MENNONITE LIFE

SEPTEMBER 1993

In this Issue

This issue highlights the third in a series of 50th anniversary celebrations of Mennonite Alternative Service in World War II. The June 1991 conference in Goshen, Indiana, surveyed the Alternative Service program in general and evaluated state-church relations in particular. These papers were published in *Mennonite Quarterly Review* October 1992 under the title, "Mennonites and Alternative Service in World War II."

The November 1991 conference in Winnipeg and Altona continued this focus with reference to Canada. The August 1992 celebrations in Clearbrook, B.C., focused on the reforestation work of the Alternative Service men May 1942 - March 1944 and concluded with the first harvesting of "CO trees" planted on Vancouver Island.

Lawrence Klippenstein, historian/archivist at the Mennonite Heritage Centre, Winnipeg, has done extensive research into alternative service by the Mennonites in Russia. Here he surveys the experience of Canadian Mennonites in World War II.

Marlene Epp is a doctoral candidate at the University of Toronto and lives in Cambridge, Ontario. She assisted her late father, Frank H. Epp, in his research on several volumes of *Mennonites in Canada*. Her contribution on the unique role of Canadian Mennonite women should encourage other "CO women" to share their stories.

John J. Bergen of Edmonton has compiled the documents outlining his CO experience in Manitoba. His case underlines a depth of conviction that other conscientious objectors may have harbored but never expressed. He is a former educator and Public School Administrator in Alberta.

Jacob A. Loewen is a former professor at Tabor College and retired missionary anthropologist/linguist. In recounting his personal pilgrimage toward peace, he critiques the shortcoming of the established church as he experienced it, not only in wartime, but also in ongoing church and mission endeavors. His comparative study of the writings of Menno Simons, Mahatma Gandhi and the New Testament led him to a peace position that includes "protest for conscience' sake." The unabridged study on which this essay is based will be published in collaboration with Wesley J. Prieb under the title *Only the Sword of the Spirit.*

A. J. and Elizabeth (Betty) Suderman Klassen have worked together on numerous publications. He taught at the MB Biblical Seminary in Fresno, Calif., Trinity Western University and Regent College in B.C., pastored the King Road MB Church, and served in shorter teaching and mission assignments at home and abroad. Betty works in learning assistance at the Abbotsford Christian School - Heritage Campus.

Her article is based on an analysis of *The Beacon*, and describes the work of the Alternative Service as the men themselves perceived it.

Another perception of that work was reflected by the British Columbia Forest Service Branch of the Department of Lands in its annual reports. The government documents provide an interesting description as well as an evaluation of the ASW from a federal and provincial perspective.

A hearty thank you to all contributors.

A. J. Klassen, guest editor

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Front Cover
Camp Q6, Horne Lake, Vancouver Island.

Back Cover
Camp Q6 crew.

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Canadian Mennonites in World War II

by Lawrence Klippenstein

After declaring war on September 8, 1939, Canada immediately began to enlist volunteers for its armed forces. In June of the following year Parliament passed a conscription law known as the National Resources Mobilization Act. This legislation called for every Canadian citizen, male or female, 16 years and older, to register. Registration was carried out in mid-August. Later that month the government released the National War Services Regulations which specified how the conscription process, including CO exemptions, would operate.

When the new regulations were announced, Canadian Mennonite leaders concluded that the churches must establish a clear position on military service. Nine western Mennonite groups had met to discuss this question in May, just months before the outbreak of the war, but a firm consensus of views had not emerged at that time. Ontario Mennonites and several related groups had been more successful. As a result of their discussions on what to do now, they had organized what they called the Conference of Historic Peace Churches (CHPC) on July 22, 1940.

In a delegation visit to Ottawa in September, the newly-formed CHPC submitted its concern to initiate appropriate procedures for obtaining CO status for its men. It also proposed that a civilian alternative form of service be made available to those not wishing to join the active forces. They stressed that such a program should be under civilian control and felt that work performed this way would be a valuable contribution to the national cause.

Western Mennonites were divided in their opinions about such a program. The "Kanadier" groups (those descended from the Russian Mennonite immigrants of the 1870s, such as the Bergthaler, Sommerfelder, and Old Colony churches) did not really support this approach. The "Russlaender" Mennonites (those who had come to Canada from the Soviet Union in the 1920s) supported, indeed actively promoted this idea, since they had worked with such a program in tsarist Russia. Their leaders promoted this idea in a separate visit made to Ottawa in November of the same year.

Government officials resisted the notion of a separate alternative service program, conceding at most the possibility of a noncombatant form of service under military control. Men like B. B. Janz, of Alberta, could accept this notion. Others like Jacob H. Janzen of Ontario, felt that military control of alternative work was not acceptable, especially because it would only alienate the "Kanadier" groups even more. The government finally gave in, and announced in February 1941, that all Mennonite young men who wished CO status would need to serve their time in Alternative Service Work (ASW) camps.

Initially these were located in a number of western Canadian national parks, and in Ontario, in a forest camp ninety miles north of Sault Ste. Marie. By June 1941, the first 1,000 men had

received their CO status, and were given camp assignments. Three initial contingents arrived at Clear Lake, Manitoba, Riding Mountain National Park on June 12, June 26, and July 15, respectively. Camp No. 1 was located in the town of Wasagaming, where COs cut, split, and piled firewood, and harvested ice for summer use by town residents and tourists. At Camp 2, north on Highway 10, the men cleaned shoulders, removed dead trees, and cut brush along the roads. Men at Camp 3, east of Wasagaming, were involved in constructing roads. Similar work would be carried out in other camps at the national parks in places like Prince Albert, Jasper, and Banff. The men at the camp in Ontario were assigned to clearing the way for what later became the Trans-Canada Highway.

In the meantime other Mennonite men had begun to enlist in the regular forces. George Krahn of Arnaud, Manitoba, for instance, enlisted in the RCAF in September 1941, and took training as a pilot officer at Dauphin, Manitoba, where he graduated in 1942. In the summer of 1943 he went overseas, and lost his life a year later when his Lancaster bomber with a crew was shot down on a U-boat patrol flight.

In some local communities such as Altona, Manitoba, a newly-launched newspaper, *The Altona Echo*, published by a member of a local Mennonite congregation, regularly ran ads calling men to enlist in the forces, and periodically published lists of those who responded. Its summary list of enlisted persons in May 1945, included 101 persons from the Altona area. With the exception of two, all appeared to be from Mennonite families. Two persons were women. Six men were listed as "killed in action." Similar lists included 82 persons from Gretna, 17 from Horndean, 12 from Halbstadt and 70 from Plum Coulee. The great majority of these were apparently from Mennonite families also.

For many, the CO camps seemed to be a reasonably satisfactory solution to the service dilemma. But there were problems, related on the one hand to the total process of obtaining exemptions, and on the other to the form of service available. At the outset some men had not taken their call very seriously and allowed the stated deadlines to slip by. As a result, they were called to appear in court, and a number of them received a one-year prison sentence. As many as a dozen at one time found themselves in jail at Headingly, Manitoba, following failure to comply with regulations. The total number of those imprisoned may have been as high as a hundred or more. Through the intercession of Mennonite leaders, these cases were reviewed, and a number of these individuals, if not most of them, were released well before their full sentence was served.

Another area of difficulty had to do with appearing in person before the Boards to be examined by judges. All Mennonite groups had appealed to the government to avoid this procedure, preferring instead to provide lists of those seeking exemption. In Ontario this did in fact become the practice. In the prairie provinces, however, such personal appearances before judges were required quite consistently. These experiences were not always pleasant for the men, especially since no lawyer or minister was allowed to be present to help explain a CO's beliefs.

To be sure, there were those whose interviews seemed perfunctory, and who got their CO status recognition after only a question or two. But sometimes Board members and representatives of the military were decidedly unsympathetic to those taking a conscientious objector stance. On occasion young recruits were literally shouted down, threatened, or otherwise verbally abused. Often considerable pressure was exercised to persuade young persons to accept military or at least non-combatant service instead of entering service as a CO.

In Manitoba, Judge J. E. Adamson believed that Mennonite men, if left to themselves and not pressured by their ministers, would join the military. As it turned out, a large number did just that. In Saskatchewan, Board member J. F. L. Embury also was quite unsympathetic to the Mennonite CO position. Usually reluctant to grant exemptions, Embury refused seventy requests out of 126 applicants on one occasion. In a letter to Member of Parliament Walter Tucker, he complained about Mennonite schools which were teaching High German and otherwise promoting doctrines which undermined the building of a strong nation.

Leaders of the Mennonite community, particularly the Rosthern bishop David Toews of the Rosenorter church, were deeply troubled by Embury's reactions. It seemed to Toews that the Board was making up its mind to reject CO applicants even before their hearings. He shared his concerns with Ottawa officials, sometimes giving illustrations of conversations which had transpired. In the fall of 1942 he went with C. F. Klassen to submit a further appeal regarding this matter. They asked specifically for an appeal process in cases where applications were refused.

Government officials were hesitant to grant such appeals, although some prominent politicians like John Diefenbaker and T. C. Douglas did support the creation of such a system. What complicated matters more was the fact, as some Boards pointed out, that sometimes Mennonite men who were given CO status joined the army not long afterwards.

By 1942 it was acknowledged that the growing labor shortage was being eased somewhat by the Alternative Service program. Camp directors and others were prepared to state that persons serving as COs were working hard and could be depended on to carry out assignments well.

David P. Reimer wrote about some new developments which occurred during this period.

> A remarkable incident occurred at Clear Lake (Manitoba) Riding Mountain National Park on April 30, 1942. All of a sudden the Park Superintendent brought news unexpectedly that all boys were to be transferred to B. C. where some would be stationed on the mainland and others on the island. . . . The order to disperse the boys was carried out so abruptly that even the Committee of Directors arrived at Clear Lake only the day before the departure. Their train was supposed to leave Brandon the next day at about noon and everything had to be packed the night before. An appeal to go home to say goodbye was not granted. (Reimer, p. 15)

The work seemed to be a little easier in B.C. as it consisted mainly of fire-fighting, removing snags, and planting young trees. The B. C. Forestry had seventeen camps, twelve of them on Vancouver Island, and five on the mainland.

In his account Reimer also commented on the good relations men of various denominations established in their camp units. Persons from different groups, such as the Closed Plymouth Brethren, Christadelphians, Adventists, and Jehovah's Witnesses, attended Mennonite church services and seemed to get on well together. Reimer noted

also that a camp newspaper, *The Beacon*, began publication in B. C. (Reimer, p. 18) Its predecessor, *The Northern Beacon*, was published by the ASW group at Montreal River Camp, Soo, Ontario.

The ASW program took a different turn in 1943, when the government diversified the service options to include other forms of civilian service where the men could obtain higher pay. Until now most of their earnings had been going to the Red Cross. Hospitals, mental health institutions, industries, food processing plants, farms, and places for other kinds of assignments were now made available. By wintertime more than 100 men had become involved in these types of alternative service work. The majority were allowed to work on farms in the summer months, then reassigned to camps and other tasks for the winter.

In December 1943, the government also authorized military officials to discharge persons who had been conscripted into the forces while maintaining that they were COs. After such a discharge, men could apply for an Alternative Service assignment. Several months earlier the government had decided to allow COs to serve in the medical corps with full assurance that they would never have to carry arms.

This applied only if they served in the regular corps; no provision was made for Mennonites to set up their own units as had been possible in Russia during WWI. A number of "Russlaender" Mennonites supported this form of service because they thought it would draw individuals away from active military service and become an active form of saving lives. Ontario Mennonites and those from "Kanadier" congregations simply reaffirmed their view that noncombatant service such as this was not an acceptable form of service for COs. By the end of the war, however, more than 200 men had opted to fulfil their service obligations in this way.

A further word needs to be said about the larger issue of Mennonites who chose not to become COs when called up to report for service. This aspect of the story of Mennonite involvement in WWII needs more research and more published material may be available soon.

The reasons for this neglect, or disinterest, may be fairly simple. Mennonites themselves have preferred to stress the more idealistic aspects of their responses during the war and thus the COs have found the limelight until now. Their achievement is noteworthy, to be sure, and these notes are not intended to belittle the accomplishments that have been honestly recorded in this regard.

However, the story of Mennonite military involvement tells us something about ourselves, our churches, our communities, and the strength of our communal teachings and Christian faith which we find difficult to understand and accept. No one, it seems, has spent much time and effort to interpret sensitively why the Christian witness we wanted to make in the Mennonite way during WWII took the fragmented and seemingly contradictory forms that have been noted here.

It is interesting to see how differently Mennonite ex-servicemen themselves view the actions and motives of those years. When a group of them recently met to reflect on their military involvement during WWII they stressed the fact that all of them had seriously wanted to make their time in the service a way of witnessing for Christ. They recalled with gratitude the opportunities that had been given them to achieve this goal.

On the other hand, another Mennonite ex-serviceman who wishes to remain unnamed, shared his rather different view on the situation at the time in these words:

> The fact remains that the young Mennonite men who joined the Canadian Forces did not do so for any great patriotic or nationalistic reasons but with a variety of other motives: they were bored and they needed some kind of adventure; their future was obscure and after a decade of relative inactivity they were looking for a diversion . . . their options had been limited for so long that they wanted action. . . . Many of the boys were torn between their loyalty to family . . . and what the Forces had to offer. The Mennonite doctrine of pacifism was the furthest from their mind....

He has a few words about aspiring COs of the day as well:

> In a good many cases, perhaps in most, these men had not the vaguest idea of what the Bible had to say about pacifism, or what it said in support of the church's position on conscientious objection. When it came to the crunch, some of the boys, on the advice of someone close to them, would seek out appropriate Bible verses, memorize them and consider themselves well prepared to support their case for CO status before a judge. . . .

Then follow further comments about the life-style of many COs—references to playing pool, drinking, playing cards, and dancing which they practiced prior to their appearance before a judge and continued after they had been granted CO status.

