asking for no less than the right to determine the reality of their own cultural and religious identity. The same quest had precipitated their immigration to America, kept them on secluded farms, encouraged the establishment of Mennonite schools, and led them to retain the German language. Now it meant maintaining their conscientious scruples against war in a twentieth century State mad with war. "For us now to accept service under the military arm of the government," stated the Mennonites (MC's) in their Yellow Creek Conference of August, 1917, "would be equivalent to a denial of the faith and principles which we have held as vital to our spiritual well-being and eternal salvation."[22] But even before the (MC) Mennonites met, they had been forced into defining their non-conformist, nonresistant claims in terms of the State, leading the bishops of the Lancaster Conference, for example, to appeal for agricultural work on the basis that it would be the most efficient use of man power.[23]

By the end of the summer Mennonites tended to believe their rhetoric had influenced the government positively. As the actual induction process drew nearer, Mennonite action was paralyzed, vitiated by vague expectations that noncombatant service would be conducted outside the military establishment. According to a booklet published by the Western District Exemption Committee to prepare the young men of that conference for the draft, the leaders of the Committee still believed on July 21 that nonresistants would not be called to serve until the President's Declaration on noncombatant service.[24] Not until August did it become apparent to Mennonites that their men would be sent to military camp along with the regular draftees. Then H. P. Krehbiel and P. H. Richert jumped to the defense. On the eve of reporting time Krehbiel wired Crowder: "whether it is the ntern (sic) of the War Department to concentrate members of nonresistant religious organization drafted into service in the general mobilization camps for military exercises and service or in separate camps for civilian service."[25] Four days later Richert tried to show that the War Department could not legally order non-resistants to serve in the military because of the wording of the bill which precluded "military" service for noncombatants.

Government replies cleverly avoided direct answers to both communications. Government tactics dictated Mennonites be withheld knowledge of the War Department's plan of action until after the Mennonite young men were in camp, where once they had reported, they would come under the military sphere of influence and future relations with the Mennonite leaders would tip even more decidedly in the government's favor.[26] Finally, in an August 31st letter to Congressman W. W. Greist of Pennsylvania who had written Baker in behalf of nonresistants disturbed over the fact that their men were being treated as regular soldiers on their arrival in camp, Baker stated the War Department's position openly. The Amish, Mennonites, and Dunkards were upset with the shape of the draft, claimed Baker, because they misinterpreted the meaning of noncombatant service. To begin with, this service was not "outside and beyond the scope and purpose of the [Selective Service] Act." By law noncombatant service still came under the jurisdiction of the army, wrote Baker, thus they could not object to the fact that they were presently being sent to mobilization camps. President Wilson would define the specifics of noncombatant work, but "where this service is performed is immatorial (sic), provided it be of a non-combatant nature."[27]

Mennonites, then, would indeed report to army camps, nonresistant scruples or not. This they did

almost without objection. Except for the special form 174 in their possession which certified that the claimant's nonresistant scruples had been substantiated by their local board and the hope that their stay would be short, they showed up indistinguishable from their fellow draftees. Earlier, at least one Mennonite, fearful this would happen, had lamented that all Mennonites had not united and refused to register. "We gave them the little finger," wrote C. H. Friesen of Buhler, Kansas, "Now they have us completely."[28]

German-Americans in World War I were told to make a choice between the solid road of Americanism and the rickety path of Germanism. From New York Evening Telegram *reprinted in* Outlook, *January 5, 1916, p. 8.*

FOOTNOTES

1 James C. Juhnke, "The Political Acculturation of the Kansas Mennonites, 1870-1940." unpubl. diss. (Indiana University, 1966), pp. 137-138.

2 *Ibid.*, pp. 132, 138.

3 Letter from Ernest Meyer, marked Koenigsburg, October 22, 1914, in *Der Herold*, December 10, 1914, quoted in *Ibid.*, p. 133.

4 *Ibid.*, pp. 135-136, and Clifton J. Child, *The German American in Politics 1914-1917*, Madison, 1939), pp. 1-21.

5 Taped Interview with C. L. Gruber, Goshen, Indiana, September 27, 1968. Bethel College Historical Library (hereafter BCHL).

6 Harrison Landis, "Contributions," *The Mennonite*, October 29, 1914, p. 3. $227 came from the Prussian community of Whitewater, $141 from Pretty Prairie, and $73 from Hillsboro.

7 On March 18, 1915, *The Mennonite* reprinted a letter of thanks from F. Hecker, German Red Cross Delegate, for recent contributions. Later, in a front page artcile, J. Lichti, Secretary of the Emergency Relief Commission, quoted another German Red Cross delegate on the need for American [and Mennonite] aid: "Through the long duration of the war the tasks of the German Red Cross are steadily increasing and without the aid of our brethren in the United States we could hardly be able to cope with them." *The Mennonite*, March 18, 1915, p. 6; and *Ibid.*, April 20, 1916, p. 1.

8 *The Gospel Herald*, VIII (September 9, 1915), pp. 388-389.

9 "Petition to the President and Congress of the U.S.A.," August 30-31, H. P. Krehbiel Collection, Folder 150, BSHL.

10 "A Petition to the President of the U.S.A. and Congress." March 28,1917. Signed by Wm. J. Ewert, John H. Epp, and John Plenert, P. H. Unruh Collection, folder 1, BCHL. In September and October of 1916, several Mennonite (MC) conferences sent similar letters to Washington. They assured the authorities of their patriotism and pleaded for exemption from any universal military law that might be enacted. See "A Memorial Address to Members of the U.S. Congress," August 25, 1916, signed by Wm. C. Hershberger, Secretary of the Southwestern Pennsylvania Conference, *The Gospel Herald*, September 7, 1916, p. 430; and the same letter October 14, 1916, signed by C. H. Brunk, Secretary of the Virginia Conference, *The Gospel Herald*, October 26, 1916, p. 556.

11 The members of the committee were: P. H. Richert, Gerhard Penner, J. C. Goering, P. H. Unruh, H. P. Krehbiel, Wm. J. Ewert, and H. D. Penner. Minutes of the Western District Conference, 1906-1917, p. 3.

12 *Ibid.*, p. 2; and Guy F. Hershberger, *War, Peace, and* Nonresistance, (Scottdale, Penn., 1944), p. 116.

13 There is some evidence to suggest that Newton Baker already became convinced of the necessity of the draft long before the passage of the May 18 act. Three months before Wilson declared war, in February, Baker had ordered the government printing office to provide millions of forms and blanks necessary to administer the draft. Then on April 23, he took another step of dubious legality. Realizing that it would take time to mail out the forms he had printed up in a conspiracy of silence, Baker sent out a confidential letter to the governors, mayors, and local sheriffs asking for their secret cooperation: "The President desires (not directs) that I bring to your attention the following considerations which he is not at present ready to give to the press while the bill (Conscription Act) is under discussion. . . ." These "considerations" were to receive and make ready the forms for distribution, and to appoint the local draft boards. Amazingly, none of these orders were leaked to the public. Frederick A. Palmer, *Newton D. Baker: American at War*, Vol. I (New York, 1931), pp. 208, 212-213.

14 Juhnke, "The Political Acculturation of the Kansas Mennonites, 1870-1940." p. 151.

15 Letter from E. H. Crowder to H. W. Lohrenz, June 22, 1917.

16 Aaron Loucks, "A Visit to Washington, D. C.," *The Gospel Herald*, X (July 5, 1917), p. 266.

17 John D. Unruh, "Experiences of the Hutterian Brethren During the First World War. Article prepared for the April 1969 issue of *Mennonite Life*, p. 2.

18 Special Committee Report to the Western District, October 24 and 25, 1917. Minutes of the Western District, p. 38; and "War Problems of Non-Resistant People." *The Gospel Herald*, X (May 31, 1917), p. 46.

19 Hereafter sometimes abbreviated to CO.

20 Ekirch. *The Civilian and the Military*, p. 190.

21 Letter from C. H. Brackbill and Peter R. Nissly to President Wilson, June 25, 1917. BCHL, microfilm 208.

22 J. S. Hartzler. *Mennonites in the World War*, (Scottdale, Penn., 1921), p. 64.

23 Letter from C. H. Brackbill and Peter R. Nissly to President Wilson, June 25, 1917. Records of the Selective Service System 1917-1919. BCHL, microfilm 208. See also letter from J. S. Hertzler to President Wilson, June 14, 1917. *Ibid.*

24 "Information for Men Drafted for Military Service Under Act of May 18, 1917, But Who Wish to be Exempt from Such Service," prepared by the Western District Conference, p. 1, in Minute Book of Exemption Committee, p. 33.

25 Telegram from H. P. Krehbiel to Provost Marshal General E. H. Crowder, August 22, 1917, Records of the Selective Service System 1917-1919. BCHL, microfilm 208.

26 Telegram from Provost Marshal General E. H. Crowder to H. P. Krehbiel, August 23, 1917. Records of the Selective Service System 1917-1919. BCHL, microfilm 208; and letter from William C. Fitts, Assistant Attorney General, to P. H. Richert, August 31, 1917. P. H. Richert Collection, folder 83. BCHL.

27 Letter from Congressman W. W. Greist to Newton D. Baker, August 27, 1917. Records of the Selective Service System 1917-1919. BCHL, microfilm 208; and letter from Newton D. Baker to W. W. Greist, August 31, 1917. *Ibid.*

28 Letter from C. H. Friesen to *Der Vorwaerts*, August 3, 1917, p. 2. Translated by James Juhnke.

The United States vs. H. Miller: The Strange Case of a Mennonite Editor Convicted of Violating the 1917 Espionage Act

by Ted Joseph

May 5, 1975

The scene: A quiet, muggy federal court room in Cleveland, Ohio on a hot July afternoon in 1918.