This is how one person saw it. Given the fact that so little research has been done on this aspect of the story, it is premature to draw any firm conclusions about the Mennonite contributions in the military and topics related to that theme.

In his study of the Mennonite ASW experience in WWII, David Fransen concluded, however, that a fuller understanding of the Mennonite experience in WWII is significant because it tells us something important about the way Canada has treated its dissenting minorities and puts into broader perspective other types of Canadian dissent, such as the French Canadian experience. For Mennonites themselves, it provided a challenge for the three major segments of the total Canadian Mennonite community to work together on a scale not encountered before.

This effort brought out divisive elements which persisted for a long time, but it also heightened understanding among the groups themselves. It provided valuable experience for further cooperation which would be attempted after the war was over and the MCC Canada program was begun. Finally, the experience offered a new opportunity to reexamine and reflect on what nonresistance and peace-making were and are all about.

"United We Stand, Divided We Fall"

Canadian Mennonite Women as COs in World War II

by Marlene Epp

Obtaining the right not to participate in wars of the nation has been central to the Mennonite story. The fact that women were not conscripted into the military, however, meant that Mennonite women have by and large been left out of the great stories of nonresistance and alternative service. Katie Funk Wiebe once said: "Because the destiny of the Mennonites revolved around the way sons were involved in [conscientious objection] and not the way the women experienced the truth of scripture, women's contribution was not as significant."[1] Another woman whose father was a church minister observed, "My father did not quiz prospective daughters-in-law, as he did sons-in-law, on their attitude to pacifism."[2]

The imbalance in the historical record with respect to women and conscientious objection is beginning to be corrected as scholars and others challenge the unspoken assumption that the issues of war and peace have not concerned Mennonite women equally as the men.[3] While their responses and actions may not have had the public and legal implications that opposition to military conscription had for their menfolk, Canadian Mennonite women were nevertheless grappling with what it meant, in a tangible sense, to be a nonresistant people. The sentiments of one Mennonite woman may have been widely shared. She raised the following challenge:

> Have you ever wished that you could prove your convictions on peace and war as your boyfriend, husband, brother, or son has? . . . Girls and women of the Mennonite church groups! Our Christian responsibility, to our God, the world, the church, our boys in [AS] is tremendous. The challenge is before us; the projects await us; the question is, do we as girls and women want to serve? Are we willing to take time out to do the little things that count so much?[4]

Mennonite women acted out their nonresistant love in a variety of ways. Most obvious was their work in material relief: canning, knitting, bundling, sewing, and performing all manner of organizational tasks to aid the suffering people in war-torn Europe. The 1940s have in fact been described as the "golden era"[5] for Mennonite women's organizations as their sewing circles or *Naehvereine* undertook massive aid projects which saw $71,000 worth of clothing travel from Canada to England. Women in Ontario organized their local sewing circles into the "Nonresistant Relief Sewing Organization," an indication that they themselves viewed their material labor in the context of a faith principle. In fact, Mennonite women across the country were knitting and sewing for the Red Cross well before their own church institutions took formal action with respect to exemption from military service or providing material aid. As the war progressed and relief efforts gained in momentum, one Mennonite relief worker in England suggested that women in North America adopt the slogan "Non-Resistant Needles Knitting for the Needy" to underscore the magnificent opportunity which their work represented.[6]

Not only did women prepare and send material aid overseas, but several women themselves crossed the ocean to work at clothing distribution, in orphans' homes, and in other volunteer capacities.[7] One of these workers, Arlene Sitler of Kitchener, compared the situation of women in England with that of Mennonite women at home in Canada. She observed that, during wartime, English women had taken over many occupations previously occupied by men such as embassy staff, subway ticket agents, and bus conductors. Though the Mennonite women in Canada had not undergone the trauma experienced by European women, nevertheless each of them "had to adapt herself to war conditions." Sitler affirmed the material relief provided by Canadian Mennonite women, suggesting that through their giving, "the bonds of peace and Christian fellowship may become stronger throughout the world."[8]

As well as aiding the needy overseas, Mennonite women also provided support services for men in Alternative Service camps. Though Canadian women did not actually participate in the Alternative Service program to the extent that American women did in Civilian Public Service, where numerous women left their homes and took up residence near the camps where men worked or where plans were developed for a parallel "CO Girls" program, nevertheless the episode would undoubtedly have a strong impact on the

wives and families of conscientious objectors. Support for men in camps included sending care packages, many letters, and also carefully copied sermons from their home churches. Much welcomed packages included new socks, baked goods, even a fully cooked pork roast! One Ontario woman, thinking that air mail meant arrival the next day, sent her husband a carefully packed jar of fresh strawberries. He wrote back with much gratitude that unfortunately they had completely spoiled, having been en route for over a week.[9] Many women viewed the sewing of clothing and quilts, and the knitting of socks and bandages, whether for war sufferers or for their own COs in camps, as their own unique expression of nonresistant love. As one woman said, in describing the material assistance and moral support given to COs in camps: "We are representing a common cause. . . . United we stand, divided we fall."[10]

Throughout the duration of Alternative Service camps, women were affected, not only by the absence of their loved ones, but also by the extra demands placed on them in sustaining the household. Like other Canadian women, many Mennonite women entered the work force, both part-time and full-time, to bring more money into the household. Other women depended on such survival mechanisms as taking in boarders, doing washing and ironing for neighbors, or moving in with family members. In many cases, women stepped out of their traditional roles as homemakers and into the vacant shoes of their menfolk. A 1942 article in a major Toronto newspaper featured a Mennonite farm north of the city where the Wideman sisters were helping to run the farm in the absence of male hands. Entitled "Girls Man the Farm Front," the article dscribed how Anna alone plowed 120 acres while her sister Ella "did a man's job daily."[11] One person speaking for the Federated Women's Institutes of Canada, of which Mennonite women were a part in many communities, praised the participation of rural women in the war effort:

> They have worked harder at farm work than ever before. They have driven tractors, made hay, picked fruit, raised wonderful gardens, and increased the poultry and egg production of all Canada. Yet they have found time to make tons of jam for overseas, clothing for refugees and thousands of articles for the Red Cross.[12]

Some women moved into lucrative factory jobs while the church was unaware or chose to ignore the fact that most factories were engaged in some aspect of war production. With the Depression still fresh in the minds of Canadians, the abundance of good-paying jobs was hard to resist, even if it meant compromising one's beliefs. The following story comes from a Fraser Valley woman, possibly a Mennonite:

> It was strange . . . how that very strong anti-war pacifist sentiment was turned... so quickly into patriotism and pro-war sentiment by the jobs that came along, and with opportunities to earn what seemed like immense sums—seventy-five cents an hour, when people had been getting twenty-five cents a day. I went to work in the local canning factory, canning green beans. . . . We graded the beans, sorted them on the long belts, We took out the small, tender ones to be canned whole for the officers. All the big, coarse ones were chopped up for the infantry.[13]

The entrance of married women into the work force in the absence of their husbands did cause concern for those who felt it important to uphold the traditional gender roles taught by the church. One western Canadian CO raised the question thus: "According to past teachings in our churches on home life is it right that mothers should have to find someone to take care of the baby and they have to work in the shop etc. for a living?"[14]

Though some women were able to become the breadwinners for their families, the war meant economic difficulty for some others. The small remuneration received by conscientious objectors created hardship for some families, particularly after 1942 when Alternative Service terms were extended for the duration. Without the support of a father, son, or husband, some households had difficulty staying afloat. One Saskatchewan woman warned the local authorities that "unless my son is permitted to return [home] for the term suggested [3 months], it will have the effect of wrecking the health of myself and my children."[15] In making requests for leave from camp in order to return home, some conscientious objectors outlined situations where mothers, sisters, and wives were attempting to run the family farm on their own. One young man in camp in British Columbia wrote the following to the minister of his home congregation in Waterloo, Ontario:

> By this time you have perhaps looked over the enclosed letter addressed to mother from the government including her remarks on the reverse side of the letter as forwarded to me. It appears as though she has already become quite discouraged and seemingly has taken rather drastic steps toward obtaining what she thinks her justice. What I would appreciate is that either you or some member of the [church] welfare board would visit her sometime in the near future to see what suggestion could be offered toward getting the required help on the farm before she writes any more of these desperate letters. You of course will appreciate when I say mother has been operating under a strain heretofore unknown to her which would account for her persistent effort . . . [for] my release. . . .[16]

The inability to support his family on the 50 cents a day paid to COs prompted more than one CO to join the army.

Normally, the church assisted those within their congregations who were in need; the tradition of mutual aid had long been practiced in Mennonite communities. At the outset of the war, however, the plight of the conscientious objector often overshadowed the situations of their families. That the church may not always have helped its members is suggested by one CO in camp who wrote to his minister, "I don't know what happened to the promises that were made to us before we left as far as support for our wives goes or that they would be looked after."[17] In response to a number of these complaints, a "CO Dependent Fund" was created in Ontario. The policy of the committee administering the fund was that families should maintain themselves with their own labor and resource as much as possible.[18] In effect, women had to prove their own need in order to obtain assistance. Other Mennonite conferences and congregations in other parts of Canada established their own funds for dependents of COs, confirming the existence of need, but it is difficult to establish the extent of the distress as well as the success of the churches in addressing the problem. No doubt some families were too proud to ask for and receive help from the church while others shied away from having the church deacon assess their financial situation. Most families probably did what they could to make ends meet, whether that meant mother 'working out' or simply cutting back.

At the same time, the government also recognized that a problem existed.

Aware that a CO receiving only $25 per month could hardly provide adequately for a family, the Canadian government passed legislation in July 1944 which legalized allowances for dependents. The exact amount of such an allowance varied according to individual circumstances and was subject to the discretionary power of the Alternative Service officer in the specific locale. The average dependent allowance was $5 to $10 per month for a married man with an additional $5 for each child.[19] The source of the allowance was, in a sense, the CO's own earnings since it was simply subtracted from that portion of his wages which went to the Red Cross.

The fact remained, however, that this arrangement was put into place only six months before the end of the war. After the war, new measures were enacted in order to ease the home situation of those men who were still performing Alternative Service. On June 1, 1945, all married COs over 30 years of age were exempt entirely from Red Cross payments. For the rest, the amount payable was reduced to $5 for those in agriculture and $15 for those in industry, since the work camps had been emptied by this time.[20] It would seem that many women with a husband, father, or son performing Alternative Service was forced to sustain her family during most of the war years by means of her own resources, without much organized help from the government or her church. It is no wonder that the Family Allowance Cheques, introduced in 1944, were welcome in most Mennonite homes despite the warnings by ministers against government intrusion. The time of separation was even more difficult for those women who had young children or who gave birth to first babies while their husbands were away.

The war did not mean just hardship, however. For a number of women who chose to move temporarily to British Columbia to be near their husbands in work camps, the memories of Alternative Service were tinged with a sense of adventure. Although exact numbers are not available, it seems as though each camp in B.C. had several men whose wives had followed them to the west coast, defying the enforced separation caused by the work program. For the most part, these were newlyweds, or couples with perhaps one young child, who found the prospect of several years apart too overwhelming. The decision to accompany their husbands was not made lightly, especially for young women who had hardly been outside their home community, much less several thousand miles from church and family. One woman, married six months, went west because she wanted to experience some of the AS program, too. Annie, who was shunned by her church and family for marrying out of the Old Order community, accompanied her husband since there was no support for her at home and thus, in her words, it was easier to be among strangers.[21] Most went out of a desire to support their husbands in whatever way they could. Helen and her CO fiance were to be married in August of 1942 when the boys were sent to B.C. that June. Clayton came home the first Christmas but it wasn't until December of 1943 while he was home on leave that a wedding could take place. Deciding that the separation had been long enough already, Helen accompanied her new husband back to B.C. in January, where they set up housekeeping with two other CO couples in a rustic cottage just outside Victoria. For her, the relatively short four-month stay on Vancouver Island was a honeymoon.[22]

John and Nellie Knelsen and son Richard, born while father was in ASW camp. First family picture, November 1942, taken while on 2 week leave.

It was not difficult for the women to find work on arrival in B.C. They were often assisted in settling in by Rev. and Mrs. Wiens in Vancouver. Housekeeping jobs in particular were plentiful. One woman thought the tables were really turned when her husband was working for 50 cents a day while she received 50 cents an hour![23]

Although the women were not in B.C. to vacation—the days of housekeeping were undoubtedly long and hard—the experience sometimes proved to be an adventure. The woman of Old Order background was thrilled to hear Sir Ernest MacMillan conduct a symphony in Vancouver's Stanley Park, an activity which would be considered "worldly" in her home community north of Waterloo.[24] Others remembered the thrill of ferry rides, mountain climbing, and even the long train ride across the country. The excitement of adventure was tempered by the stress of not knowing what awaited them, and a few women wondered all along if they were making a big mistake.

The presence of women near camps in B.C. undoubtedly raised the morale of young COs. In October 1942 the

Beacon announced the first wedding in CO history. The paper observed: "On his return to camp Dave did look a little worn out, but certainly had the expression of responsibility and worry one usually sees on the face of a married man."[25] One woman who travelled to B.C. brought with her a steerage trunk full of canned goods which kept her household as well as many guests fed for several months.

The presence of women near the camps in B.C. seems to have gone unacknowledged by both the church and camp authorities. Though there was no opposition to men who chose to set up housekeeping with their wives outside the camp, neither did there seem to be much attempt to incorporate the women into camp life. The women are by and large unmentioned in the CO paper, the *Beacon*, and the women themselves were not allowed in their husband's work camp more than once or twice during the course of his term. While in the U.S., attempts were made to organize the many Mennonite women who uprooted themselves to be near camp or who actually worked within the camps, this did not happen in Canada.[26] Maybe the numbers were just too small and because the program was sponsored by the government, rather than the church, there was little concern to do so.

Mennonite women were conscientious objectors as well, though perhaps in less recognized ways than their menfolk. They put their hands to work to clothe and feed war sufferers. They lent moral support to Mennonite men in camps, whether through letters and packages or through their actual presence near the camps. And they stepped out of traditional roles and became breadwinners for their families. Mennonite women had to cope, sometimes without the help or moral support received by their menfolk, with the implications of being part of a peace church. Nevertheless, they put into action their own expressions of nonresistant love and thus participated wholeheartedly as conscientious objectors to suffering in the world.

ENDNOTES

[1]Katie Funk Wiebe, "Images and Realities of the Early Years," *Mennonite Life* 36:3 (Sept. 1981) 27.

[2]Magdalene Redekop, "Through the Looking Glass," in *Why I am a Mennonite: Essays on Mennonite Identity*, ed. Harry Loewen (Kitchener: Herald Press, 1988), 239.

[3]Historian Rachel Waltner Goossen's doctoral research on women and Civilian Public Service is a significant contribution to the gap in the American story. See "The 'Second Sex' and the 'Second Milers': Mennonite Women and Civilian Public Service," *Mennonite Quarterly Review* 66 (October 1992): 525-538. A beginning to the Canadian story has also been made by Lorraine Roth in "Conscientious Objection: The Experiences of Some Canadian Mennonite Women During World War II," *Mennonite Quarterly Review* 66 (October 1992): 539-545. At another level, feminist theologians are asking important questions about the tradition of Mennonite nonresistance in a contemporary societal context of violence against women. For instance, Carol Penner has suggested that Mennonite pacifism "does not address the reality of women's lives as they face the violence of a patriarchal system." See "What did you do? What will you do? A Feminist Begins to Consider the Mennonite Tradition of Pacifism" (Unpublished paper, 1989).

[4]Edna Ramseyer, "Will Ye Heed the Call?" *Missionary News and Notes* November 1943, 1.

[5]Gladys V. Goering, *Women in Search of Mission: A History of the General Conference Mennonite Women's Organization* (Newton: Faith and Life Press, 1980), 38.

[6]"Mennonite Central Committee Relief Notes," *Missionary News and Notes*, April 1941, 61.

[7]For the stories of two Canadian Mennonite women who went overseas, see Lorraine Roth, "Edna Hunsperger Bowman, 1912-," in *Willing Service: Stories of Ontario Mennonite Women* (Waterloo: Mennonite Historical Society of Ontario, 1992): 188-190; Marion Keeney Preheim, "Elfrieda Dyck," *Something Meaningful for God: The Stories of Some Who served with MCC* (Scottdale: Herald Press, 1981): 215-57. Stories of several other women are in Roth, "Conscientious Objection: The Experiences of Some Canadian Mennonite Women," 540-542.

[8]Arlene Sitler, "A Challenge to Mennonite Women," *Women's Activities Letter* 18 (February 1946): 1-3.

[9]Lorraine Roth interview with L. J., n.d. Roth shared her interview notes with the author.

[10]Clara Snider to Workers of the Nonresistant Relief Sewing Organization, October 16, 1942, John Coffman Letters, Conrad Grebel College Archives (hereafter CGCA).

[11]"Girls Man the Farm Front," *The Star Weekly*, August 14, 1943.

[12]Quoted in Ruth Roach Pierson, *'They're Still Women After All': The Second World War and Canadian Womanhood* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1986), 39.

[13]Quoted in Jean Bruce, *Back the Attack! Canadian Women During the Second World War—At Home and Abroad* (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1985), 115.

[14]J. B. Martin and E. J. Swalm, "Report of Alternate Service Workers in B.C. and Alberta." J. B. Martin Collection, CGCA.

[15]National Archives of Canada, Record Group 27, File 601.2 (12), vol. 1. Quoted in L. E. Westman, Chief Alternative Service Officer, to Allan M. Mitchell, Director, Employment Service and Unemployment Insurance Branch, 23 Aug. 1943.

[16]H. S., Seymour Mt. Camp, Dollarton, B.C. to J. B. Martin, Waterloo, Ontario, 26 Aug. 1942, J. B. Martin Collection, CGCA.

[17]B.S., to J. B. Martin, 1 Mar. 1943, J. B. Martin Collection, Hist. Mss. 1.34.1.1.1, CGCA.

[18]"Peace Problems Committee," *Calendar of Appointments of the Mennonite Church of Ontario* (1943-44), 22.

[19]J. A. Toews, *Alternative Service in Canada During World War II* (Winnipeg: Canadian Conference of the Mennonite Brethren Church, 1959), 90.

[20]Thomas A. Socknat, *Witness to War: Pacifism in Canada, 1900-45* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987), 346.

[21]Lorraine Roth interview with A. M.., May 15, 1991.

[22]Interview, H. B., July 24, 1992.

[23]Interview, H. B., July 24, 1992.

[24]Lorraine Roth interview with A. M., May 15, 1991.

[25]"First Wedding in CO History," *The Beacon*, 1:1 (Oct. 1942), 16.

[26]See Waltner Goossen, "The 'Second Sex' and the 'Second Milers' " for a description of women's experience in CPS camps.

My Personal Pilgrimage toward Peace

by Jacob A. Loewen

When World War II erupted in 1939, I was just turning seventeen. Until then, to my knowledge, Mennonite peace principles had received little attention in the preaching and teaching of the Mennonite Brethren churches in which I grew up. But as soon as war had been declared and the draft became imminent in Canada, the church dusted off its doctrine of nonresistance and began to catechize its young men in its teaching. I, of course, accepted the church's position on war when my call-up came. I had been instructed to avoid arguments and theoretical discussions with the examining draft board members. I was only to affirm, again and again if necessary, "My conscience does not allow me to take up arms to kill other people."

How I became uneasy

I used the quote above only once before the examining draft board. The chairman followed my initial statement with the question, "Then what will you do when Hitler rapes your mother or your sister?" Before I could answer, he fired off a rapid stream of similar questions, but he never stopped long enough for me to answer any of them. Then, as abruptly as it had begun, his stream of questions dried up. He stamped my papers and said, "Next please!" That's how I became a CO. The utter frivolousness of how I had achieved my CO status stirred up a host of questions in my mind. I felt I needed to do some serious studying to find out whether my professed peace position really was a personal conviction or merely an idiosyncratic practice which I was following because of tradition and social pressure.

To meet my alternative service obligation, I served in a large urban general hospital. Many Mennonite COs served in forestry camps in British Columbia and some came home after the war severely disillusioned. Their camp service had given them little satisfaction. Many of their CO-camp coworkers had been war dodgers. The life of the latter didn't reflect even basic Christianity, not to mention peace principles. As a result the serious COs felt that their peace witness had been seriously compromised.

When I compared my lot with theirs, I felt fortunate indeed. I had been able to express my Christian faith in helping sick people to a degree that I had never experienced before. As a service to my fellow human beings, my hospital work had been an exciting and deeply meaningful experience. But again and again, when patients discovered that I was doing alternative service as a CO and then asked questions about the basis for my convictions, our conversation quickly revealed that I was dead set against war, but I was fuzzy about why I was against it so adamantly. But what was even worse, I did not know what I was really for. As my unease about this grew, I vowed that I would study this matter in depth in order to discover what I was really "for" in my peace position.

But then the war ended. I went back to school to complete my college education. After graduation the MB Board of Missions sent my wife and me to Colombia as missionaries. As a result, the felt need to pursue the foundations of nonresistance was pushed out of my consciousness. After all, as a missionary I was working to reconcile the ungodly to God and that seemed like a very positive kind of peacemaking.

How my unease grew

Shortly after our arrival in Colombia the persecution of Protestants in that country erupted. Quickly I became engaged in a battle royal—fighting "tooth and nail"—to keep our mission's churches, schools, and dispensaries open. These mission projects had all been duly authorized by the highest authorities of the land, but they were now being disrupted and closed by provincial or local authorities who were under pressure by the local state-church authorities to "stand up for their Catholic faith and to drive the Protestant heretics out of their communities, if not out of their country."

The struggle to keep our mission institutions open forced us to carry our fight all the way to the highest ministerial authorities in the capital. These officials, while conceding that our operating documents were valid (many, in fact, bore their personal signatures), still refused to reverse the lower authorities' actions, because they, in turn, had the papal nuncio breathing

down their necks, reminding them that hell would be hot if they did not act like obedient sons of the church defending the true faith.

To force the Colombian government to give us what we felt was elementary justice, we involved lawyers, embassies, the US Congress, newspaper reporters, indeed, we enlisted every possible source of world opinion. During this course of events, it suddenly dawned on me that I was engaged in a "war" in which, short of physical violence, I was using every legal and diplomatic power weapon available in defense of our right to operate as a peace church! After eighteen months of fighting, I became convinced that this approach was not in harmony with my peace position any more than was the use of the gun or the sword in time of war. But I still had not developed an adequate rationale to explain why I felt so uneasy.

This experience, however, made me deeply aware that peace principles could not merely be a war-time issue, as my church had been teaching. Such a peace stance had to involve all of life if it was to have any validity! All our interpersonal interactions needed to be guided by it. When I thus became convinced that I could no longer fight the Colombian government in good conscience, I notified the mission board that I was bowing out of that fight for good. The mission, of course, saw me as a poor "soldier of the cross," but in spite of their obvious displeasure with my decision, I was convinced that I could not in good conscience use every legal, diplomatic, etc., power weapon in defense of peace and truth! It just did not harmonize with what I felt in my heart a positive witness for peace should be. But once more, before I had sorted out the issues, a new agreement, negotiated between the state church and the government, made our work with the Waunana Indians illegal, and we were thus forced to leave Colombia and return to North America.

How my unease grew still more

I finished graduate school. Then, because the mission board had no opening for a person with a PhD., I accepted a teaching position at Tabor College in Hillsboro, Kansas. This move coincided with the early stages of the protests, marches, and sit-ins in connection with race problems in the U.S. South.

To put my budding peace principles into practice, I naively, but enthusiastically, joined the ranks of the marchers and protesters, together with some students from Tabor College. In my classes I tried to help students recognize racism in our churches and communities. However, as my southern involvement increased, I became increasingly more uncomfortable with my fellow protesters. Among them I found dozens of "horny" young fellows who saw these large protest gatherings as good places to find some excellent "lays." Others claimed to be anarchists. There was a wide array of leftists, and many were there just to "raise hell." Here too, I soon realized that the non-violent label was a very elastic one. It included every use of force short of strangling somebody. As a result, I found myself withdrawing again, just like in Colombia.

The utter frivolousness of how I had achieved my CO status stirred up a host of questions in my mind.

The Bible Society interlude

Then the United Bible Societies offered me an overseas service opportunity. I was to train nationsl—mother-tongue speakers—to become translators of the Bible into their own languages. Here I worked with all kinds of churches, missions, and ethnic groups. I soon observed many conflicts in the mission programs overseas. There were tensions between missions, tensions between nationals and expatriates, tensions between various ethnic groups, and inter-generational tensions within the indigenous churches themselves, etc. To my delight I discovered a variety of peacemaking opportunities.[1]

On the whole the peacemaking experience during my Bible Society service was a very satisfying one. However, when I tried to make this experience relevant for church people in general, I found that the reconciliation process I had experienced involved a degree of cultural competence and counselling skills which average church people might not have. Secondly, my peacemaking effort did not show a clear relationship to the Anabaptist peace concerns which I espoused in theory.

When I returned in 1984 and finally had time to pursue some of my personal interests, the peace issue unexpectedly came to a head—my son left the MB Church because his home church could no longer take a clear unequivocal position for peace. When he then, somewhat disappointed asked me, "Dad, you have laid foundations in my life for so many things I never dreamed I would encounter. But why in heaven's name did you never guide me in the premises underlying the Anabaptist/Mennonite peace position?"[2] The answer, of course, was because I had never done the necessary homework to develop my own personal convictions. But I decided then and there to do it.

The result of this multi-year effort is contained in a book *Only the Sword of the Spirit* (Loewen and Prieb) now with the publishers.

In a nutshell this study revealed that Menno Simons in his voluminous writings had little to say about wartime abstinence from the use of the sword, but he had a lot to say about the need to develop a lifestyle which abstained from all use of force and coercion. A lifestyle he labelled as "living only by the sword of the Spirit." This study not only has led me to personal conviction on the peace position, it has also helped me develop a series of "yardsticks" or "rules of thumb" to govern my behavior in situations in which I feel I must protest for conscience sake.

Toward a personal yardstick

In the earlier part of my personal pilgrimage toward peace, I shared a number of experiences of acute discomfort with the use of coercion to accomplish "God's purposes." As recounted there, I withdrew from a number of situations, because of an acute inner unease, but I never was sure just why I felt so uneasy about what I was doing. The fact of the matter was that I had no personal yardstick for measuring appropriate and inappropriate behavior in the furtherance of peace. While a little more clarity gradually emerged as I went on in life, it wasn't until I engaged in this study that I really had occasion to sort out the issues and to

define my personal guidelines, or yardstick, if you will, for acceptable protest for conscience' sake.