Judge D. C. Westenhaver: "Mr. Miller, you have heard the clerk read the grand jury's charge that you violated the 1917 espionage act. How do you plead, please, to each of the five counts in the indictment?"

"Not guilty your Honor!"

Less than a month later, The Rev. Samuel H. Miller, Mennonite minister and newspaper editor, changed his plea, for some inexplicable reason to guilty on the third count. The prosecution dropped the other four counts. This is just one of the unsolved mysteries in the 1918 case, United States v. S. H. Miller.

This story has its general roots in the persecutions suffered by the Mennonites during the 16th through the 19th centuries. Early Mennonites strongly believed that the Gospel required pacifism and nonresistance in time of war. Menno Simons, an early Church giant, said, "the regenerated do not go to war, nor engage in strife. They are the children of peace who have beaten their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks, and know of no war."[1]

This basic tenet has endured but, not without agony for thousands of Mennonites who have been forced to leave their homes and countries on countless occasions because governments refused to accept the non-resistance principle. Thousands of Mennonites fled to the American colonies during the 17th and 18th centuries. Despite the change, many were still persecuted, in varying degrees, during the Revolutionary War and Civil War. But, the major test was during the First Great War.

The Selective Service Act of 1917 allowed conscientious objectors. The President, however, expected them to work in a non-combatant role. Many Mennonites and Amish could not accept any such duty. Therefore, various groups tried to get the Federal Government to completely exempt conscientious objectors.[2] On August 29, 1917, the Mennonite General Conference (MC), for example, passed a resolution which deplored the noncombatant role for the nonresistants. It said: ". . . we cannot participate in war in any form; that is, to aid or abet war, whether in a combatant or non-combatant capacity."[3]

Despite such official pleas, the government continued to draft Mennonites and Amish. The August 29 policy statement recommended that Mennonites and Amish allow conscription but that they should "merely inform them that under no circumstances can they consent to service, either combatant or noncombatant. . . ."[4] The conference then sent a delegation to visit with the Secretary of War, Newton D. Baker. The government eventually produced new rules that conscientious objectors:

1. Would not be required to wear uniforms nor perform military drill.
2. Would be segregated.
3. Would be offered a list of services considered noncombatant but that they need not accept any of the tasks.
4. Who could not accept a non-combatant job would be held in detention until the government decided their status.[5]

The Infamous May 15 Letter

Such historical thoughts often flowed, no doubt, through the keen mind of Mannasses E. Bontrager while he did chores on his 106 acre farm at Dodge City, Kansas. Bontrager, an Old-Order Amish Bishop, was also concerned with increasing pressures on the Amish and Mennonites to purchase Liberty Bonds. Some Amish and Mennonites believed that such purchases were possible under Church doctrine; others did not know what to do; still others, as the Rev. Bontrager, could not accept any compromise of the nonresistant principle and refused to purchase bonds. In April, 1918, Bontrager decided he wanted to share his absolutist views with other Amish and Mennonites throughout the nation.[6] So, he wrote the following letter to the unofficial Amish/Mennonite newspaper, The Weekly Budget. (Sugarcreek, Ohio):

Dodge City, Kans., April 24—A greeting in our Saviors name.

People are all well excepting some colds.

The weather is cool again. Were having more rain than usual this spring.

Oats fields are nice and green much more barley is being put out this spring than usual on account of the wheat failing. A few farmers think they have

Popular hatred of Germany and of German-Americans was fed by posters showing the Prussian monster with bloody hands preparing to devour the world.

some wheat that will be harvested, some corn is planted.

As we are living in an age of time when the gospel is preached over an wider area than ever before, but in what state of affairs the world is in? A world war, never since the time of Julius Caesar was so large a portion of the civilized nations at war, never were such destructive weapons used to destroy life, never were the nonresistant people put to a more trying test in our country.

How are we meeting the great problems confronting us. Shall we weaken under the test or are we willing to put all our trust in our dear Savior? Are we willing to follow his foot steps? Our young brethren in camp were tested first let us take a lesson of their faithfulness. They sought exemption on the ground that they belonged to a church which forbids its members the bearing of arms or participating in war in any form. Now we are asked to buy Liberty Bonds the form in which the government has to carry on the war. Sorry to learn that some of the Mennonites have yielded and bought the bonds. What would become of our nonresistant faith if our young brethren in camp would yield. From letters I received from brethren in camp I believe they would be willing to die for Jesus rather than betray Him. Let us profit by their example they have set us so far, and pray that God may strengthen them in the future. Many people can't understand why we don't want to help defend our country.[7]

Miller, the 46-year-old publisher and editor of the paper was away on Church business when the letter arrived. His printer, A. A. Middaugh, decided to print it on May 15—the 28th anniversary of the newspaper. The letter reached approximately 3,600 people.

Letter Reported to Federal Grand Jury

One or more of those individuals decided the letter was a pro-German letter and that the editor should be punished. It has never been established who reported the article to the federal authorities. It is known, however, that "operatives" of the American Protective League for Wayne and Holmes counties reported Miller to the authorities. There were 48 operatives working in the two counties under the authority of a U. S. Justice Department representative, Frank Fortune. The reporting system was simple: operatives were to report to one of the three captains who were stationed in Wooster, Orville and Millersburg; captains would report to Fortune and Fortune would relay the information to the U. S. District Attorney Edwin Slusser Wertz. Wertz would then decide whether or not to prosecute.[8]

Many citizens in these two counties were extremely patriotic. In Holmes County, for example, a local Vigilante group was formed to fight anti-Americanism. On April 25, 1918, just 21 days before the letter appeared, one vigilante wrote in The Holmes County Farmer:

> Our duty to the man in the trenches and to every other American at home, means loyalty to the demands of the present. . . .
>
> Not only must we send him constant words of cheer, but the damnable treachery of doubt and pacifism and Germanism, which keeps trying to spread itself through the press and by spoken rumor, must be stopped and abolished—utterly swamped in patriotic enthusiasm. Whenever you hear a doubting whisper of disloyalty, nail the whisper as a liar and a criminal, and know you are doing your country a service.[9]

Two days later, the influential The Wooster Daily News in Wayne County ran a front page banner, "Wayne County Reaches Million in Liberty Loan." Wayne and Holmes County residents, were, in the main, very supportive of the Liberty Loan Drives and America's effort to win the war. The newspapers were, no doubt, a partial factor in igniting this patriotism. One newspaper even editorialized that they were grateful that the American people had at least begun to hate the Kaiser. Within this general environment of patriotism and hate, the Rev. Samuel H. Miller was dutifully reported to U. S. District Attorney Wertz.

Wertz, a 42-year-old former two-term representative in the Ohio General Assembly (1904-1908) had been appointed to the federal post by President Woodrow Wilson in 1915. He had already been active in securing other anti-war indictments. Socialist Eugene V. Debs was his most famous indictee. Miller would soon be added to the list.

Grand Jury Hearing

Miller was not allowed a preliminary hearing. Instead, Wertz simply charged the jury with establishing whether or not Miller violated section 3 of the 1917 espionage act, which read:

> Whoever, when the United States is at war, shall willfully make or convey false reports or false statements with intent to interfere with the operation or success of the military or naval forces of the United States or to promote the success of its enemies and whoever, when the United States is at war, shall willfully cause or attempt to cause insubordination, disloyalty, mutiny, or refusal of duty, in the recruiting or enlistment services of the United States, or shall willfully obstruct the recruiting or enlistment service of the United States, to the injury of the service or of the United States, shall be punished by a fine of not more than $10,000 or imprisonment for not more than twenty years, or both.[10]

The gentle minister was not allowed to testify at the grand jury hearings. Wertz, however, knew where he lived. The jurors may have been told that Miller would flee if he knew that the grand jury was investigating him. In any case, the jury deliberated without input the accused or from other Mennonite and Amish witnesses.

Indictment

On July 7, 1918, the grand jury issued a five count indictment aginst Miller. The counts were that he:

> 1. Published the letter to promote the success of the Imperial German Government.
> 2. Intended to interfere with the operation and success of the military and naval forces of the United States.
> 3. Attempted to cause or incite insubordination, disloyalty, mutiny and refusal of duty in the military and naval forces of the United States.
> 4. Attempted to obstruct the recruiting and enlistment service of the United States.
> 5. (Destroyed. No record is available.)[11]

The jury said the last paragraph of the Bontrager letter caused the indictment.

Asst. U. S. Atty. F. B. Kavanagh, who signed the indictment, clarified the government's position by charging that the letter was an example of "fanatical anti-war teachings." He added:

> A great many of the Mennonites have been led astray by such vile counsel as that which appeared in this paper, "The Weekly Budget." Violation of the espionage act is especially grevious when it is committed by men who are ministers, editors or publishers.
>
> What such men cause to appear in print has more influence than the spoken word. Its very appearance as printed matter involves it being prepared and its being read with deliberation. Hence, the effect is especially pernicious.[12]

Arraignment

Two days later, on July 9, 1918, Miller, dressed in a light business suit, "showed no spirit of either defiance or regret" during the arraignment before Judge Westenhaver. He pleaded not guilty.[13] He was immediately placed in jail but released on the same day after signing a $5,000 bond.

Trial

At 9:30 a.m., on August 17, as the temperature hovered around 90 degrees, Miller's trial began before Judge Westenhaver. The religious leader had no attorney. What he said is not certain. Hartzler said that Miller "told the court that he could not plead guilty to the charges in the indictment but confessed that the article in question was published."[14] The editor's son, George S. Miller, agrees with Hartzler.[15] The Court docket, however, shows that Miller withdrew his not guilty plea and pleaded guilty to the third count. The other four counts were dropped by the prosecution.[16] Wertz or Kavanagh apparently negotiated or plea-bargained with Miller. In any case, on Wertz's 43rd birthday, he had another conviction.