What Gandhi taught me

When I looked around for actual life examples to illustrate these emerging guidelines, I found, much to my chagrin, that Gandhi's life provided the best modern examples. To add to my chagrin, when I showed my preliminary findings to a fellow MB minister, the latter warned me not to use them, because Gandhi, after all, was not a Christian. After some serious soul-searching, I have, nevertheless, decided to use Gandhi's life and protests as an example of putting Christ's peace principles into practice. If this supposed "non-Christian" is the best example of what a Christ-like life of renouncing force and depending only on the moral force of love and self-giving looks like, so be it! I bow my "Christian" head in shame before the moral power and the example of "non-Christian" Gandhi's life.[3]

James W. Douglass gives us a powerful insight as to why Gandhi felt that he had to reject official Christianity when he reports: "He (Gandhi) had to reject organized Christianity because he wanted to be true to Jesus Christ and his teaching."[4]

Here are Gandhi's own words reported by R. K. Prabhu: "Today I rebel against orthodox Christianity, as I am convinced that it has distorted the message of Jesus. . . . When it got the backing of the Roman Emperor, Christianity became an imperialistic faith as it has remained to this day."[5]

But the New Testament was a gold mine for him:

> The Gospels enthralled him. . . . They seemed to confirm his earlier religious insights, bringing out clearly what hitherto he had only half believed. The Sermon on the Mount, with its teaching of non-resistance, attracted him in particular; it remained favourite reading with him for the rest of his life. On this impact he writes in his *Autobiography:*
>
> The New Testament . . . especially the Sermon on the Mount . . . went straight to my heart. I compared it with the Gita. The verses 'But I say unto you, that ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, you turn to him the other also. And if any man take away thy coat let him have thy cloak too,' delighted me beyond measure and put me in mind of [the Gujarati poet] Shamal Bhatt's 'For a bowl of water, give a goodly meal,' etc. My young mind tried to unify the teaching of Gita, *The Light of Asia* and the Sermon on the Mount. That renunciation of power was the highest form of religion appealed to me greatly.[6]

Douglass then points out that both Gandhi and Bonhoeffer correctly insisted that Jesus did not preach a new religion, he preached a new life of peace and obedience to non-use of force.[7]

The first example of protest from Gandhi's life comes from his involvement in the struggle against South Africa's infamous passbook laws. When Gandhi's fellow protestors wanted to blockade the passbook offices to make it impossible for them to function, Gandhi refused. He insisted that the protestor for conscience may not harass or impede those who had legitimate reasons to enter those offices. It did not matter whether they were whites who were employed there, or whether they were blacks who felt they had no alternative but to register to get a passbook. Gandhi also insisted that the protestors had no right to block the area in front of the office, because that would impede and inconvenience ordinary passers-by who were not involved in the protest.

Because of these considerations, Gandhi assembled his fellow-protestors in the park across the street from the passbook office where no one was impeded or inconvenienced by the protest. Gandhi believed that clear visibility in the park across the street was an adequate form of non-violent protest.[8]

Later when Gandhi organized the strike of the textile workers in Southern India, the mill owners were led by a close friend and faithful supporter of Gandhi. Before the strike was called, Gandhi carefully ascertained what level of wage increase would be manageable for the mill owners. The workers wanted more, but Gandhi told them that exorbitant demands would make it impossible for the mill owners to operate with a margin of profit. What Gandhi proposed was an increase that would improve the quality of life for the mill workers, but which, at the same time, would not fatally cripple the textile mills. If a strike demand met the essential needs of both parties, Gandhi said, it could be considered a just demand.

During the early part of the strike Gandhi frequently dined with his mill-owner friend and discussed the ramifications of the strike with him. Gandhi insisted that the protestor or striker may not be arrogant or hostile, nor should he be subservient and begging. Both parties should be able to settle their differences while maintaining their individual personal dignity.

When the strike dragged on, however, and the striking mill workers began to suffer hunger, Gandhi had to learn two additional lessons. First, that he as the moral leader of the strikers also had to suffer, even though there was plenty of food at his ashram. Out of this came Gandhi's first hunger strike. Second, some of the mill workers and their families found it impossible to survive while on strike. Some of these workers thus broke ranks and went back to work at the mills for their old wages. Other strikers now wanted to punish these strike-breakers, but again Gandhi opposed them, saying that no one had the right to exercise violence on another. Furthermore, no one but the person himself had the right to decide how much suffering he/she could bear.[9]

When I looked around for actual life examples to illustrate these emerging guidelines, I found, much to my chagrin, that Gandhi's life provided the best modern examples.

By the time Gandhi was on a hunger strike for his country's independence, several more issues had been clarified in his thinking. First, civil disobedience is a valid response if laws are patently unjust, e.g., his peaceful march to the sea to make salt. Second, only the person whose conscience is being violated by an abuse or an injustice may be called on to suffer. The protestor may not demand nor inflict suffering or humiliation on others, whether they be perpetrators or merely uninvolved bystanders. Gandhi felt that accepting suffering without flinching empowers the sufferer. Louis Fischer espouses this

point of view and says, "The British beat the Indians with batons and rifle butts. The Indians neither cringed nor retreated. That made England powerless and India invincible."[10]

Gandhi applied

As I worked through Gandhi's experience of non-violent protest, I began to understand the cause of my inner discomfort in Colombia as I was fighting to keep our mission work going. We were using every possible means of coercion, short of physical violence, to shame, harass, embarrass, and create discomfort for as many government officials as possible. We used the press, both local and foreign. We involved embassies. We marshalled world opinion against Colombia in the US Congress. For Christians of genuine Anabaptist persuasion, violating another person's dignity should be just as unacceptable as it was for Gandhi.

In the same light I can now also evaluate why I felt I had to withdraw from the racial protests in the USA South. We blocked traffic, occupied seats in restaurants, tried to disrupt business, tried to embarrass people, argued fiercely with racists, and tried to use courts to force our morality on people of a different persuasion. As a result of our verbal aggression, we, as protestors, had little or no moral power.

Menno Simons' Vision

In the course of the analysis of Menno Simons' writings, twelve shifts in regard to the Scriptural vision he discovered and proclaimed were identified. The twelve shifts fall into two categories: those that relate to the believers' citizenship and those that relate to the Scriptures and the nature and function of the believing community.

In each of the two categories the first shift is foundational and those that follow are the results or the outworkings of the former.

In the first category, the following shifts can be identified:

(1) the believer's citizenship: from citizenship in only Christ's kingdom of peace to also becoming citizens of the kingdoms of this world.

(2) Separation from the world: the shift from radical separation characterized by an only-the-sword-of-the-Spirit lifestyle to only the refusal to wield the sword of war.

(3) Property: from stewardship of God's earth to private ownership.

(4) The covenant community: from a community of equals to a class structure largely based on differences in wealth.

(5) Governances in the believing community: from governance by the Spirit of God mediated by the *Lehramt*, teachers of the Word, to the development of a *Gebietsamt*, a Mennonite secular state.

(6) The exercise of power: from only the sword of the Spirit to a just war with the sword of iron.

In the second category the following shifts can be noted:

(7) The Scriptures and their exegesis: from the focused canon and Christ-centered exegesis to a flat canon.

(8) The exegetical community: from the congregation as an exegetical community to a church controlled by professional exegetes.

(9) Decision-making: from community consensus to democratic majority voting.

(10) Church governance: from congregational control to ministerial or denominational control.

(11) The privileged community: from a persecuted suffering church to God's privileged chosen people in their own promised land.

(12) Identity: from a people with a clear vision of what it means to be a disciple of Jesus to a loss of identity and vulnerability to outside -isms.

Today, having examined the issues carefully and in detail, I can affirm that my personal yardstick for protest for conscience' sake involves the following:

1) My peace position demands that I abstain from force and coercion at all times and in all areas of life.

2) As I protest, I may not insult or humiliate those whose behavior I oppose.

3) I may not harass underlings who are carrying out, in the line of duty, actions I oppose, because they are not the individuals who are in a position to make the changes I feel are necessary.

4) I may not impede or inconvenience people who may be present, but who are not really involved in the situation.

5) If there is any suffering involved, I may not inflict it. I as the protester should be the one suffering.

6) If the law is patently unjust, I may violate it peacefully, e.g., Gandhi's march to the sea to make salt in the face of the colonial government's salt monopoly.

7) Only the person whose conscience is violated may be called on to suffer. No one may force or pressure another person to protest or to suffer.

8) If the protest results in suffering, every protester must decide for himself/herself how much suffering she/he can bear. No one may ridicule a fellow protester for dropping out, because the suffering is greater than he/she can bear.

These eight guidelines or rules of thumb have helped me evaluate and assess actions such as picketing at abortion clinics, lying down in front of vehicles carrying nuclear arms, or causing damage to nuclear facilities, etc. They represent my studied position on *Gewaltverzicht*, "abstaining from the use of force in coercion" a la Menno Simons.

ENDNOTES

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[2]Jacob A. Loewen, "Dear Bill," *Mennonite Brethren Herald* (Oct. 28, 1988) 2-5.

[3]Orlando Waltner, "Mahatma Gandhi and World Peace," *Mennonite Life* 17:2 (1962) 53-54.

[4]James W. Douglass, *The Non-violent Cross: A Theology of Revolution and Peace* (New York: MacMillan, 1968) 55-56.

[5]R. K. Prabhu, *What Jesus Means to Me* (India: Narajuiran Publishing House, 1959) 33.

[6]Mahatma Gandhi, "The Story of my experiment with Truth," (originally published in Guyarati [1927-29] and translated into English by Mahader Desai and called *Autobiography*) in *Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*, 39 (New Delhi: 1970) Part 1, Chapter 20; Peter Brock, *Freedom from War: Nonsectarian Pacifism 1814-1914* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991) 267.

[7]Douglass, 56.

[8]Guy F. Hershberger, *War, Peace and Nonresistance* (Scottdale: Herald Press, 1969) 197-198.

[9]Erik H. Erikson, *Gandhi's Truth* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1969) 410-423.

[10]Louis Fischer, *The Life of Mahatma Gandhi* (London: Collier Books, 1962) 279.

The Case of John J. Bergen

by John J. Bergen

June 1940—At the age of 18, I completed senior matriculation and graduated from Gretna Mennonite Collegiate Institute.

September 1940—I was hired to fill a teaching position "on permit" in Big Black River, northeast shore of Lake Winnipeg. First I was interviewed by a committee of three, comprising I. Schultz, Minister of Education, R. M. Stevenson, Principal of the Winnipeg Normal School, and W. G. Rathwell, Registrar for the Department of Education. The interview focused mainly on my political ideology. (One of my grade XII classmates was permitted to register in Normal School, but did not qualify for an immediate permit to teach because she dared to say that she did not think that one side of the war was completely in the right and the other side completely in the wrong.)

C. K. Rogers, Superintendent of Schools for the Department, directed me to the school at Big Black River and gave me a contract for $2.50 per reported teaching day. There was no opportunity to leave, even at Christmas, until the ten months were over. The Department made no further contact with me in order to see how I was managing.

September 1941—As spokesman for Mennonite students at the Normal School, I approached the Principal on whether we might be excused from the "dancing" portion of the Physical Education program. Our objection was given publicity on the front page of the Winnipeg Free Press. Our request was referred to the Advisory Board for the Department of Education. We were informed by Miss Graham, the instructor, and by letter (*October 2, 1941*, directed to me) by C. K. Rogers that no exemption could be granted to us. (A Catholic sister, however, was not required to participate in the activity!)

Due to a shortage of teachers during the war years, the Principal invited some Normal School students, including three Mennonite boys, to truncate their teacher preparation time and take positions which needed to be filled during the after-Easter period. All of us had also taught a year on permit. Obviously Mr. Stevenson considered us fit to return to the schools. I taught a few months in Russell. In the Russell school, junior and senior high school boys, and I believe also girls, were given cadet training by the school janitor.

September 1942—I obtained a teaching position in the Hopeland School District, just north of Homewood.

The Hopeland School District, with some 26 students enrolled, was comprised of Mennonite families except for one Anglo-Saxon family with two school-age boys.

I taught grades I to IX, and must have enquired whether I might instruct German in grade IX. In a letter of September 10, 1942, Registrar W. G. Rathwell replied as follows:

> German is included in the Programme of Studies as one of the optional subjects and, of course, you may include it in your programme if you think it wise. It

is questionable if this is the proper time to introduce this subject, and you might be well advised to have your students take one of the other options. The final decisions must, of course, rest with yourself, but it would seem that your action would be in keeping with the time if you encouraged your students to select another subject.

I do not recall whether or not I taught German. However, I included German items in the Christmas program. When the first such item was performed, the non-Mennonite family and their two boys left immediately, and the boys were unable to play their parts in the rest of the program. And at the end of the program, D. D. Klassen, pastor of the local Mennonite congregation, made closing remarks in German!

Later in the winter the father of the boys demanded that I come outside, and accused me of having pictures of Hitler and Mussolini on the school wall. I asked him to come in and see for himself. He refused to come in. (Actually I had newspaper clippings of the leaders of the warring countries on a display, both the leaders of the allies in one grouping and the leaders of the enemy nations in the other grouping, as a current events illustration.) On the day Inspector J. A. Peterson of Carman called at my school I had forgotten to raise the flag—a serious omission during the war years; Peterson drew the matter to my attention, but showed no alarm.

Fall 1942—an undated circular "To The Teacher" from Ivan Schultz, Minister of Education, urging the purchase of War Savings Stamps and Certificates. The final paragraph reads as follows:

> The Department keeps a record of the amount reported by you each month and sincerely hopes that your school will show a real accomplishment during the school year.

December 7, 1941—In a letter to Hon. I. Schultz, Minister of Education, I indicated that I would be subject to a military call, however, that as a conscientious objector I would continue teaching. In the letter I stated that "I am willing to serve my country in any non-combatant, essential line."

December 12, 1942—A reply by Superintendent C. K. Rogers included the following:

> Three times during the past four months we have been placed in a very awkward position when we have written on behalf of persons who were conscientious objectors . . . but we cannot again place ourselves in [that] position. . . . We feel very definitely that any person who has charge of the citizenship training of a group of children in a school should himself be willing to go all the way in the matter of his obligations as a citizen of this country. This you are not prepared to do and because of your deficiency in citizenship, we cannot ask for a postponement.

December 17, 1942—A circular from Administrative Officer A. A. MacDonald, addressed to teachers who had not submitted reports regarding the sale of war-savings stamps, included the following:

> The real test of education is whether or not the students are being prepared . . . to be good citizens of this country. . . . Whatever the reason for the failure to report or the failure to conduct . . . a war-savings stamps campaign in the past . . . will be overlooked, if immediate steps are taken to institute such a campaign to see that it is carried forward in the future.

January 24, 1943—I wrote to the War Selective Service Board, Winnipeg, in part, as follows:

> I am willing to go through all the dangers the soldiers are going through, if need be to lay down my life. But I would help to sustain rather than to destroy life. I would gladly help in the care of the wounded, if necessary on the battlefield. But I cannot take any training such as gun and bayonet practice, or the handling of any war machinery.

January 29, 1943—My letter to the Department of Education included the following:

> I have received your notices regarding the matter of War Savings Stamps. As far as I understand, this is an entirely voluntary matter. . . . We are willing to help to sustain life, rather than to help to destroy life, believing in Christ's words, "Love thine enemy," as well as, "Love thy neighbour". . . . When our forefathers were in Holland, they refused to shed blood, when they were in Prussia, they again took that stand, and also in Russia. . . . Had they given up their non-resistance in Prussia, their sons would today be fighting against the British, whereas they are now here, again asking that they may be left in peace. . . . After this war the nations expect to establish a world of peace. They will then be glad to have people who are averse to the shedding of blood as we are. . . . Of course, there are many among us, who not worthy of their fathers, are leaving our faith. They have gone to fight too. I do not expect, but I do sincerely hope you may understand our position.

February 4, 1943—My naive and foolish boldness not surprisingly brought a swift reply from A. A. MacDonald, parts of which read as follows:

> The opinions you expressed in this letter, in my opinion, should not be held by anyone teaching children in this province. . . . "Love thine enemy" may be a very fine belief but when our enemy is trying to deprive us of our homes . . . I think love must cease. . . . I wonder what would happen in Germany today, to anyone who wrote such a letter as yours? I do not believe they would ever have an opportunity to write a second one. . . . I am accordingly reffering it [my letter] to Mr. Rogers.

February 6, 1943—The Department of National War Services directed me to undergo a medical examination without delay.

February 11, 1943—A letter from C. K. Rogers included the following:

> These statements [contained in my letter of January 29] have created very definite doubt as to whether you should be in charge of a school in this province. You are hereby notified to appear before a meeting of a Discipline Committee of this Department on Friday, February 19th, at ten o'clock in the morning. . . .

My files contain a copy of a letter I had addressed to the Rt. Hon. M. King, Prime Minister of Canada, dated February 12, 1943, in which I stated in part:

> Do you have a place where an honest young man, a conscientious objector, a Christian, could give valuable service to his country? I cannot take military training of any sort. . . . But I am willing to help to sustain life, to help the wounded, though I may myself pass through all the dangers of any other soldier in battle....

And on February 17, 1943, I submitted a report to the *Dufferin Leader* (Carman), reporting "a very successful Red Cross campaign" in which my pupils had participated. Tickets had been sold and the proceeds forwarded to the "War Fund of the Junior Red Cross." My memory fails me in this matter, but surprisingly I also report that Blaine Morrison, one of the two non-Mennonite boys in the school, who had sold the greatest number of tickets, was awarded a War Savings Stamp! (I can't recall where that came from!)

February 19, 1943—Upon appearing for a hearing before the Discipline Committee of the Department, I was

handed a letter signed by I. Schultz, Minister of Education which stated that:

> This is to advise you your teaching certificate is suspended in this Province pending the decision following the report of the Discipline Committee.

The Discipline Committee comprised about twelve persons, all male, also representing the Manitoba Teachers' Society. The hearing was relatively civil. I recall one question, "Why do you object to wearing the King's uniform." I recall replying that my objection was not to the uniform, but to a service requiring the use of offensive weapons. I recall saying that I would be willing to serve in uniform should I be given the option of serving in the Medical Corps and not be required to take weapons training. (The option to do so became available in September 1943.)

Appearing on the same morning was Tony Funk, who taught near Gretna. Bishop D. Schultz (in whose district Tony taught) accompanied him and wished to speak on his behalf, but was denied the opportunity. Though the Hopeland school trustees offered to accompany me and speak on my behalf, I had advised them not to do so, warning them that the minister also had the power to dismiss them and place the district under an official trustee, in which case they would have no choice on who would be teaching in their school.

Tony Funk was heard first, and I after him. Both our certificates were cancelled, though I doubt that Tony had provoked the Department through correspondence as I had done. We were the first two Mennonite teachers in Manitoba to lose their teaching certificates at that time. Several others suffered the same fate. However, the following term Mennonite teachers were able to retain their positions with part of their salaries designated to the Red Cross.

February 24, 1943—A letter from Registrar W. G. Rathwell included the following:

> The members of the Discipline Committee . . . unanimously agree that your understanding of Canadian citizenship does not meet the requirements of the teaching profession of this Province. . . . The Minister of Education has accepted the recommendation of the Discipline Committee and I am authorized by him to advise you that effective March 1, 1943, your teacher's licenses for the Province of Manitoba are cancelled and that you will not be eligible to teach in the public schools of this Province. . . .

Actually, my teaching career had been interrupted on February 19, the date of suspension of my certificate.

I do not have a copy of a letter I wrote to E. K. Marshall, General Secretary of the Manitoba Teachers' Society, to which he replied on May 11, 1943, partly as follows:

> I wish to thank you for being so frank in your account of what took place. . . . Of course, this is a matter upon which people are divided. Some of us believe quite differently from your opinion. . . . All we have to do is to see what takes place in the land of the dictators and then we go to our present task somewhat grimly. I will be glad to hear from you from time to time whenever you feel like writing.

July 9, 1943—A note from the Department of Labour National Selective Service Mobilization Section on a form from the Department of National War Services stated that:

> After due consideration your application for the postponement of your period of military training has been granted by the Board of this Administration Division as a Conscientious Objector.

I was permitted to continue working on the farm of my parents at Stephenfield, to which I had retreated following the cancellation of my certificate.

October 12, 1943—I addressed a letter to the Department of Labour National Selective Service Mobilization Section in which I had also stated that:

> I was pleased to read the news that Conscientious Objectors are now being permitted to join the Medical Corps for non-combatant duties. Under much the same conditions I am willing to offer my service, even as I stated in my letter of January 24, 1943. . . . I do hope that in granting my service, I shall also be able to prove that I am willing to perform those duties which are expected of a loyal citizen, and that after the war, I may finally recover my teacher's certificate, which was cancelled because of the opinions which I hold as a conscientious objector.

An Order-in-Council, dated September 16, 1943, made provision for conscientious objectors, including members of a "denomination of Christians called Mennonites," to serve as non-combatants with the Medical Corps or the Dental Corps. Believing that the arrangement had the approval of our Mennonite leaders, I enlisted in January 1944 and received "basic training" (non-combatant) in Peterborough, Ontario, along with several dozen COs, most of whom were Mennonites. (Bishop Jacob H. Janzen paid us a pastoral visit during that time.) I was then placed in the Dental Corps and was located at Camp Shilo, Manitoba, (along with a Hutterite and a Plymouth Brethren) until I was sent overseas in January, 1945.

May 17, 1945—In response to my letter to C. K. Rogers (at which time I was located in England) in which I recall having stressed the point that I had carried out the intentions which I had stated in the hearing before the Discipline committee, he replied in part as follows:

> While I cannot commit the Department to a definite statement of restoration of your Manitoba certificate . . . I certainly can promise that the matter will be reviewed as soon as this war is over . . . and further I may say that I appreciated the very frank statement of your position at the moment. [I believe this reference was to my statement before the Discipline Committee in February, 1943.]

January 22, 1946—A letter from R. O. MacFarlane, Superintendent of Education, in response to my enquiry from Oldenburg, Germany, where I was stationed about seven months, stated that:

> I have looked over your file and in the light of your service . . . I should be very pleased to recommend your case to the next meeting of the Discipline Committee with a view to having your certificates revived.

(This response might be assessed also in the context that the cancellation of certificates of CO teachers had been discontinued a few months after I had lost mine.)

May 3, 1946—A letter from Registrar W. G. Rathwell informed me as follows:

> on the strength of recent information . . . the members of the committee [Discipline Committee] were unanimous in the opinion that your certificate be reinstated and so recommended to the Minister of Education. . . . Your teaching licenses are reinstated and you are now entitled to negotiate with School Boards on the strength of the certification previously held.

However, I arrived in Winnipeg from England before receiving the above letter. My first act was to walk to the Legislative Building, and to Mr. Rathwell's office in order to enquire about the status of my certification. Mr. Rathwell received me cordially.

I registered in a July summer course given at the Normal School by John Brown (later Dean of Education), who surprised me by saying that he "knew" me. Unknown to me, he had observed me at the time I was being inducted into the Services at Fort Osborne Barracks (Winnipeg) in January of 1944, where he had been an officer.

Thirty Years Later

July 2, 1975—I wrote to R. W. Dalton, Deputy Minister of Education. A portion of that letter follows:

> I hereby request that my case be reopened and that the files concerning my case be carefully examined. I am also prepared to appear in person in the interests of my case.
>
> Though this may have implications regarding my eventual retirement income, the major reason for my request is based on grounds of justice.
>
> My certificate was cancelled because I declared myself a conscientious objector to participation in active violence. I declared my willingness to participate in a non-combatant capacity. When the latter became legally possible, I joined the forces and was placed in Dental Corps. Nothing changed with respect to the position I held on the basis of conviction and conscience between the time my certificate was cancelled and the time my certificate was re-instated. Since that was the case, I hold that the first decision was based in the context of the then political climate, understandable in a time of war, and not based rationally or in justice.
>
> It may be that appeal procedures were available at that time. However, I was not informed about such, nor did I conjecture that such might have been available. I accepted the ruling as final at the time, even though I did not believe that it had been just. Even if appeal procedures were available at the time, and even if such procedures required that appeals be launched within a given time limit, in view of the ignorance of teachers such as myself at that time, and in view of the special circumstances of that era, I do think that the case should be reconsidered at this time.
>
> I did not at that time, nor did I at any time since, hold any malice towards those who made the decision. However, I do now request that the case be reviewed from today's vantage point, and I would like to hear a contemporary judgment on the event which took place 32 years ago.

July 30, 1975—R. F. Lee, Director of Teacher Certification and Records, informed me as follows:

> On July 11, 1975, the Deputy Minister of Education, R. W. Dalton, made the following recommendation to the Minister of Education, the Hon. Ben Hanuschak:
>
> "In view of the fact that Mr. Bergen did serve his country during the war, that society's attitudes towards war have changed vastly in the last thirty years, and that Mr. Bergen's record as a certificated teacher was unimpeachable, I wish to recommend to you that the cancellation of Mr. Bergen's certificate be expunged from the record and that retroactively he be considered certified during the period of cancellation."
>
> On July 22, 1975, the Minister gave formal approval to the recommendation.
>
> As a result, your record on file with the Teacher Certification and Records Branch will be cleared and your certificate will be considered to have been in full force from the date of first issuance.

My first inclination was to refuse acceptance of the information and to demand a hearing. However, with personal respect to the person of Mr. Dalton, I refrained from doing so, and wrote to him as follows on August 2, 1975:

> This came as a pleasant surprise, as I had not expected that the matter of my concern would have been dealt with so promptly.
>
> I wish to thank you heartily, Mr. Dalton, for taking my concern to the Minister.
>
> In view of the fact that there were a number of teachers whose cases did not differ from mine in substance, on their behalf, I wonder whether the Minister may not be willing to review their files without formal applications.

Group of draftees from Toronto arrive at Green Timbers Manning Station, British Columbia.

Alternative Service Work as Reflected in *The Beacon*

October 1942-September 1945

by Elizabeth Suderman Klassen

History

The Beacon was published by Canadian conscientious objectors who chose to do Alternative Service Work (ASW) during World War II. Its 20 pages were mimeographed on letter-size paper and appeared monthly (or bi-monthly) from October 1942 to September 1945. It was "owned, operated and controlled by ASW men in the B.C. Forestry Service."

Its purpose was to serve "as an inter-camp communication to create a respectful understanding and common fellowship" among ASW men. It also served as a newsletter "for the folks back home" and intended "to show our friends and acquaintances . . . what we COs are doing to live up to our convictions. We want them to learn the nature of Alternative Service Work and . . . our universal patriotism." It purported to give equal voice to the various religious groups represented at the camps, solicited "articles of a constructive nature" and did not discuss political issues.[1]

Its predecessor, *The Northern Beacon*, first appeared January 3, 1942, six months after the first ASW camp was established and dealt exclusively with the Montreal River Camp at Soo, Ontario. Its stated purpose was providing a worthwhile leisure activity, serving as a newsletter to friends, family and other interested parties, reflecting the activities of the Montreal River Camp, establishing contact with persons in similar camps, deepening friendships within the camp, and promoting new projects to benefit the camp.[2] The men were building the Trans-Canada Highway north of Lake Superior. In July 1942, when the Montreal River Camp was closed, the men transferred to B.C. and publication ceased.

Within three months, *The Beacon* appeared. Wes Brown, the editor of its predecessor, edited it from Oct. 1942 - May 1943; and John L. Fretz from June 1943 - Sept. 1945. It was first published at Campbell River on Vancouver Island, then at Lake Cowichan. The price, originally 50 cents per year, was eventually raised to $1.00. Circulation figures stood at 600 in Oct. 1942, peaked at 1,200 in March 1943 and decreased to 877 for Feb.-March 1944.

Starting in 1943 *The Beacon* featured original mastheads for each issue. Most of them included a lighthouse and the motto "Let your light so shine." When the ASW camps in B.C. were officially closed at the end of March 1944, the men were transferred to national parks and experimental stations in B.C., Alberta, Manitoba and Ontario.[3] The April-July 1944 issue of *The Beacon* was published in Kitchener, Ont., and contained an urgent appeal for addresses of those who had left. The policy and constitution of *The Beacon* were revised to make it a newsletter.

The March 1945 issue featured "An History" of *The Beacon*. An executive staff was to carry on the publication of, by and for Canadian COs. Plans included publication of "news and articles regarding COs and Peace Activities in general." At that time, Alternative Service included placements to alleviate severe labor shortage, primarily in agriculture, but also "in industry, dairying and hospital service."[4] In addition to features of earlier issues, *The Beacon* included births, marriages, deaths, and solicited testimonials and opinions from readers, as well as feature articles.