Judge Westenhaver fined Miller $500 plus $145.93 in costs.[17] The Rev. Miller was unable to raise the money and spent several days in prison.[18] Finally, his cousin, W. A. Miller, paid the fine and Miller was released.[19]

Discussion

Miller's trial was not an isolated event in Wertz's district. As noted earlier, the same grand jury indicted three-time U. S. Presidential candidate, Eugene V. Debs. He, too, was convicted. Other alleged pro-Germans were also convicted. After the Miller trial, Wertz had plans to indict the Mennonite Church (MC) leaders who signed the August 29, 1917 resolution. On August 20, 1918, for some inexplicable reason, he sent the U. S. Attorney General this telegram:

> I am ready to present grand jury indictment against one hundred eighty-one bishops, ministers, deacons of Mennonite church for conspiring to violate espionage act case is prepared and while there is no doubt in my mind about a conviction as well as a possibility that government will have pleas of guilty I believe it advisable to consult you in regard to case before returning indictment for this purpose

I request authority to incur expense to travel to Washington for conference.[20]

The Rev. S. H. Miller would soon be on trial again.

Wertz got approval for the Washington trip but not for the indictments. He was sharply criticized, behind his back, by a special assistant to the U. S. Attorney General, John Bettman, who provided an analysis of the meeting to another assistant, John O'Brian. The memorandum read, in part, that Wertz came "in great glee over the case." Bettman blasted Wertz's evidence and urged no action against the Mennonites. The Ohio attorney, however, planned to continue the case because "he is afraid that a case of the same sort is apt to be brought in some other district and he thereby would lose the credit." Bettman asked Wertz to wait until O'Brian could review the case.

On September 5, O'Brian sent a letter to Wertz suggesting that the proposed massive indictments be postponed. He ordered the Wooster lawyer to send all "evidence and facts." On September 6, Wertz, in a telegram, agreed to postpone. Six days later, Wertz sent a three-page letter to the Attorney General which outlined his case against the Mennonites. In brief, Wertz was strongly opposed to the 1917 resolution. On September 19, O'Brian ordered Wertz to stop any prosecution action. He offered that "prosecution of them or their leaders would do more harm than good." Yet, he told Wertz to still gather evidence in case the Justice Department decided to prosecute. Wertz meekly acknowledged receipt of this letter without comment.

Several days later, O'Brian told Wertz that his evidence was just not sufficient to warrant indictments and that prosecution "would be highly inadvisable." So, Wertz was forced to drop the case. But, nearly three years later, the aggressive Wooster native was still angry at O'Brian's refusal. This bitterness was revealed in an August 9, 1921 letter to the U. S. Attorney General in which he charged that the Mennonites were allowed to "defy the laws of the country." The letter was in response to a request from the Attorney General to Wertz to return the Mennonite General Conference (MC) secretary's minutes book. (Wertz had subpoenaed the book for his planned indictments.) Wertz, continuing in his letter, revealed some motivations:

Personally, I have very great objections to returning this book to Hartzler. I want the case complete and to remain in the files of this office to show that I have performed every duty which I should have performed in regard to the prosecution of this outfit and breaking up the conditions which this conference brought about.

Was he planning to use the indictments as a political ladder to other higher offices? He was politically ambitious, according to his son. During his second term in the Ohio General Assembly, Wertz ran for a U. S. Representative seat in 1906. In those days, candidates were selected by a party convention and not through the primary. After a three day deadlock, the young lawyer lost on the 277th ballot. Nine years later, President Woodrow Wilson appointed Wertz to the U. S. Attorney's post for the Northern District in Ohio. Wertz was grateful but wanted the federal district court judge's position in Cleveland. He campaigned hard in 1916 for the post but, on January 17, 1917, a political ally wrote Wertz and explained that, after an interview with President Wilson, "The President feels he cannot appoint you."[21]

Wertz then quit active campaigning for any appointed or elected office and concentrated on getting indictments. He had 8500 criminal indictments with only 85 acquittals during his eight year (1915-1923) term.[22] In 1934, he ran for his final political office—Judge of the Court of Appeals but he was defeated.

One can only speculate on Wertz's motives. While he had strong political motives he also had strongly opposed pacifism.[23] One could also wonder if Miller would have been indicted if Washington had been more involved with the case. Wertz could have, perhaps, achieved the mass indictments if he had not asked for counsel from Washington.

There are also several additional unsolved issues. Did Miller, for example, not get due process of law by not receiving a U. S. Commissioner's preliminary hearing? It appears that Wertz had the option to avoid such a hearing. But, the libertarian can argue that Miller's rights were violated.

Why did Miller not get called before the grand jury? Why did the jury have to issue a secret indictment even though the government knew the minister's location? Some might speculate that Wertz was more interested in the indictment than in justice.

Why did Miller, who pleaded not guilty at the arriagnment, plead guilty to only the third count at the trial? While he appeared to be a man of strong religious principles, Wertz, convinced him, perhaps, that no principle was worth 20 years in jail and a $10,000 fine. Or, perhaps, Miller wanted to fight but could not afford the attorney's fee. He did not have an attorney at any stage in the process.

Another mystery is why several Wayne and Holmes County witnesses travelled to Cleveland on August 7. It is known that they were ordered to testify at the trial. But, it is not known if they appeared before Judge Westenhaver. Moreover, why did Miller refuse to cover the case in his own paper? His son does not even know. George R. Smith, whose father bought the paper from Miller, said:

I would presume that the reason Mr. Miller never published anything in the Budget concerning the

A group of Mennonite draftees singing hymns at an informal service. From Ferdinand Schroeder Collection.

trial was because of a sense of shame at having been involved in a court case, although I am sure practically all his subscribers were quite sympathetic toward him.[24]

Samuel H. Miller made no noticeable changes in his paper after the trial. But, of course, World War I ended shortly thereafter. The conviction, however, dampened his enthusiasm for the newspaper. He, and other members of the Budget Publishing Company, sold the newspaper in 1920.[25] He died eight years later. His obituary claimed he was a "faithful minister" and that "He was the fortunate possessor of a big mind and a big heart."

The key question is whether or not Wertz was politically motivated in securing the conviction of Miller. Would other attorneys, outside of Washington, have been so aggressive? His statement that he might "lose the credit" complemented with the esoteric method of handling the case suggests political behavior. Nevertheless, in his August 9, 1921 letter, he showed, as in 1916, strong disdain for the pacifism principles of the Mennonites. He may have genuinely believed that non-resistance was, indeed, anti-American. But, it is very difficult to extricate his scorn from his political needs. In any event, Miller is the only known Mennonite editor to be convicted for attempting to cause or to incite insubordination, disloyalty, mutiny and refusal of duty in the military and naval forces of the United States.

To many, the charge is warranted; others have no view; still others, as this writer, believe that Miller was an unfortunate victim.

FOOTNOTES

1 Guy Franklin Hershberger, War, Peace and Nonresistance (Scottdale, Pennsylvania: The Herald Press, 1944), p. 74.

2 For the detailed group letter to the Secretary of War, see J. S. Hartzler, Mennonites In The World War (Scottdale, Pennsylvania: Mennonite Publishing House, 1922), pp. 67-68.

3 Proceedings of The Mennonite General Conference, 1921 (no author and no place of publication; was compilation of 1898 to 1939 General Conference minutes), p. 185.

4 Ibid., p. 186.

5 Hershberger, op. cit., p. 118.

6 For the only account of the Bontrager case, see David Luthy, "The Arrest of an Amish Bishop—1918," Family Life, March, 1972, pp. 24-27.

7 The Weekly Budget (Sugarcreek, Ohio), May 15, 1918, p. 3.

8 "Wertz to Pen: Miller and Bontrager Receive Fines," The Wooster Daily News (Wooster, Ohio), August 12, 1918, p. 2.

9 Bilss Carman, "Loyalty Is Our One Great Duty," The Holmes County Farmer (Millersburg, Ohio), April 25, 1918, p. 6.

10 June 15, 1917, Ch. 30, Title I, Sect. 3 40 Stat. 219.

11 Indictments are in case No. 4091, Federal Archives and Record Center, Chicago, Illinois. September 10, 1918 personal correspondence between Wertz and the Attorney General confirms there were five counts. See National Records and Archives Service, File No. 186400-18-4, Washington, D. C.

12 "Charges Pastor Was Seditious in Newspaper," Cleveland Plain Dealer, July 11, 1918, p. 1, 2.

13 The Wooster Daily News, "Mennonite Bishop Brought Here Under Sedition Act," July 11, 1918, p. 6. Miller accepted the tenets in Bontrager's letter. Miller was a signer of the 1917 Church policy statement. See Proceedings of the Mennonite General Conference, op. cit., 188.

14 Hartzler, op. cit., p. 164.

15 Personal letter, George S. Miller, Wellman, Iowa, March 17, 1975.

16 Personal inspection of the docket, U. S. District Court store room, Cleveland, Ohio, March 14, 1975.

17 U. S. District Court records, n.d. File No. 186400-18.

18 Personal letter, George S. Miller, Wellman, Iowa, March 17, 1975.

19 U. S. District Court records, August 12, 1918, File No. 186400-18. The trial was never reported, in detail, in the area papers. Therefore, it is not known what Judge Westenhaver said to Miller. Westenhaver, however, in the August 5 trial of Bontrager, offered these thoughts: "When the country is at war, you and all who benefit by its power are equally bound to bear the burden. Religious liberty such as you enjoy was not gained by non-resistance. No persons in this country regret the war more than those not of your faith. No man, no matter how rich he may be, can buy exemption; no man may furnish a substitute. But out of consideration of your religious beliefs, there has been granted to your men exemption from combatant service." Bontrager responded: "I made a mistake by writing that letter. I did wrong. I thank Mr. Kavanagh (assistant prosecuting attorney) and the judge for showing me my error." See "Bishop Fined $500 for Sedition Note," Cleveland Plain Dealer, August 6, 1918, p. 1.