John L. Fretz published the last issue in September 1945, and with his resignation and assignment to rehabilitation work abroad, *The Beacon* ceased publication.

Fulfilling its purpose

The Beacon certainly fulfilled its purpose of providing a worthwhile leisure activity, since a single issue involved 500 man-hours: editing, typing, proofreading, publishing, circulating and bookkeeping, with an additional 40 hours to collate, staple, fold, address and stamp.[5] This does not include the many hours of creative thinking and writing logged by the contributors to an issue.

Introductions

The Beacon carried many vignettes introducing ASW men in various camps. Tabulations of denominations represented at camp appeared occasionally. The Green Timbers 4 camp at Webster's Corners in Haney, for example, reported that its 33 boys represented 10 denominations. "However, denomina-

COs swimming at Horne Lake, Vancouver Island.

tionalism is forgotten at our meetings. We simply gather as a group of Christians in the name of the Lord." Seven of them were from Ontario, 4 from Manitoba, 4 from Saskatchewan, 2 from British Columbia and 6 from Alberta.[6] On the other hand, GT6 at Powell River was opened with 40 men, at the request of the SDAs. Nearly all of them enrolled in correspondence courses, with their conference paying 80% of the cost. A two-hour quiet study period was observed every evening.[7]

Canadian and international statistics on conscientious objectors appeared occasionally. Articles from Civilian Public Service units staffed by COs in the U.S. as well as groups in England and Australia extended international friendship.

Camp Life

In order to describe camp life to loved ones at home *The Beacon* featured creative articles on facilities, various persons, sports, recreation, and weather. Unique idioms and terminology appeared in a "Campee's Dictionary." It listed interesting terms like "crummie - a closed box car for hauling people," "inkslinger - timekeeper; office clerk," "murphys - potatoes," "powder-monkey - man who uses dynamite in the woods," "sugar report - letter to one's sweetheart or wife; (not rationed)."[8]

Visible support came from wider circles in the form of Christmas parcels for all the men. COs expressed their appreciation for stationery, woolen mitts, socks or scarfs, cookies and greeting cards from the Ladies Sewing Circles and Young People's Societies in Manitoba and the Mennonite Churches in B.C. "It was indeed a practical gift made possible by the cooperation of numerous sewing clubs, and expresses the interest for unity of all denominations; the unity of men in camps and groups at home."[9]

At Q3, Lower Campbell Lake, the camp consisted of "an office, wash house, mess hall and kitchen and the living quarters of the boys. The tents... are 12×14 and are pulled over wooden frames. They accommodate four men each."[10] At other camps, the COs' first task was to construct prefabricated houses. "The houses are delivered cut and ready to put together. Each board is slotted and numbered and fits the next board so that they make a weather-proof join about 5 inches long. Some of the men have become real experts in putting those houses up, and a house a day for a three-man crew is the rule. Each house holds 8 men who sleep in double-decker, prefabricated bunks, some with springs, some without. A Klondike stove is provided for each hut."[11]

"The Conchies (conscientious objectors) should not mind living on a small house scale when they return home and start married life. You should take a peep into one of the Horne Lake cabins where the 7 occupants in each have utilized every possible space to the best advantage, with their beds, shelves, clothes closets, tables (in some cases folding), hangings, stools and chairs, etc. Everything but the beds are of their own design and construction. Everything has its proper place; the pictures of wives or girl friends command the choicest locations."[12]

In the first wedding in CO history "David Neumann of Gem, Alta, was married to Miss Martha Harder, Borden, Sask., in Vancouver, on Sept. 26, with J. A. Harder of Yarrow officiating. The new wife had to reside in Vancouver. The wedding gift from the boys in camp was a Scofield Reference Bible."[13]

"The wash-house here (at Q7, Campbell River) is well on the way to completion, lacking a few items of equipment. The lake (our bath tub) has turned rather cold. However, the boys are still bathing."[14]

"Since our arrival at this rather pleasant camp (C4), we have made numerous useful and practical improvements. In addition to our conveniences, a small dam was built to supply water by gravity pressure, making it possible to have showers and faucets installed in the washroom. A new air-cooled building has been constructed for the preservation of food supplies—an ideal refrigeration plan for this warm but damp location."[15]

Q6 reported that "finally we have a washing machine at camp. Now the boys can collect a month's wash and do a real day's work. It's a wooden outfit, . . . Beatty by name."[16]

The GT1 men reported that "the biggest disturbance we had [was] one night at midnight, when 15 Hutterites from Manitoba breezed into camp. It proved to be a double disturbance. We were disturbed by having to turn out of our warm bunks at such an hour, and they were disturbed to learn that their sleeping quarters were the recreation hall, hastily converted. Soon we had them all comfortable before a roaring fire and in the morning . . . all had survived."[17]

The men at Kelsey Bay, the most northerly camp on Vancouver Island, had different disturbances and excitement. "During slash burning 7 miles from camp, the men used several pumps to guard a large wooden bridge, . . . 792 feet long, some 165 feet above the water, with a 99-foot single span over a deep canyon."

The men in this camp enjoyed deer meat, had the screen in their meathouse ripped by a bear, and frequently sighted wildlife like rabbits and beaver.[18]

The Beacon carried news from many camps where the "conchies" worked not only on road construction but also forestry services like fire-fighting, snag-falling and supplying fuel for general consumption, tree-planting and park improvement. They worked 48 hours a week and received 50 cents per day plus room, board and medical care.

Road Construction

One writer described road construction as follows: When the fire season was over, C-3 was given an assignment for the winter months. The COs stationed at Shawinigan Lake had opportunity to "push the muddy Port Renfrew Road to completion. The hardy COs, up at the first glimpse of light in the East, worked until dusk overtook them in their weary stride, . . . endeavouring to finish the highway before the war ended. A logging railroad pushed east from Port Renfrew a distance of nineteen miles. The objective of this camp was to connect up with the railroad, which, when done would give us the honour of (having constructed) 13 miles of the hardest, toughest, most grueling trail ever pushed through the wastelands of Canada. To date, we have finished a mile and a quarter that trucks can drive over (after a fashion), two miles in the process of being finished and nine and a half to go. . . . Due to the inclement weather of late, production has somewhat slowed up. Because of the super-abundance of precipitation, we have been working in mud that would be the envy of any youngster who has interest in the mud variety of pies."[19]

Firefighting

Firefighting provided many challenges and dangers. July 18, 1943. "Ding! Dong! Bang! What a noise to disturb the peaceful quiet of a Sunday afternoon in camp. But there it was . . . and it couldn't be ignored. It meant only one thing—FIRE—and fire means action. In short order the truck pulled away, with half the crew still lacking boots and pushing in shirt tails. It wasn't long, however, till the truck was coming back down the hill again—the crew somewhat blacker and dustier than when they left—and the fire under control."[20]

In an article entitled "Battling the Flames," Paul L. Storms describes one forest fire.

> This summer . . . our biggest battle was with a fire which raged in the mountains only a few miles in front of camp, and was fast approaching the camp location. The tremendous fire broke guard twice. A new guard was established some distance in front of the flames, through thick bush, on a steep, rugged mountain, for ¼ of a mile. It took 20 men 2 days of hard labor to make this clearing approximately three feet wide.... The second day, 30 men took positions at intervals along the guard with the purpose of backfiring. By this time the massive flames were about upon us. There was dire need for quick action. It was breath-taking, having to climb the guard, which was almost perpendicular in places. At intervals, about 20 feet in from the guard, oil was poured on the parched undergrowth. Soon fires blazed the entire extent of the guard to form a second large fire to meet the oncoming flames and stop their wild, devastating hungriness. . . . It was awe-inspiring to watch the wall of colorful, mighty flames; to see them shoot with lightning rapidity up tall trees, to see and hear the weighty snags of flame fall with thunderous audition, sometimes too close for comfort. Our eyes smarted with dense smoke and our throats were parched.
>
> In backfiring, there was grave danger of the fire crossing guard and cutting off our retreat to safety, making it necessary to take to the woods behind and blindly stumble through dense forest. In the places where this could readily happen, the fire remained intact and that evening, we witnessed God's providential care. By 10:30 o'clock, the fire was appreciatively under control, only raging at the crown. At midnight most of us were in bed. Some, however, stayed on patrol all night putting in 24 hours continuous labor. . . . Yet it was interesting, exciting and thrilling.[21]

Commenting on the homesickness following annual leave, one reporter declared that "swinging into the routine of camp life . . . acted as a back-fire and killed the 'blues'."[22]

Andrew Steckly of GT5 described his experience while fighting a forest fire: "Two fire-fighters, one tall and the other of a much more diminutive build, guarding the left flank of the fire which now . . . seemed to have burned itself out, . . . climbed to the upper end and put out a small blaze. The small blaze attended to, they paused for lunch . . . and gazed out over God's handiwork from this vantage point. . . . Lunch over, [they] descended to the lower fire line, a long and arduous journey down the steep and rocky cliff studded with trees and logs. Scarcely had the lower fire line been reached when a tall snag on the edge of the fire fell with a reverberating crash, showering sparks and bits of burning wood . . . into the unburned slash. A small breeze fanned the sparks and since the steep side-hill created its own draft, within a few minutes, the fire swept upwards and the rocky, scenic bluff, vacated only a

Supper time at Camp Q6, Horne Lake, Vancouver Island.

short time ago, was a roaring inferno, sending flames and billowing smoke hundreds of feet into the air. . . . The two youthful fire-fighters looked at each other and one voiced in an awed tone what the other's eyes so plainly said, 'We wouldn't have had time to get out of there, had it happened any sooner.' "[23]

"The ASWs are the best fire-fighters we ever had," commented Jim Pedly from the forest service. Although the COs appreciated this unsolicited praise, the writer hoped that "such words do not go to our heads, but rather, increase our efforts to serve our country and continue to change and gain public opinion in this manner."[24]

Snag-falling

After a forest fire, the COs were sent into the area to cut down the snags and make cordwood out of them. "Snags are a grave fire hazard, because once aflame, they explode sparks over a large area. Hence, it is great importance that those snags be felled before an area is replanted. Reforestation is most necessary. At the present time the province is logging 3 billion board feet a year, yet the timber replaces itself at the rate of 1 billion board feet a year."[25]

"As it takes 2 men to make a falling saw buzz we naturally work in teams of two. . . . A snag faller starts the day off with a stiff walk over very rough country, climbing hills, jumping stumps and boulders, sliding down steep slopes and doing an acrobat's job of line-walking across ravines with tools, waterbag and lunch kit to balance. Of course his work only begins when he encounters a stand of snags and gets into action by pulling the saw and swinging an axe. Even his vocal cords are exercised by his loud cry of 'Timber' before each tree falls. This is the customary warning to workers nearby that a tree is ready to fall." The snag-fallers averaged 105 square feet daily; the record for a pair was 207.73 square feet.[26]

"Most of us haven't received our rain hats yet (they were to be supplied by the government), and during the rain I have a stream of liquid-sunshine trickling down my neck. On foggy days we have a little trouble finding our snags."[27]

Injuries at work occurred, for example, when an axe slipped and cut through the CO's boot into his foot; another fell on the snag-falling saw and had to have 5 stitches in his knee; yet another had a finger badly crushed while working with the caterpillar which was grading the road near camp.[28]

On July 22, 1943, Willard Toman from Q6 "had a marvelous escape from being crushed by a huge snag. The snag . . . hit a short one several feet ahead, causing its end to come back off the stump several feet and caught Willard! A log on the ground saved his life. But why did he fall beside the log while the snag was on top instead of between the log and the snag? The Christian . . . thanks God, the protector and sustainer of our lives for His protecting hand in time of need."[29]

An excerpt from the *Nanaimo Free Press* reads: "What ASW Camp Workers are Doing in the Hills Near Nanaimo." "There are about 200-250 cords cut and stacked after splitting, alongside an old logging road which hugs the hillside overlooking the valley of the Nanaimo River. . . . The hillside is so steep that the simple process of rolling logs down the hill has been adopted. . . . The quality of the wood... is of the best, being obviously bone dry. . . . The personnel of this camp (C-5) is made up of 12 men cutting, 4 felling snags, a bull cook, two kitchen helpers, an office man and two drivers."[30]

Reforestation - Silviculture

While some COs were clearing the land, others in the Green Timbers nurseries were growing seedlings for reforestation. The purpose of reforestation was to supplement nature by planting the areas that could not reforest naturally because of repeated burns or lack of seed-trees. Depending on the soil, geography and topography, the principal species planted were Douglas Fir, Western Hemlock and Western Red Cedar.

Small farmers collected the cones

Camp Q3, Campbell Lake, Vancouver Island.

under supervision. The seed extracted from the cone was stored in air-tight tins in a tree storage cellar at 41 degrees Fahrenheit and later tested for germination. Fir seed cost $5 a pound, which would plant 20 acres and produce 25,000 seedlings.[31]

Seedbeds, 52 ft. × 4 ft., lying east and west, were ploughed and cultivated with spring tooth harrows, then curbed with 1 × 10″ or 1 × 12″ rough cedar, standing on edge. Seed was broadcast by hand and covered with good earth. Ten days after seeding, the weeds were burned off the surface with a "Hauk" high temperature burner, which cut weeding costs later. After germination, beds were shaded with standard snow-fencing, with laths lying across the beds north to south, so that their shadows moved rapidly with the sun. Seedlings, about 50 per square foot, were watered with full rotary type sprinklers twice a week. Hand weeding was done only during the first year. Straw mulch or sawdust protected the young seedlings from frost heaves in winter.

Root pruning after the first growing season eliminated the need for transplanting of nursery stock and ensured a diversified root system. A caterpillar tractor moved the root pruner machine across the bed, cutting off all roots below the four inch level, pruning 500,000 trees per day, producing stock that could not be distinguished from the more expensive transplanted seedlings.