20 August 20, 1918 telegram from Wertz to Attorney General, Washington, D. C. National Archives and Records File No. 19J642. All following facts were extracted from this file.

21 Letter from U. S. Senator Pomerene to Wertz, January 17, 1917, Washington, D. C. Personal copy.

22 Personal copy of campaign literature, "Edwin S. Wertz," October 8, 1934.

23 In a personal copy of a January 29, 1916 speech, "The Man of Peace," written by Wertz, he is extremely critical of pacifists. His August 9, 1921 letter, op. cit. also emphasizes his disgust with the pacifist thoughts. In his closing statement to the Debs jury, he said, in part, ". . . and those who oppose the laws of this country, as this man has done, are touching anarchy, and will tear your country down instead of holding it up and preserving it as it is." Later, he charged that "These fellows, instead of going over and giving Germany information, find it more profitable to create discontent here at home, to make the people feel that they are not fighting for the honor of their country and for the safety of democracy, and to preserve this country as it is. . . ." Personal copy of closing remarks, U. S. v. Debs, by Wertz, n.d. Some of this basic philosophy can, it seems, be transferred to the Miller case.

24 Personal letter, George R. Smith, Sugarcreek, Ohio, April 10, 1975.

25 The paper was never owned by the Mennonite Church. Its owners, though were mostly high-ranking Mennonite Church leaders. Personal letter, Ben Cutrell, Publisher, Mennonite Publishing House, February 10, 1975. Evidence was sought to establish a relationship between the Church and the omission of case in Miller's paper. There may have been an informal recommendation to not cover the case but no evidence exists that Miller was told not to report the facts.

EYEWITNESS ACCOUNTS

The Schowalter Oral History Project at Bethel College has collected over three hundred interviews with Mennonites about their experiences in World War I. Over one third of the interviews have been transcribed. The tapes and transcriptions are kept in the Mennonite Library and Archives.

Something of the great variety in the accounts of these men is suggested by the following excerpts from the collection. The complete transcripts range from ten to fifty pages in length. Only sections from the transcripts are produced below.

Some Mennonite draftees accepted noncombatant work. This group at Camp Funston is peeling potatoes. From Henry Gaede Collection.

STUTZMAN

Enos Stutzman of the Old Order Amish Church at Bucklin, Kansas, reports how he escaped combat duty by being transferred to the bugle corps at Camp Funston.

Stutzman: I still had that faith that I was going to be delivered. I didn't know how. I says, "Lord," I says, "You see my, you see how I want to get out of this. I do not want to kill. Show me a way."

And so one morning I was called out of seventeen hundred marchers. My number, I had a number, and I was sent to carry a message. . . . Well, I didn't know what this was for. And finally I found out I was to go to Bugler School to learn to play the bugle. . . .

X: Had you played the trumpet or bugle before? Or had any experience of . . .

Stutzman: This is the amazing thing about it. Being an Amish boy, all musical instruments are barred from their belief and homes. Well, I wasn't very old and I had a few little instruments in the house, and my folks wasn't too much against it. But we had to keep them secret. Now, I could not read a note. . . .

But when I got in the Bugle School, from the morning when I started, twelve days after I was in that school, I took up the regimental calls, and I memorized 55 regimental calls. . . . I couldn't see how the Lord would tell anyone how quick to read notes. It was one of the miracles again. . . . It was a direct deliverance.

BERKY

H. W. Berky graduated from Princeton University in 1915. He accepted regular military service and represents that considerable segment of Mennonites who had been weaned away from pacifism by liberal and militarist American influences. He was a member of the Hereford Mennonite Church in Bally, Pennsylvania. After an unhappy term of service he became a convinced pacifist.

X: Who influenced you most in your decision regarding military service?

Berky: Well, that's pretty hard to tell. We were taught in our home to do our own thinking. . . . My mother was not a Mennonite. My mother was a German Reformed. But being a Mennonite, a church which had the reputation of being pacifist, I don't recall ever hearing a pacifist sermon in all my life. In other words pacifism as it was, was dormant, excepting in print. That was all. I mean, we had no discussions on pacifism that I recall, till the war came. And then all of a sudden, boy, everybody wanted to be a pacifist. . . .

Some Mennonites in military camp in World War I wore military uniforms. Others refused and were allowed to wear civilian clothes in camp.

X: What was your father's position towards war, towards military service?

Berky: My father was opposed to war. I think he was against it, but my mother wasn't. . . .

X: What did your family think about the war when it started in Europe in 1914? . . .

Berky: They were largely sympathetic towards Germans. Of course, there was very little reading done, no daily newspapers or anything like that. But at heart they were Germans. Although they did realize that they left Germany to get away from military influences. But somehow or other the Germans were just something special. . . .

X: Did you consider refusing to register?

Berky: No. I did not. I did consider very seriously, though, whether I, that is, I didn't believe in war either. I didn't believe that that was the way to settle disputes. But in those days I had a little bit the view—I'm going to be frank with you—the view that some of these problems that came up were a disease, which I still think is correct. Social disease. But I likened the whole thing a little bit to a person that was sick and they called in a doctor and the doctor says, "Well, this is a case where an amputation is necessary to save a life." And that was a little bit the reasoning I had. At that particular time, I thought I had read some of the accounts of what the Germans had done over there in Belgium and didn't do there, and I listened to a speech over in Lima that was given by a doctor, a great preacher from New York City, who was going to leave the country, and he gave us gory stories of the Germans, how they marched through Belgium and the kids would run along beside the troops and like they always do, and there was a band where some soldiers were marching along, and how some of the soldiers, the German soldiers stuck their bayonets through them and carried them on their shoulders and all that kind of stuff. . . .

X: Did you tell people about your experiences here after you returned here at Bluffton? Were people proud of you?

Berky: I don't know. I wasn't proud of myself. I couldn't have been.

X: Why not?

Berky: Why not? Because I had sinned. I had seen what the army was like, and I had seen what war was like, first hand, and when I came through, I was a confirmed pacifist.

X: Immediately, or was this kind of reaction set in later on?

Berky: It didn't take very long.

X: Was this true of many of the other fellows you knew?

Berky: Well, I think it was true of quite a few.

X: Did some of these people, did you become involved in the peace movement then in between the Wars?

Berky: Oh, yes. Oh, yes. I was opposed to the Second World War.

GORDON

Charles Gordon was a non-Mennonite dairy farmer near Burrton, Kansas, in 1918. On Armistice Day, November 11, the town of Burrton held a victory celebration. Gordon describes how the crowd went wild and persecuted John Schrag, a Mennonite farmer who had refused to buy war bonds.

Gordon: When we got there, there was a big milling crowd around at Four Corners there in Burrton where the main part of town was. And they had a casket out in the middle of the street in the square there. This casket, they said that anybody who wants to see the Kaiser come right ahead, and of course we milled through the crowd and got up there and there was a skunk in this casket. And that was the Kaiser. And they celebrated around there and burned a lot of old stuff there to make bonfires.

Before Sunday worship service at Camp Funston (Fort Riley), Kansas.

So they was gonna round up all these immigrants that had migrated here from Russia, you know, that settled here around Burrton and Halstead and Newton, Moundridge, Hesston. And there was one particular man. He had about 15, 16 quarters of land around Burrton there, and they tried to get him to buy liberty bonds during the war, and he wouldn't buy none. . . .

They brought him in and he never said a word, and the questions or anything they'd ask him, he never, never complained or never put up no resistance whatsoever. They give him a little American flag to hold in his hand. And when they give him that, why, they closed his fist on the handle of the flag. Of course you naturally would relax as you know. . . . So it dropped. Well, they was a shovin' and pushin' and somebody said, "He stepped on the American flag." Well, brother, you just as well throw the gasoline on a fire to put it out. I never saw so much yellin' and a cursing and slapped him. And buffeted him and beat him and kicked him. He never offered any resistance whatsoever. One of the fellows went and got a, a hardware store and got a gallon of yellow paint. And pulled the lid off and poured it over his face. He had a long beard, kind of a short heavy set man, had a nice beard, and that run down all over his eyes, his face, and his beard, and his clothes. Of couse that was yellow. . . .

He never offered no resistance whatsoever and they, one man went to the hardware store again and he got a rope and put it around, got there, and put around his neck and marched him down to the, close to the city jail, a little calaboose there. Had a tree there and they was going to hang him to this tree. And Tom Roberts, who is a president to the Anti-Horse Thief Association, quite well-to-do-man, lives about mile west of Burrton. And he is kind of a deputy sheriff or undersheriff of the county and come and said, "Now boys," he said, "you've gone far enough." He said, "This man is not going to be hung as long as I am alive." . . . And he just shoved him in the thing and shut the door. Now he said to, "Anybody that takes this man out is going to take it over my dead body." He said, "You're all my friends, you're my neighbors," he said. "I love every one of you," but he said, "Law is the law. Let the law take its due course, justice take its due course." And he said, "I'll shoot the first man that comes in. You may shoot and kill me," he said, "I'm protecting this man."

X: Do you think they would have hanged him if it wouldn't have been for . . . .

Gordon: Oh yes. Why you mob, and I said then, if ever I got out of that mob alive I said I'll, whenever I see a mob form, they go crazy. Storekeepers, and the banker, and everybody. . . .

I don't know how many people walked right up to him (Schrag) and spit in his face and he never said a word. And he just looked up all the time we was doing that. Possibly praying, I don't know. But there's some kind of a glow come over his face and he just looked like Christ. . . . (inaudible). Enemies smite you on one cheek, turn the other and brother he did it. He just kept doing it. They'd slug him on the one side of the face and he'd turn his cheeks on the other. He exemplified the life of Christ more than any man I ever saw in my life.

Ferdinand Schroeder is on the upper right. Schroeder Collection.

SCHROEDER

Ferdinand Schroeder of the Alexanderwohl Mennonite Church near Goessel, Kansas, was one of the first men drafted and sent to Camp Funston. He tells what happened when he and his friends refused to "haul slop" on Sunday.

Schroeder: They finally had figured out that we could haul slop. . . . We worked on trucks to haul garbage. That was a big business. . . . We had fourteen hundred barracks to collect every day with trucks and then they had to haul it to the incinerator. . . .

Then they told us to report back tomorrow morning as usual to haul the slop and that was Sunday. So we boys had a little conference that evening and decided that we would not go back on Sunday. . . .

As they came in they all got an order if they would accept punishment. And the punishment would be to let us down in a hole and starve us to death with one piece of bread a day. That is what the order was to all these guys. And they all accepted that kind of order that they rather go and work, except me and three others we refused it, that we would not go. And they said whether we would be willing to accept that punishment and I said, "I am." I would be willing to take that punishment to starve to death with one slice of bread and three others. . . . They had planned out that there would be some guys they would beat. . . . The officers did go along to see how everything would turn out.

So the one that asked me whether I would go to work. And I said, "No." And so the next one and the next and the next so as the third one and the fourth one said, "No." So they beated us and I tell you pretty hard. We all dropped down to the ground and were bleeding pretty bad. Of course they told us to get up. We did get up and to stand at attention. We stood at attention. I know the blood was running down my cheek here and tickled me and I wiped it off and I got bawled out. They said, "Attention!" I should not wipe off my blood. I was to stand at attention. I just had to let the blood roll off.

They gave us a few minutes time and then they said, "Well, are you going to haul slop today again?" They asked us for a second time. And I said, "No." And the next one also and the next one and the next, us four. So we got beated again. And a little bit worse this time. . . .

Well, all right, we four refused again for the second time that we would not go. We would rather take that punishment, you know. So we dropped onto the ground again and were bleeding. I know the second time they knocked out a tooth. The rest all got beat up and then they asked us for the third time. Then one of us boys asked him whether he could deliver a prayer. And the officers allowed it. He had a nice prayer there in the weed patch. And they did not beat us the third time. They just led us back to our company.

KING

Marvin King, a Mennonite draftee from Harper (MC), had a difficult experience in camp. But he did recall moments of triumph when practical argument or Biblical truth won a point.

King: I remember one distinctive time he (the military officer) said, "What would you do now if everybody would be just like you?" I said, "I wish they would. Then there wouldn't be no war." They had never gave that a thought. . . .

I never seen this but I think it was true. They told that an officer was moving a CO in the train. And he (the Mennonite) had scripture verses wrote all over his suitcase. The officer said, "Turn that suitcase around. I'm tired of looking at it." The boy said, "Okay," and turned it around. And on the other side he had the scripture verse, "Unless ye repent, ye shall likewise perish."

PANKRATZ

P. W. Pankratz was not a church member when the war broke out. He says he wanted to be a regular soldier, but was prevented when his father collaborated with pastor of the Lehigh Mennonite Church (GC) to baptize him in absentia! The unwanted forged baptism certificate eventually led to his being court martialed and sentenced for 35 years as a conscientious objector. If his report is to be trusted, Pankratz is surely the only Mennonite whom the military authorities refused to allow *into* regular service.

Pankratz: I was in uniform, and I was acting corporal during my squad zone when I was called to headquarters. And after I got home, Dad says, "Well," he says, "they forced me to sign that." The two preachers and Dad signed that certificate that I was baptized.

X: The preachers forced your father to sign that?

Pankratz: Yeah.

X: And they baptized you in absentia, or while you were in camp they were baptizing you?

Pankratz: Yeah.

X: At which church, the Lehigh Mennonite Church?

Pankratz: The Lehigh Mennonite Church.

X: Who were the ministers?

Pankratz: My Uncle Frank Pankratz, he was the minister at the Lehigh church and P. H. Unruh was the elder of the Alexanderwohl Church. And them two signed it and my father. They told my father if he didn't sign it, well, they'd throw him out of church too.

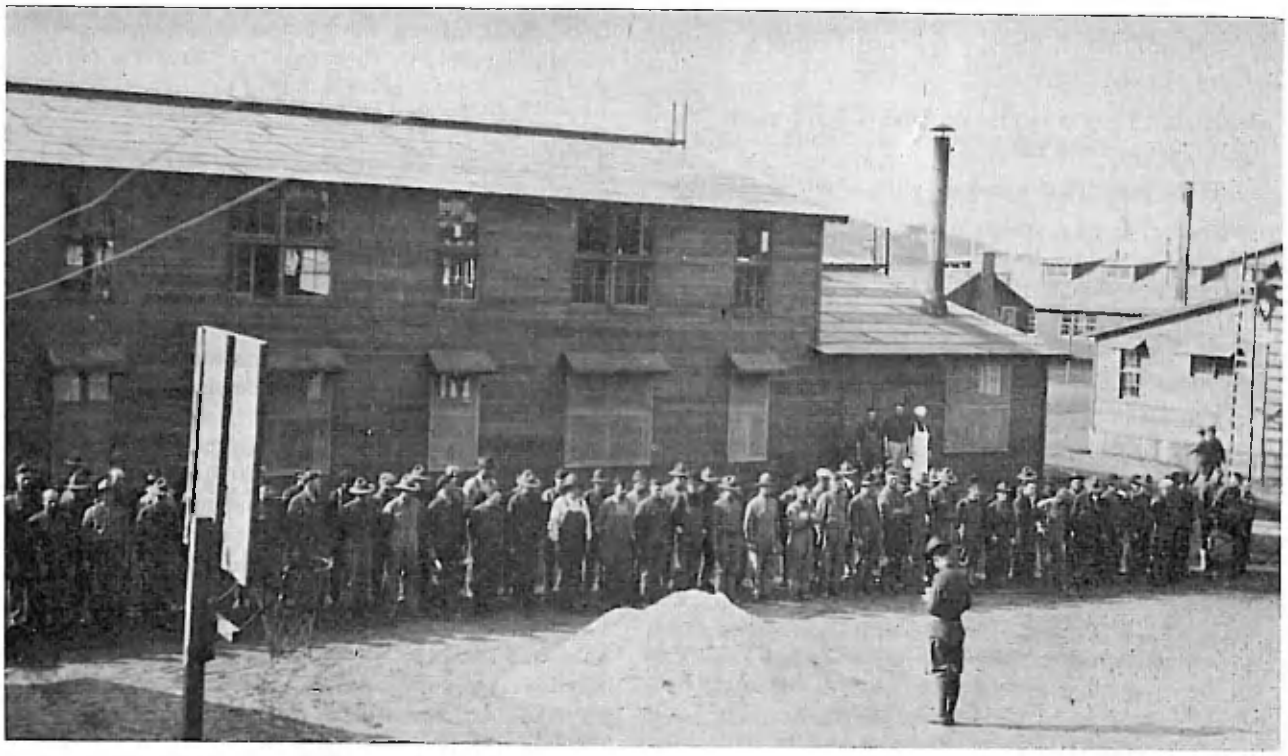
X: Your father told you this?

Pankratz: After I got home. If he'd told me then, I'd have said, "Why go ahead; let them kick you out. I'm going as a regular." And I'd have went as a regular, because I didn't have no business going as a conscientious objector.

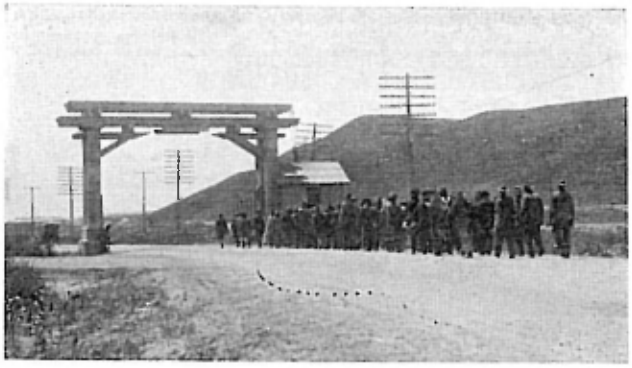
X: Well, what did the officer say when you said—or what did you tell him?

Pankratz: I told him—I says, "Sir, I ain't lying." Well, he says, "You know the orders from Secretary Baker. I can't issue no guns." Well, I says, "Sir, I ain't going across the sea, by gosh, without a gun. I'll guarantee you that. . . ."

X: Why were you court-martialled? Because—just because of what you had said?



Roll call at barracks No. 527, Camp Funston.



Mennonite draftees marching toward the entrance to Camp Funston.

Pankratz: Because that—well, I don't want to say it.

X: Go ahead.

Pankratz: That goddamn baptism certificate is what fouled me up. Because they said I was a church member. Then they got me in front of the Board of Inquiry.

X: Now wait a minute. I still don't understand why you got court martialled.

Pankratz: Because they took me as a CO too.

X: Yeah, but in order to be court-martialled you had to disobey an order.

Pankratz: I—that certificate done it I guess. They wouldn't issue me no guns; they wouldn't issue me—and they put down conscientious objector. . . .

X: What did you say at the trial? Who were the officers at the trial?

Pankratz: They was all—oh, god, I don't know. They was all lieutenants and. . . .

X: Were you tried alone or with a whole bunch?