Later, the root pruner, fitted with a broad, rigid, slightly tilted blade cutting at a depth of 8 inches, served as a lifter. Lifting crews, working in pairs, shook the dirt off the seedlings, tied them in bundles of 100, and packed them in burlap bales of 4,000 each. A two-man team could bale 100,000 trees per day. The bales were stored in a tree storage cellar 40×20 feet. Stock not shipped immediately was heeled in. Production costs including lifting and packing was $3.00 per thousand. When seedlings were to be shipped, 5,000 young trees, 50 bundles of 100, were packed into a box-like frame, roots pointing inward, and covered with peat moss. The bundles were wrapped with waxed paper and covered with sacking.[32]

At Green Timbers in New Westminster (now Surrey), 6 acres yielded a total of 3,358,221 trees, the lifting operation completed in 259 man days. "On an average, each man lifted 12,100 trees per day. . . . At first, there were stiff legs and aching backs: the boys at Green Timbers soon found that tree-lifting is no sissy's job."[33]

Survey crew of camp Q6; left to right, David Wall, compassman; Bill Elias, chainman; John Knelsen, left spotter; Ben Enns, right spotter.

In 1943, the Green Timbers nurseries produced 6,000,000 Douglas Fir. The seedlings had been protected by 6.5 miles of shade frames which had to be rolled up when it was cloudy, requiring ten man hours. After lifting and packing with 36,000 yards of binder twine, the seedlings were all shipped during the following 6 weeks.[34]

In their first half day of lifting seedlings in January 1944, the COs at GT1 "pulled, tied and heeled in . . . no less than 64,000 trees. . . . Tabulations on the last day of January show one million trees torn from their moorings, awaiting shipment. . . . This was not accomplished without a few cold fingers and the odd stiff back, but all were consoled with the thought that there would be more lame backs before the trees were all planted!"[35]

Tree planting

During the short planting season, usually February and March, men from various camps were transferred to the planting area. For example, in 1943 Camp Q1 welcomed 56 new camp members, 28 from Seymour Mountain and Haney. After tree-planting these men returned to their respective camps. . . . The number of trees planted was a million and a half, of which 5,000 were spruce, 10,000 hemlock, and the remainder fir. The men worked in 4 planting crews, averaging 800-1000 trees per person per day. A tree-planting crew was set up with 15 men in a line, forward on each end and slightly sway back in the middle, the planters 6 feet apart. Each man chopped a hole, planted a tree, firmed the soil, moved forward 6 feet and planted another. However, the plan was not quite as simple to put into practice. Nonetheless, these "side-hill gougers" planted 303,650 trees on their hillside. Some complained about backaches. However, after working hours, they usually gathered enough energy to play several games of volleyball.[36]

Men from Hill 60 at Duncan reported that they began tree-planting on March 2, 1943. Early in the month 14 men arrived from Camp C2 (Lake Cowichan). On March 26, ten SDAs from Powell River reached Hill 60. "The record crew average is 900 trees per man per day. By March 29, 579,000 Douglas Firs had been planted."[37]

Farming

Besides Camp Q4 at Courtenay, there was Project F (Farm), which raised vegetables for the camps. The CO farmers reported that some of the vegetable seeds didn't germinate, but the weed "catch" was 100%. "Every weed known to science plus several new and vicious varieties have appeared on the farm. In an all-out attempt to repel this invasion, Foreman McKenzie

Butchering buffalo at camp Q6; Jack Rae, deputy park warden, on the saw.

shifted his men from the wood-lot to the garden front. Nor is cavalry support lacking—a sad looking horse pulls a cultivator and Kornie Frase around the field from morning till night."[38]

When the Dominion Government passed Orders-in-Council regarding alternative service, *The Beacon* usually carried the item on its front page.

Religious life in ASW camps

The Beacon also published original poetry, graphics, humor, seasonal reports (Christmas, Mother's day), personal testimonies, reports on religious activities and new government regulations.

The ministry of visiting brothers was appreciated and acknowledged. "The campees enjoyed a spiritual treat on Sept. 1 & 2 when Rev. John Toews from Alberta and Rev. John Penner from Sask. did the preaching." "During the past few months we have been encouraged by the visits of various ministers. Rev. C. D. Toews of Manitoba has spent some time with us, and we are still enjoying his visits at the camps."[39] In August 1943, *The Beacon* listed 31 visiting ministers.[40] But there were lighter moments also. A CO in Q2 who "announced visitors by barking like a dog, was slightly embarrassed when he barked at a visiting minister from his home town."[41]

The Beacon regularly featured religious articles and editorials. The sermons and poems ranged from inspirational and seasonal to Christian life and evangelistic. A sample of titles listed by volume and number includes:

1:2 Let Your Light so Shine (Mt. 5:14-15) - Frank L. Showler
2:1 Weighed and Found Wanting (Belshazzar) - William Buller; A CO's Prayer in B.C. - John Boldt
2:2 Things that are Beautiful (Phil. 4:7-9) - Allen P. Vinall
2:4 The Cross of Calvary (Lk. 23:33) - Edwin C. Byers
2:5 The Dangers of Indecision (Joel 3:14; Josh. 24:10) - Edward Gilmore
2:7 The Second Coming (1 Thess. 4:16) - F. C. Peters
2:8 Show Thyself a Man (1 Kings 2:2) - John H. Enns
2:9 A Vital Christian Experience (Phil. 3:7) - W. Wiebe
2:10 Seek Those Things Which are Above (Col. 3:1) - Peter Wolfe; Christ's Bonds not Bondage - Paul L. Storms
2:11 Spiritual Revival (2 Chron. 7:14) - Rev. J. B. Martin, Chairman, MPC of HPC
3:2 The Mysterious Element in Christianity; the New Birth - Jake J. Giesbrecht; Come Ye After Me (Mk. 1:17-18) - Norman Fehr
4:2 Life and Unionism: the New Testament Ray - Rev. J. B. Martin

Spiritual life among the COs

At Q2, "the first of all activities to be organized among the boys was the spiritual life in camp." They elected a leader who assumed responsibility regarding religious services, led some himself and asked others to take turns. Every morning, before breakfast in the mess hall, a scripture passage was read, followed by prayer. Quite a number became willing to assume this responsibility at Q6.[42]

Most camps had Sunday morning services that included Scripture, singing, prayer and a sermon. Some also had Sunday School, using the International Sunday School lessons, offering various persons opportunity to teach. Some camps alternated sermons and Sunday School. Every second Sunday evening they had a program on a special theme, similar to a young people's meeting. Q6 described a typical program: "The boys sing heartily. Someone reads the Scripture and offers prayer. A musical selection (violin, guitar, or octaphone) and a duet or quartet are rendered. A suitable poem is recited and an open number gives opportunity for anyone to take a part as the Spirit so leads. Several of the boys take turns in preaching. . . . An offering is taken which helps in non-resistance war relief." Camp GT6 reported sending its offering of $31.50 to the Aid to Russia Fund. Prayer meeting, Bible discussion, additional messages and sometimes male choir practice appeared on the calendar of the camps.[43]

Camp Q6 reported, "It is not unusual to enter any one of the cabins and see one or more engaged in Bible meditation. Willard Toman is religious director and sets a good Christian example."

"Last spring the spiritual life of our camp (C1) gave concern to both the ministers and a number of the brethren in the camp. This led to a rededication to the Lord and daily prayer-meeting of a few boys. . . . Last spring one soul was saved and another made a new stand for the Lord. Today another soul expressed his faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and was washed in the Blood of the Lamb."[44]

Some COs found opportunities for Christian service outside their ASW assignment. The editor reported that the boys from GT1 often attended and participated in the Green Timbers Mission in New Westminster, only one and a half miles from the camp, and enjoyed

the services.[45]

Sometimes men from different denominations held differing opinions. At the camp near Alberni, a small group insisted on holding street meetings in town on Saturday evening. The boys of a different religious stripe objected to this "undignified" activity. The question was put to the foreman for decision. "This particular foreman is a wise old duck, and didn't wade through his sixty winters without learning a thing or two. He surveyed the gathering solemnly and thought fast. At last he cleared his throat and asked, "You ask me what is right and what is wrong in this case, and I answer you with a question. 'What would Jesus do? What would Jesus say?' Every man present knew the passage wherein Jesus commanded his disciples to go out into the highways and the byways. The argument ended right there, . . . and the boys still preach to the . . . populace of Port Alberni on Saturday nights."[46]

Conclusion

Judging by the creative news articles, the emphasis on spiritual life in the camps, circulation and responses from subscribers, *The Beacon* served its purpose from 1942-45.

Circulation ranged from Vancouver Island to New Brunswick to New Hampshire, USA. Subscribers commented: "The young paper is a witness to the government and the Canadian public. It will . . . cause the men to be even more conscientious and true . . . to their testimony. Continue to serve the Lord . . . with the Bible, axe and pen." A Canadian in a U.S. CPS camp writes, "I've wondered . . . what was happening with Canadian pacifists and enjoy reading your inter-camp news." "My family and I read it from beginning to end with the greatest of interest. . . . Please forward two subscriptions: one to my son in England and one to my son at home."

Fifty years later, Andrew Steckly showed his video recording of life at the ASW camps in British Columbia to a very appreciative audience. The friendly exchanges at the reunions in Clearbrook, B.C., indicated that the CO experience positively influenced the development of the Christian life and convictions of many of our young men during World War II. Many of them have devoted a lifetime to serving the Lord.

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ENDNOTES

[1]*The Beacon*, October 1942, 1, 22.
[2]*The Northern Beacon*, January 1942, 1.
[3]*The Beacon*, April-July 1944, 1.
[4]*The Beacon*, March 1942, 2.
[5]*The Beacon*, February 1943, 19.
[6]*The Beacon*, January 1943, 9.
[7]*The Beacon*, January 1943, 1.
[8]*The Beacon*, October-November 1943, 12, reprinted in Klippenstein, L. ed. *That There be Peace: Mennonites in Canada and World War II*, 84.
[9]*The Beacon*, January 1943, 8; January 1944, 3.
[10]*The Beacon*, October 1942, 19.
[11]*The Beacon*, October 1942, 8.
[12]*The Beacon*, October 1942, 11.
[13]*The Beacon*, October 1942, 16.
[14]*The Beacon*, October 1942, 6.
[15]*The Beacon*, June 1943, 7.
[16]*The Beacon*, June 1943, 13.
[17]*The Beacon*, January 1944, 16.
[18]*The Beacon*, October-November 1943, 22.
[19]*The Beacon*, November-December 1942, 12.
[20]*The Beacon*, July 1943, 10.
[21]*The Beacon*, October 1942, 12.
[22]*The Beacon*, January 1943, 2.
[23]*The Beacon*, October-November 1943, 27.
[24]*The Beacon*, October 1942, 8.
[25]*The Beacon*, October 1942, 18.
[26]*The Beacon*, January 1943, 9.
[27]*The Beacon*, January 1943, 18.
[28]*The Beacon*, October 1942, 16.
[29]*The Beacon*, July 1943, 18.
[30]*The Beacon*, July 1943, 11.
[31]*The Beacon*, January 1943, 10; July 1943, 13-14.
[32]*The Beacon*, January 1943, 10; April 1943, 8; July 1943, 14-15; September 1943, 19.
[33]*The Beacon*, April 1943, 17.
[34]*The Beacon*, February 1943, 20; August 1943, 14.
[35]*The Beacon*, January 1944, 5.
[36]*The Beacon*, January 1943, 10; March 1943, 16; October-November 1943, 7.
[37]*The Beacon*, April 1943, 13.
[38]*The Beacon*, June 1943, 11.
[39]*The Beacon*, April 1943, 19; January 1944, 5.
[40]*The Beacon*, August 1943, 4.
[41]*The Beacon*, January 1943, 13.
[42]*The Beacon*, October 1942, 9, 17.
17.
[43]*The Beacon*, October 1942, 9; November-December 1942, 6; March 1943, 22; October-November 1943, 22.
[44]*The Beacon*, October 1942, 9; August 1943, 7.
[45]*The Beacon*, April 1943, 19.
[46]*The Beacon*, October 1942, 7.

Sunday morning worship and Sunday School at camp Q6.

Alternative Service Work in the B.C. Forest Service

A Survey of Documents in Government Archives

by A. J. Klassen

When Japan entered World War II in 1941, "the possibility of forest fire emergencies which might arise as a result of enemy attack with incendiary air-borne missiles was stressed. . . ."[1] Since this was deemed to be a matter of national importance, the Federal Government agreed to allocate a minimum of 1000 Alternative Service Workers for B.C. Forestry Service.

> These men started arriving in May (1942), were dispersed in camps throughout the Lower Mainland and Vancouver Island forest areas and were thoroughly trained and organized for forest fire-fighting.[2]

In October, at the close of the fire-season, B.C. Forest Service reported that the men had already done:

> fall planting, felled snags and opened up old railroad grades in preparation for the tree-planting to be done in spring. The programme called for the planting of approximately 7,000,000 trees at Menzies Bay, Loveland Lake, Quinsam Lake, Lower Campbell Lake, Bowser, Timberlands, Hill 60 and the Robertson River Valley.[3]

Skeletons of trees, sometimes broken or charred, left standing after logging or accidental fire, were referred to as "snags." Felling and cutting these trees into fuel for general consumption "fire-proofed" the area by eliminating a potential fire-hazard, an essential stage of preparation for reforestation.

The ASW camps were funded by the Federal Department of Mines and Resources under agreement negotiated between the Province and the Dominion Government, dated April 29, 1942.[4]

> Payments from the Dominion Government were based on an allowance at a fixed rate per man-day. From May to December, 1942, 740 men reported for duty. This total has since been decreased somewhat through discharges for medical and other reasons, extended leaves, etc., but, all factors considered, the number of men made available has been very satisfactory.
>
> Throughout the early part of the season, crews in project camps were fully trained in fire-fighting measures, and in hazardous periods later in the season placed on stand-by as initial action suppression crews. In non-hazardous periods, crews carried out fire-protection improvement-work.
>
> The plan has worked out very satisfactorily, and, aside from the actual fire-fighting work carried out, much valuable and essential forest-protection improvement work has been accomplished. Snag-falling and fire-proofing of logged-over lands, together with opening up of the larger of these areas for forest-protection access by means of conversion of old grades into truck-trails or rough roads, constituted the main effort in improvement-work carried out.[5]

The Hon. A. Wells Gray, Minister of Lands, Victoria, not only listed some of the work accomplished by the COs, but also recognized their motivation.