Pankratz: I was tried alone. But you know Ben Balzer. He wrote down a bunch of Biblical verses, you know, and he says, "That ought to get you through." Well, I never paid enough attention to church, you know, so I just threw that on a—the guy that's supposed to defend me.

X: You had a lawyer?

Pankratz: Yeah, one of the officers, you know. And he read it. He says, "According to that he's a CO." Well, I wanted to argue that point, but the bigshot says, "You ain't talkin' unless we ask you to."

X: The army officer said that?

Pankratz: Yeah, the bigshot there, the colonel down there or major or whatever he was. So they didn't ask me no questions and I didn't give no answers—couldn't, because I couldn't talk unless they asked me. So we was all court-martialled and sent to DB's (disciplinary barracks) for 35 years.

MUMAW

Adam Mumaw of the Salem Mennonite Church in Wooster, Ohio, refused to wear the military uniform at Camp Taylor, Kentucky. One of the officers turned him over to the regular soldiers for some rough treatment.

Mumaw: I refused a uniform. Then of course, that was going against the orders. And all orders had to be punished. I don't recall, but I think it was just two hours later there at noon, a group of three hundred men were gathered together outside our tent, and the corporal told these men that here's a conscientious objector and he refuses to put on a uniform. What shall we do with him? He come in and told them there, "Here they are," he says, "I'll put you out under their influence and they can do with you what they want to, unless you put on the uniform, accept the uniform." I said, "I can't do that." And the guy I notified told the lieutenant what my intentions were. What I could and what I couldn't do. Seemingly the lieutenant wasn't there at that time so they says, "All right. Here you are boys. Take him." And I was taken up to the supply room where they keep the uniforms. "Here's your chance. Take the uniform or let the crowd take you." I wouldn't accept, so they took me. Give me a ride.

X: They gave you a ride?

Mumaw: Sure did.

X: What do you mean?

Mumaw: Throwed me up in the air about 15 or 20 feet, and the second time I grabbed on the edge of the blanket. You see, they had a blanket and men all around and pushed me up in the air. Well the second time they wanted to give me a bump. I grabbed the outside, flew up in the air into the crowd. I went over the edge with my shoes and, I asked them, I told them I was sorry but I couldn't help it. And finally then they said, "We'll give you another chance to take a public uniform." I said, I told them before I couldn't do that. So, just about that time the lieutenant came, that was on the noon hour, and he says, "What's going on here?" "Oh, they're putting a uniform on this conscientious objector." They had taken my clothes all off, and my underwear. And he asked a few questions and finally asked were those my clothes lying there on the floor, and I said, "Well," and he says, "You gather them up and go down to your tent and stay there until I tell you."

Mennonite draftees on an uphill hike north of Camp Funston. Some Mennonites were persuaded to carry rocks for "exercise," but stopped working when they learned the rocks would be used to build a road.

JANTZEN

David A. Jantzen was a Mennonite Brethren draftee who was proud of his noncombatant military service. He criticized fellow Mennonites at Camp Lewis, Washington, who refused to cooperate with the military system.

Jantzen: After I'd been in the Army for about six weeks, Father wrote to me. He says, "Boy, you look out that you don't disgrace us. Because remember, we left the old country because we were Mennonites, prayer-lovers, noncombatants." So I went and talked to the sergeant and then I said, "Is it necessary that a noncombatant trains with a gun?" He says, "No. Are you one of those?" I says, "Yes, I'm one of those." He says, "My God, I thought you was a smarter man than that. But," he says, "I'll get you to talk to the lieutenant." And then I talked to them. They were very nice people. I was nice to them, and they were very nice, but it happened to be that the lieutenant was standing there in line and as the boys were coming in from the different parts of the country, I was the first one in his company, and he asked me a lot of questions. And I was polite to him, nice to him. I wasn't a bit snotty, or stubborn, or anything like that, because most of those boys they were sullen.

X: That is, the Conscientious Objectors?

Jantzen: Yes.

X: Or everybody that was there?

Jantzen: No, the Conscientious Objectors. They were sullen. They were just like a chip on the shoulder, you know? That is what I found like all of them. . . .

X: What should the Mennonites have done—the Conscientious Objectors?

Jantzen: They should have done everything that they was told. If they told you to go over and dump the cans in the outhouse, you should do it. Or if they told you to go and cut the brush, you should do it. If they told you to take the broom and sweep the outside, where everybody was spitting on and puking on and discharging mucus, and one thing or other, they should do it because it was for their own health. And they should keep their rooms immaculate, which they did not do. They would throw their shoes here, and the beds weren't made up or anything like that. But they sat on the beds and read the Bibles.

HANDLING PRO-GERMAN IN THREE-SCENE DRAMA

The following excerpt from a Fairview, Oklahoma newspaper (undated clipping from the H. R. Voth collection in Mennonite Library and Archives), provides a model in the form of a drama on how Mennonites should be persuaded to buy war bonds. There actually were Mennonites named Schmidt in the Fairview area.

SCENE I—IN THE COUNTRY IN THE HOME OF A WELL-TO-DO GERMAN MENNONITE

"No it's our religion. I can't buy a Liberty Bond. That would be aiding the government to carry on war. My religion is against war. No, I'm glad to have you here, I want you to stay at my house for dinner but I can't talk to you about bonds, No, no, I can't do it."

"This is your farm?"

"Yes."

"You have added to it?"

"Yes, one quarter. One other quarter is school and the other quarter is in my oldest boy's name. He homesteaded it."

"Are you a citizen?"

"No, I just took out first papers. I was born in Germany."

"You made your money in America?"

"Yes, I landed in New York with $53.00. We've paid for two farms here."

"You could afford to buy bonds then?"

"Yes, but it is against our religion. I've bargained for the Creek eighty there. With thirty cent cotton and $2.00 wheat we'll pay for it this year. Our eggs and butter brought us $21.00 last week."

SCENE II—MEETING OF COUNCIL OF DEFENSE AND LIBERTY BOND COMMITTEE

(Investigating Committee makes report)

"You say Schmidt owns three farms?"

"Yes."

"And has a bank account."

"In two banks; $872 in one and $1383 in the other. He is dickering now for another farm."

"Your estimate of his worth?"

"About $15,000."

"What is the average purchase of other farmers worth a like amount?"

"$550.00."

"I move that Schmidt buy $550.00 in bonds."

"If he won't?"

"He has accepted every good thing America has. It has permitted him to make a fortune. It has educated his children. Now, if he won't accept his obligations, we'll let him be a man without a country, county, town or community."

Motion carried.

SCENE III—TOWN, THE GROCERY STORE. SATURDAY NIGHT.

(Friday's paper carried list of "Disloyals.")

"Spring weather is good for hens. Twenty-eight dozen today. Rain has brought the grass out too. Got thirty-one pounds of butter this week."

"Sorry, Mr. Schmidt, I can't buy your produce today. They say you're not a loyal American."

"What?"

"Sorry, my customers like your butter and eggs, but they'd all quit me if I trade with you now. The Council of Defense won't stand for it. You've traded with me seven years and I'm sorry. Better get right."

ANOTHER STORE

"What, Schmidt, you quit Wilson's? What's the matter? No, I am sorry, we need fresh butter mighty bad, but the County Council says you're not a good loyal American. I'd lose every loyal customer if I traded with you. Better buy a bond, Schmidt."

THE DRY GOODS STORE

"Three pair canvass gloves. Yes, I know you've got the money to pay for them, but I can't sell them to you. Our first business now, is America. The County Council says that you are not loyal. My boy's at the front now, and I wouldn't trade with you for his sake; and I'd lose every good customer I have, anyhow, if I sold stuff to you."

THE BLACKSMITH SHOP

"Nope, I'm sorry, I take the County Council's word for it. Go get your bond."

DOCTOR'S OFFICE

"You say your stomach bothers you. Let me see, your name is Schmidt. You're not in danger of dying? Well, I'm sorry. Here's the list. I'll be over there before long myself, and I want to know every free American is behind me, No, that's final. Good day."

LAWYER'S OFFICE

"You say your name's Schmidt? And no one will trade with you? Your religion won't let you buy bonds? No, Mr. Schmidt, I can't represent you. I wouldn't dare, if I wanted to. The law? Well, no law ever was made with the intention of hurting the country. You'd better buy bonds."

LIBERTY BOND HEADQUARTERS

"Hello, Schmidt, you here. What's that? Yes, sure, we'll still take your subscription. Fifty dollars? No, your quota's $550.00. Yes, $550.00. What's that? Yes, all cash, here's your receipt. Wait a minute. Here's a letter to show the stores."

Public sentiment has proclaimed that there is no place for slackers in Oklahoma.

Books in Review

Robert T. Handy. *A Christian America: Protestant Hopes and Historical Realities.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1971, pp. 282, $7.95.

Russell E. Richey and Donald G. Jones, eds. *American Civil Religion.* New York: Harper and Row, 1974 pp. 278. Paper, $3.95.

Robert N. Bellah. *The Broken Covenant: American Civil Religion in Time of Trial.* New York: Seabury Press, 1975, pp. 172. $7.95.

Americans take great pleasure in reminding themselves and others of the legal separation of church and state in their country. But Americans have found the implications of separation—a free church in the midst of secular government—far too risky to implement. Despite legal separation both church and state, preacher and politician have sought to develop ways to live together congenially.

These three books deal in some measure with the fusion of the religious and the civil in the context of legal separation. The first summarizes an early hope and vision of Christians to Christianize the nation. The second discusses and evaluates the nature and character of an emerging religious dimension of political life. The third book suggests that this religious dimension of political life is in need of revision.

The story of the disestablishment of the churches in the Colonies, Northern and Southern in particular, and the story of the road to the first Constitutional Amendment have been told frequently. Not as well known is the story of the efforts of American Christians to secure the triumph of a Christian civilization through means other than an established church. That story is told superbly by Robert T. Handy, Professor of Church History at Union Theological Seminary, New York, in *A Christian America: Protestant Hopes and Historical Realities.*

Despite the ratification of the first Amendment the dream of a Christian civilization persisted. Handy writes: ". . . that civilization needed religion was to continue to be axiomatic in the nineteenth-century dream of a Christian society as it had been among Colonial Christians" (24). Voluntary persuasive means were the route, rather than established, coercive means.

On the forefront of the effort to Christianize America Handy lists the work of voluntary, nondenominational, often lay-directed Bible and tract societies. These along with reoccuring revivalist movements sought to Christianize the populace thereby lifting the morality of the people who in turn would affect the institutions of society.

In the middle and late decades of the nineteenth century Handy finds the vision to Christianize America under test. The cooperative Protestant spirit upon which the vision depended broke over the issue of slavery. Industrialization, urbanization, and immigration challenged the hopes and expectations.

During this period of frustration and testing Handy suggests the effort made a critical shift. In the original vision America would be Christianized by Christianizing the populace. As that hope was frustrated by urbanization, immigration, and other factors, an alternate route developed. If one could not baptize all inhabitants, one could baptize the institutions. By the early decades of the twentieth century the nation had taken on an exalted mission and destiny.

This sacred character of American institutions forms the heart of the now much discussed civil religion. *American Civil Religion* edited by Russell E. Richey and Donald G. Jones provides a thorough discussion, though not precise definition, of civil religion.

The twelve chapters of the book deal with primarily two issues—whether or not there is a definable thing as civil religion and how it functions in society. Both issues develop in response to the celebrated 1967 article by Robert Bellah, "Civil Religion in America," reprinted as chapter two of this book.

Bellah states the case for the existence of civil religion forthrightly. He wrote "that there actually exists

Barracks No. 527, Camp Funston.

alongside of and rather clearly differentiated from the churches an elaborate and well-institutionalized civil religion in America" (21). Other writers add detail and varying definitions including the well-known scholars Sidney Mead and Will Herberg. Not all are convinced however. Historian John F. Wilson, simply cannot find the thing Bellah sees so clearly. Interestingly Bellah does not see the civil religion eclipsing other commitments.

The second issue, the role and function of the civil religion in America, is of greater concern. Bellah sees civil religion functioning as both a unifying cohesive force in society and a standard of judgment for society. "Every society," Bellah writes, "is based on a sense of the sacred and requires a context of higher meaning" (270). He adds, "At its best civil religion would be realized in a situation where politics operates within a set of moral norms, and both politics and morality are open to transcendent judgment." (271).

Herbert Richardson in a persuasive article, "Civil Religion in Theological Perspective," refutes Bellah's contention that the civil religion functions to judge and limit the activity of the nation. Richardson suggests that rather than limiting the state the civil religion sanctions the activities of the nation. What is required according to Richardson is competing institutions, other loyalties—a function the church could well perform.

Robert Bellah is not uncritical of American civil religion. He recognizes distortions of all kinds. But Bellah argues that if there are no ties between religion and morality and politics, the situation might be worse. This eroding of the ties between historical experience and religious vision is the subject of the third book listed: *The Broken Covenant: Civil Religion in Time of Trial.*

In the book Bellah recounts how Americans have interpreted their experience in covenant terms. Because of particular opportunities granted them they have seen themselves under particular obligation. A sense of chosenness and mission have characterized Americans. Briefly, but brilliantly, Bellah summarizes the development of this sense of mission and responsibility noting also points of arrogance and aggression. This corporate sense of responsibility and mission in turn elicited personal motivation, loyalties, and obligations.

It is this erosion of personal responsibility and obligation that troubles Bellah. He sees "a tendency to rank personal gratification above obligation" with a corresponding "deepening cynicism about the established social, economic, and political institutions of society" (preface x). Bellah calls for a new enlarged vision, a transcendent reality, to elicit commitment and responsibility.

Bellah's book deserves careful study and discussion. His summary of the American past and analysis of the present seems right. But his prescription for the future is troublesome. While he calls for inner renewal, a new religious awakening, religious imagination, he sees it for the purpose of stimulating a new national idealism. The "transcendent vision" fails to transcend the nation.

These three books in dealing with the emergence, present state, and future of civil religion also deal with American Christianity. Not only is civil religion on trial but more profoundly American Christianity is tried and found wanting. In trying to create and preserve a Christian society the church has once again sought to serve two masters—God and mammon. Four hundred and fifty years later the radical vision and hope of Grebel, Manz, Blaurock, *et. al.*, remains largely unfulfilled—indeed still radical.

James Longacre

Alexander Ritter, ed, *Nachrichten aus Kasachstan: Deutsche Dichtung in der Sowjetunion.* Hildesheim-New York: Olms Presse, 1974. 234 pp.

This book is more than an anthology of lyrics and prose written by Russo-German writers of our day. In his introduction the author presents valuable information about the present status of the German ethnic literature in the Soviet Union. He relates that the total number of Germans in Russia was 1,700,000 in 1914 and that it was 1,900,000 in 1957. (Out of this number there were 120,000 Mennonites in 1914. This would indicate that the population of ethnic Mennonites of present-day Russia would hardly be less than what it was in 1914).

Ritter demonstrates that there has been an increased effort in German literary production. Poems and short stories appear regularly in *Arbeit* (Barnaul, since 1955), *Neues Leben* (Moscow, since 1957) and *Freundschaft* (Zelinograd, since 1967). German literary contributions are being published in book form by a number of publishers in Moscow and in Central Asian cities. Some information along these lines has been accessible in the West.

In his introduction, Ritter presents very helpful information about the stages of the development of the literary efforts, and the availability of the published literature. At the end of the book he gives a list of the authors he selected with an account of their lives and works. Originating either from the Volga area or the Ukraine, at present most of them live in Central Asia or Siberia, or in cities like Moscow. Some are teachers, others editors, many of whom write in German as well as in Russian. The bibliography and other sources at the end of the book are helpful for those who want to read more of the literary productions than those offered in this book.

Fittingly, the editor chose to reprint under *Literaturkritik* an article by Alexander Henning, "Probleme, Probleme. . . ." (first published in *Freundschaft* in 1967) in which a survey of German literary efforts in the Soviet Union is presented. It is a brief account of achievements and problems in regard to publishing facilities, a critical analysis, and a presentation of the status of efforts of writing dramas, prose and poetry. Henning himself is a veteran writer (born 1892) and presents a frank and critical review.

Ritter presents 74 poems written by 28 poets, and 22 short stories by 18 writers. In the poem "In Alma

P. H. Richert and P. C. Hiebert during Sunday morning worship at Camp Funston.

Boys at work near "First capital of Kansas," Fort Riley

Ata", Friedrich Bolger states in his last two lines:

Mein Stern is im Norden Geblieben.
Dorthin zieht's mich sehnlich zurück. (p. 20).

N. Reichert expresses his satisfaction and joy in "Zwei Flügel" about the fact that he is able to express his poetic inspiration in both the German as well as the Russian languages. (p. 68).

In "Kasachstan" Johann Warkentin describes human accomplishments that transformed the desert into a paradise. "Wil'st du die Grösse des Menchen erleben, . . . so durchreise, mein Freund, Kasachstan." (p. 87). In "Der Feigling" Johannes Weininger (p. 224) relates how Mrs. Penner has come from a prayer meeting and continues her prayer in front of her burning house with her children in it. Preacher Friesen lends her support in prayer while a Red Army soldier risks his life and saves the children. Here Sina, who has admired Walter, found her hero.

The young people are usually featured as hard working well disciplined idealists. Abstaining from kissing, the recruit says good bye to his girl when he takes leave for a two year term in the army, and when he finally returns, and after a long search finds his Lida, the same girl, who has only one second to spare on her way to work to hold his hand to assure him that they are destined to work and live together for their great fatherland (Dominik Hollmann, "An den Wunderbaren," p. 139). However it is different when Woldemar Herdt reminisces in "Der erste Kuss" about the "good old days" when he kissed his girl in the meadow and the Pater forced him to repent and to pray on his knees in front of the Madonna. But now at a ripe age his wife still asures him: "Dein erster Kuss war deine Busse wert!" (p. 36).

Whether these writers have typically Volga German names or are Loewens, Klassens and Warkentins, their art and style in prose and lyrics reflect the same dedication to the cause and the style of presenting their inspirations. We are grateful that we have this anthology from a far away land and hope that the publisher and editor will continue a series as a source of information not available elewhere.

Cornelius Krahn

Johnny Schrock, Ed. *Wonderful Good Cooking.* Herald Press, Scottdale, Pennsylvania, 1974. 136 pp. $3.95.

This interesting little book features 250 recipes from the Amish kitchens of Holmes County, Ohio. However, I suspect it is really more a book about the Amish way of life than a cookbook.

It reflects the philosophy of the editor, Johnny Schrock, son of an Amish bishop. "I am never ashamed to say I was born and raised Amish. They put a lot of qualities in me that have stuck with me through the years and have helped me in life."

The introductory section explains who the Amish are, their beliefs and practices from the church to the *Ordnung* (unwritten rules) to a barn raising. It is written in a personal style and one feels these are real people. Perhaps the words of the Amish man who looks out the window at his newly built barn "that was not there this morning" sums up the feel of the book—"It pleases me to be Amish." The color photos of Amish life are delightful, highlighting the quiet beauty of the rolling countryside.

Good food and lots of it is very much a part of the Amish way of life—from weddings to family gatherings. The recipes are organized under the following categories: Meats and Main Dishes, Breads, Cakes and Cookies, Pies and Desserts, Salads and Relishes, Candy, Ice Cream, and Miscellaneous.

The writers do not explain why or how these recipes came to be "Authentic Amish recipes." Although Amish may live in "the peace and quiet of homes undisturbed by outside influences," their recipes show considerable outside influence. One notes the frequent use of brand name ingredients, such as Miracle Whip and Campbell's Soup, even such modern ones as Dream Whip, Tang, and packaged seasoned Bread Crumbs. There are many recipes using products from the gardens and farms of the Amish. Schnitz pie is missing, but other traditional recipes from Amish church cookies to shoofly pie are included.

This book will be a joy to use in the kitchen and it will be equally enjoyed in the living room for an evening of good reading.

Carolyn Schultz

The Tragedy of German-America, by John A. Hawgood. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1940. Notes, index, 334 pp. Arno Press Reprint, 1970.

The German-Americans in Politics, 1914-1917, by Clifton J. Child. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1939. Notes, bib, index, 193 pp. Arno Press Reprint, 1970.

Russian-German Settlements in the United States, by Richard Sallet, trans. by Lavern J. Rippley and Armand Bauer. Fargo: North Dakota Institute for Regional Studies, 1974. Notes, index, maps, supporting essays, 207 pp.

Bonds of Loyalty, German Americans and World War I, by Frederick C. Luebke. De Kalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1974. Notes, bib, ill, 366 pp.

Interest in the historical study of the experience of Germans in America is apparently on the increase. The Department of History at Colorado State University (Fort Collins) has announced a major project to collect the oral history of Germans from Russia in Colorado. The American Historical Society of Germans From Russia has experienced new vigor and growth. Other signs of the revival include the translation of older works, the reprinting of books long out of print, and the appearance of articles based on current research.

The publication of the formerly out of print volumes by Hawgood and Child by Arno Press makes available two important works. Hawgood's *Tragedy of German-America* emphasized the effort of German-Americans to create "new Germanies on American soil," and the tragic "dissolution of the hyphen" in the twentieth century. Child's volume zeroes in on the National German-American Alliance from 1914 to 1947. Both Hawgood and Child were citizens of Great Britain who brought to their study in the 1930's a certain perspective which was free from the fileopietism which had marked many earlier in-group studies of Germans in America.

Richard Sallet's book was earlier published in 1931 in German and is now available in English, together with a good deal of supporting material compiled by the editors. Sallet excluded the Mennonites from his study of the Russian-German settlements in the United States.

Frederick Lubke's book on German Americans and World War I represents the best of the scholarship of the 1970's on this topic. It is a study in social history which poses questions about the dynamics of acculturation which were ignored by the institutional-oriented studies in the past. Luebke includes the whole spectrum of German-America in his analysis and analyzes the widely varying responses to the war by different groups of German-Americans—the cultural chauvenists, the assimiliationists, and the religious ethnics. One of Luebke's hypotheses, in contrast to Hawgood, is that "the Germans had a rich ethnic life in America in spite of, rather than because of, recurring waves of nativist intolerance." (p. xvi)

Luebke's book is based upon voluminous research in primary and secondary sources. Even so, the book does not so much represent a definitive closure of the subject, but rather a challenge to those who would test the book's insights through the examination of the impact of World War I in local areas or upon special groups. Luebke gives a good coverage to the Mennonites, but it remains true that the historical understanding of the war experience as social process is in its early formative stage.

James C. Juhnke

THE RUSSO-GERMANS PAST AND PRESENT

Adam Giesinger, *From Catherine to Krushchev*. The Story of Russia's Germans. Published by the author, Winnipeg, Manitoba, 1974, pp. 443.

This book is evidence that interest among the Russo-Germans in North America in the background is increasing. After a number of area studies we now have an overall treatment in the English Language of the total story of the Germans that moved to Russia starting in 1763 including their subsequent emigrations to North and South America.

It is good for all Russo-German descendants, whether they are Catholics, Lutherans, Reformed, or Mennonites by background to know that they have much in common. The Mennonites have been most active in many ways in telling their story in print and in commemorations, but they were only one tenth of the total Russo-German population. The author reports that the census of 1926 listed 1,248,549 Germans in Russia. According to Ehrt (p. 153) there were about 131,000 Mennonites in Russia in 1922, which would constitute about one tenth of the total German population. According to the Russian census of 1970, the total number of ethnic Germans in the USSR was 1,846,000 (Giesinger, p. 336). This would establish an approximate figure of 180,000 ethnic Mennonites in Russia in 1970 contrary to the often quoted figure of 40,000.

The author starts with the movement of the Southwest Germans to the Volga River which became the largest German settlement in Russia. In subsequent chapters he presents the founding of the various settlements in the Baltic states, near Petersburg and in various parts of the Ukraine as well as the daughter settlements spreading into all parts of Russia including Siberia. The charts of the settlements and the lists of the villages accompanying the text are helpful aids.

The story of the Russo-Germans is told in 18 chapters in a fluent style, not burdened by footnotes, followed by a bibliography, notes and an index. We list a few of the chapter headings: "New Homes on the Volga," "Germans in New Russia," "Land Hunger" (establishing daughter settlements), "The Empire they Built," "Protestant Majority" (Lutherans and Reformed), "Mennonite Commonwealth," "Broken Promises Spark Emigration" (a century ago), "Liquidation of the Colonies" (1939-43), "Survivors in Russia" and "Relatives Overseas."

The author concludes that about 300,000 Russo-Germans have come from Russia to North and South America, three times as many as had gone from Germany to Russia the century before. He estimates that the descendants in the Americas must be 1,500,000. Six hundred thousand live in the United States; 300,000 in Canada and 600,000 in South America. The author states that many of them have been so completely assimilated in their society that there is little if any awareness about their background, but that there is now more interest than there has been for some time. It is surprising that the author fails to call attention to the fact that during the last few years an increasing number of ethnic Germans have been permitted to leave Russia so that some 7,000 have come to Germany where they are accepted even if some no longer speak German.

It must be said that the author has done his utmost to present a popular account of an ethnic German minority that survived all the years of prosperity and misery in Russia and is to this day struggling to preserve some resemblance of an identity.

He has presented his findings based on diligent and scholarly research of sources in whatever language he found them. At this point one could present a list of books, periodicals and other sources that the author does not list or was not aware of. For example, in his research of the Mennonites in Russia he confines himself primarily to the writers P. M. Friesen, D. H. Epp, E. K. Francis and a few others. A look into the bibliography of volume IV of the *Mennonite Encyclopedia* under the article "Russia" would make him aware of many other books not listed. And so would the two Ph. D. dissertations, A. Ehrt, *Das Mennonitentum in Russland*, 1932 and D. G. Rempel, "Mennonite Colonies in New Russia," Stanford University (1933). Both have complete bibliographies up to that time. It is even more surprising, however, that Karl Stumpps, *The Emigration from Germany to Russia, 1763-1862*, finds no mention. Stumpp presents, on 1018 pages, the complete record of all migrations (see review in this issue). What does this show? Can one select some sources and ignore the rest and come up with results as good as one would have if one would have used them all? Maybe!

Giesinger succeeds in presenting the Russian Mennonite story on some 15 pages in great detail as far as their divisions are concerned. Very few have been able to do that as well as he does. However he hardly does them full justice when he aims to describe their "commonwealth" as indicated in his chapter heading. Their accomplishments on the economic and cultural levels, particularly in education, in spite of all shortcomings, were considerably above the average. Most of their publications in Russia, Canada and the USA escaped the attention of the author. In addition to this he used some generally available sources in Germany (Stuttgart) but did not seem to become aware of some large holdings in this field in North America (Hoover Library, Stanford University, and even the Mennonite Library and Archives, North Newton, Kansas).

Cornelius Krahn

Kauffman, J. Howard and Harder, Leland, *Anabaptists Four Centuries Later*. A Profile of Five Mennonite and Brethren in Christ Denominations. Scottdale, Pennsylvania, Herald Press, 1975. 399 pp. $9.95

In 1972 Kauffman and Harder conducted a survey in which 3,670 questionnaires were received from members of 174 congregations in five denominations descended from the 16th century Anabaptists. The results and interpretation of the data are given under the title *Anabaptists Four Centuries Later*.

Three major areas were covered in the survey: (1) Patterns of Faith and Life, (2) The Work of the Church, and (3) The Sources and Consequences of Church Membership. These three areas are broken down into seven subcategories in the first section and five in the second and third.

The book gives a rather comprehensive snapshot of how the five denominations appear in 1972. Some guesses are made about where the groups have come from and some intimations are given as to where they are headed but the survey itself is not a motion picture. Many of the conclusions drawn from the data are not surprising to any careful observer of the church scene. Some details are brought into sharper focus and some of the complex interrelationships were not as evident as the study makes them, such as the impact of basic Anabaptist or Fundamentalist orientations on various attitudes and behavior.

One area which is probably changing rapidly is the role of women. The attitude of women themselves on the issues was somewhat surprising and has implications for programming.

Christian education in the local church has achieved better results than critics of the Sunday school movement as a whole would credit. It does show some areas of weakness, however, and does not tell us whether the results can be sustained as change is affecting the churches.

The study will no doubt receive criticism for not measuring what the authors say was measured. For example, the questions on anticommunism may have created a dilemma for those opposed to violence and to communism when it seems to assume that military action is necessary "to stamp out communism." Two of the answers would require some kind of compromise for many in the churches.

The authors generally try to describe what *is* without using the survey to say what *ought* to be. The study did require the authors to set some standards of what the Anabaptists intended to be. To that degree the study forces evaluation of the present church and suggests directions for the future.

Anyone with concern about the Mennonite and related churches will want to study the material. It should guide the churches in decisions about where the program needs strengthening to move either toward greater faithfulness to the Anabaptist vision or to some other vision which seems to be faithful to Christ as Lord of the Church.

William Keeney