> These workers (COs) are young men of military age whose religious convictions forbid their bearing arms. At the same time, contrary to the common conception of conscientious objectors, most of them are not only willing but anxious to be doing something of national importance in the present emergency, and their record in B.C. during the past summer bears out this fact.[6]

The following year, the Report of the Forest Branch stated:

> The agreement with the Dominion Government, under which a number of Alternative Service Workers were allotted to forest-work, was renewed for a year from April 1, 1943. These men proved of great value in the conservation of forest resources and were of distinct assistance.[7]
>
> Considering the general shortage of labour, it is remarkable that the reforestation programme was able to maintain its schedule. This would not have been possible but for the labour supplied by the Alternative Service Workers. These men worked well and in addition to doing the actual planting in the field, they felled snags, opened up old railroad grades at truck-roads, collected cones and assisted with lifting operations in the nurseries.
>
> A mobile ten-man crew of Alternative Service Workers spent approximately one month in each of the five island parks during the winter of 1942-43. Much valuable improvement-work was accomplished, such as erection of park attendants' quarters; cleaning up snags, brush and stumps; building of toilets at parking-grounds; establishment of change-houses and toilets at swimming-pools; the protection of natural features by ditches or rock barriers; the installation of covered garbage-pits and wood piles; construction of new fireplaces, tables and signs; and planting of shade-trees on parking-grounds.[8]

A summary and evaluation of that year's work states:

> The Alternative Service Workers extinguished or assisted on 89 fires in the Vancouver Forest District. Exceedingly satisfactory results marked their efforts on outbreaks attacked while still small. These crews attacked 72 small fires (1 acre or less) with such success that the average spread per fire was only ¼ acre. Any one of these fires was potentially a destroyer which could have gained 4-inch headlines. . . . This is a real testimony for well-trained and equipped suppression crews standing on the alert in the emergency.[9]

In 1943, food production became necessary when supplies for the ASW camps were difficult to obtain. Consequently four ASW men raised vegetables for the camps on a rented 22-acre farm near Courtenay, designated as Camp "F".

Several 3-man units based in Camp "M" near agricultural communities were authorized by the Emergency Farm Labour Bureau Service and the ASW officer to assist in local harvesting.[10]

The report entitled "Alternative Service Workers and Slash- and Snag-disposal" states that

> The ASW crews in the last two years have demonstrated the practicability of fire-proofing wide expanses of country by falling snags. The accompanying photographs depict the situation better than words.[11]

In 1944, the Forest Branch reported that the planting operations carried out in February and March on Crown lands comprised 7,108,200 trees on 9,175 acres, all done by ASW.[12]

The 1944 assessment of the ASW function as "Fire Suppression Crews," reads as follows:

> The ASW were not required to work with the idea of making good on the job and continuing in the work to rise to positions of greater responsibility. Neither was their 50-cents-per-day wage much encouragement in doing a job well. . . . The work performed under the circumstances was surprisingly satisfactory.[13]

A. Wells Gray, Minister of Lands and Forests described the effectiveness of the AS workers in fighting fires in the B.C. Forestry Service. In a letter to Justice A. M. Manson, Chairman of the Mobilization Board, Division "K", he wrote:

> By way of illustration in this regard, it might be noted that the average elapsed time between report of a fire and departure of a fully equipped crew from the trained camps last summer was less than three minutes. A surprise test of a trained "stand-by" crew gave the following results:
>
> Test fire started ..... 3:00 p.m.
> Smoke reported by
> Lookout ..... 3:03 p.m.
> Crew started for fire ... 3:05 p.m.
> Arrived at fire
> (11 miles by road) ... 3:22 p.m.
> Fire extinguished ..... 3:27 p.m.
> Crew arrived back
> at camp ..... 3:54 p.m.
>
> This 'preparedness feature' constitutes the principal value of these camps and it cannot be compensated for under any other manpower plan. . . . They (i.e., A.S. men) have served a function of great national importance and will continue to do so in these camps. The need is as urgent as ever and they cannot be replaced.[14]

An article in the Victoria *Times* contrasted this effort with that of untrained crews:

> This is in strong contrast to the three to six hours lost in recruiting casual labor, and has made the organized crews, immediately at hand, three times as effective.[15]

When the federal government announced the termination of its agreement with B.C., effective March 31, 1944, the Victoria *Times* featured an article which stated that

> Withdrawal of conscientious objectors from the B.C. forestry camps on Selective Service orders returning them to their farms, will cost the provincial forestry branch the most effective fire fighting service it has ever had.[16]

A summary of major accomplishments by Alternative Service Workers in B.C. from May 4, 1942 to March 31, 1944 was compiled by Forester H. G. McWilliams as follows:[17]

Camp Q3 crew, Campbell Lake, Vancouver Island.

SUMMARY OF MAJOR PROJECT WORK
May 4th, 1942 - March 31st, 1944

Fire Fighting		
Number of fires fought		234
Number of man-days on fire fighting		8,470
Number of man-days on training and standby		4,875
Snag Falling		
Man-days		41,910
Acres cleared of snags	44,115	
Number of snags felled 10"	431,002	
Number of snags felled -- 10"	159,105	
Total snags felled	590,107	
Total basal area square ft. 10"	1,031,34	
Average basal area per man-day	24	
Farm Aid		
Man-days		840
A.S.W. Farm		
Man-days		1,900
Reforestation and Nurseries		
Acres planted	21,520	
Number of trees planted	17,006,550	
Man-days nursery work		8,395
Bushels of cones collected	1,050	
Man-days planting trees		22,820
Road Construction		
New roads (miles)	21.2	
Existing roads improved (miles)	154.5	
Railway grades converted to roads	123.5	
Number of culverts built	625	
Number of bridges built	38	
Man-days on roads and trails		51,420
Trail Construction		
New trails (miles)	16.3	
Existing trails improved (miles)	29.2	
Telephone Line Construction		
New line (miles)	25.7	
Existing line improved (miles)	8.5	
Man-days		1,210
Fuel Production (Fuel Control Board)		
Cordwood produced (cords)	11,273	
Millwood produced (cords)	611	
Man-days on cordwood		22,660
Man-days on millwood recovery		190
Miscellaneous Projects		
Man-days		6,660
Total man-days, effective project work (54%)		171,450
Total man-days, May 4, 1942 to March 31, 1944		319,308

Obviously, the work of conscientious objectors in ASW camps was appreciated by the B.C. government, which was reluctant to release them even though the threat of fires due to enemy attacks no longer existed.

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[1]*Report of the Forest Branch*, Department of Lands (B.C.), 1942, FF 54.
[2]*Report of the Forest Branch*, 1942, FF 5.
[3]*Report of the Forest Branch*, 1942, FF 20.
[4]*Report of the Forest Branch*, 1942, FF 47.
[5]*Report of the Forest Branch*, 1942, FF 54.
[6]*Vancouver Sun*, October 29, 1942.
[7]*Report of the Forest Branch*, 1943, BB 5.
[8]*Report of the Forest Branch*, 1943, BB 17-18.
[9]*Report of the Forest Branch*, 1943, BB 45.
[10]*Report of the Forest Branch*, 1943, FF 54.
[11]*Report of the Forest Branch*, 1943, BB 56.
[12]*Report of the Forest Branch*, 1944, DD 23.
[13]*Report of the Forest Branch*, 1944, DD 57.
[14]Letter: Gray to Manson, February 11, 1943, File No. 601.3 (12) S.S.D. Quoted in J. A. Toews, *Alternative Service in Canada*, 105-106.
[15]*Times* (Victoria), March 18, 1944, 2.
[16]*Times* (Victoria), March 18, 1944, 2.
[17]Letter of June 15, 1956 from R. G. McKee, Assistant Chief Forester to J. A. Toews, quoted in Toews, *Alternative Service in Canada*, 88.

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Book Reviews

Louise Hawkley and James C. Juhnke, eds., *Nonviolent America: History through the Eyes of Peace.* North Newton: Bethel College, 1993. Pp. 275. ($15.00) ISBN 0-9630160-1-6.

Nonviolent America, the outgrowth of a 1992 conference at Bethel College, challenges American historians to rethink radically the interpretive framework of U.S. history "in the light of the values of peace" (p. vii). James C. Juhnke of Bethel College set the tone with his opening address, "Manifesto for a Pacifist Reinterpretation of American History." Recalling John Howard Yoder's and Gordon Kaufman's similar challenge to the historical profession in the 1960s, Juhnke laments that the challenge went largely unanswered. The "nationalistic orthodoxy" with its "integral linking of violence and freedom" still reigns. But he sees favorable omens: the rise of peace studies and the new social history, the greater attention to marginalized groups, the erosion of the military-political paradigm.

Juhnke also welcomes the emergence of historical relativism for "open[ing] windows of credibility for alternative viewpoints" (p. 6). This latter point is somewhat ironic, since Juhnke's own philosophy of history is hardly relativistic: "An Anabaptist historian," he declares, "is one for whom the Christ-event is normative. The life, teaching, death and resurrection of Jesus constitute the event in terms of which all other events, including the events of American history, are judged" (pp. 9-10).

A peace-centered history, he asserts, would affirm human freedom: history is not simply the clash of irresistible forces; individuals and societies can choose to avoid war. Yet he also recognizes central challenges. Peace historians, like the new social historians, must find strategies for bringing to their work the narrative drive that gave old-fashioned military-political history such power. And pacifist historians must confront the moments when oppressed groups have resorted to war or violence to assert their just rights. Balancing the claims of peace and justice is no easier for pacifist historians than it has been for pacifist theologians.

Responding to Juhnke's manifesto, Charles Chatfield of Wittenberg College praises its many strengths while subtly modifying Juhnke's formulation of the "Christ-event." After recounting his own religious odyssey (including worship with Baptist, Methodist, Quaker, Presbyterian, and United Church of Christ groups), Chatfield observes (p. 20):

> The Christ-event and Christian faith is something to which a person comes, something which people find in their histories, a discovery that locates them in a community of faith. It is not something to be imposed on human beings or on human history. Ultimately, then it is not ours as historians to impose the Christ-event on history in order to retain our distinctive faith. Rather it is ours to respond to the Christ-event as we construct our histories.

In Chapter 3, "The Burden and Discipline of Evangelical Revisionism," John Howard Yoder echoes Juhnke's rejection of historical determinism. Human freedom permits choices, he argues, and thus alternative outcomes were possible at every juncture of American history. In Yoder's incisive words:

> History matters because moral choices are not only real but important; they make a difference for how the world is to go and what is to happen to our neighbors. Therefore the writing of history, when rightly done, ought to somehow render the decisiveness of the choices people make. Yet often the historian . . . lay[s] over events the grid of an explanatory cause/effect connectedness such that things really had to go the way they finally did (pp. 23-24).

After these opening forays, *Nonviolent America* goes in a variety of directions, presumably illustrating the forms a peace-centered historiography might take. William E. Unrau recounts the violence against the Native Americans of Kansas; James O. Lehman discusses the complex responses of Anabaptists to the Civil War; and Stephen L. Longenecker documents the spread of mutual tolerance among the early Pennsylvania Germans.

Kenneth Ives, in an exercise in counterfactual speculation, argues that the Civil War might have been avoided had only the compromise-minded Constitutional Union Party won the 1860 election. While such "what if" scenarios offer a useful corrective to historical determinism, they can be treacherous. In this instance, Robert G. Clouse's response to Ives notes his scant attention to the larger factors that shaped the outcome of the fateful 1860 election.

Another boldly speculative essay, Ivan J. Kauffman's "Democracy, Nonviolence, and the American Experience,"

argues in broad-brush terms that Christianity introduced a non-hierarchical "network" mode of organizing power in contrast to the "pyramid" structures of the ancient world, and that this led ultimately to democracy. War, he further contends, is fundamentally alien to the democratic principle. Ted Koontz offers a penetrating critique of Kauffman's "pyramid/network" paradigm, pointing out, for example, that it was *democracies* that contributed the concept of "total war" to the long history of human conflict.

Two authors focus on peace heroes of the past. Donald Durnbaugh offers case studies of three men who stood up for peace during World War I: Maurice Hess, Henry J. Cadbury, and Henry Peter Krehbiel. Valarie H. Ziegler, linking peace history and feminist history, sketches the careers of three peace advocates: Julia Ward Howe, Charlotte Perkins Gilman, and Jane Addams.

Yet these two essays, useful as they are, raise questions. If peace history is to win a hearing, it must avoid mere advocacy and maintain a critical dimension. Theron F. Schlabach makes this point in his critique of Durnbaugh's essay, which poses penetrating questions about the ideologies of Hess, Cadbury, and Krehbiel, and probes the general relevance of the World War I experience. Similarly, Ziegler's story might appear more complex if one explored Howe's support of the Civil War (including her authorship of the war's anthem, "The Battle Hymn of the Republic"); Gilman's racism and nativism; and Addams' complex relations with pragmatists like John Dewey who supported the war. Further, Addams spent 1917-1918 lecturing for Herbert Hoover's Food Administration to increase farm output—thereby indirectly supporting the war effort. My point is that peace history becomes most interesting not when it celebrates neglected pacifists—a worthy effort, to be sure—but when it grapples deeply with the complex, ambiguous texture of actual historical experience.

Non-pacifist historians may find particularly provocative the essays of Ken Brown and William E. Juhnke. Brown, applying just-war doctrine to World War II, concludes that the United States flunked both the "last resort" and "proportionality" tests, first by not pursuing all avenues of negotiation with the Japanese, and then in the terror bombing of civilians. Brown trenchantly criticizes Michael Walzer, who in *Just and Unjust Wars* (1977) concluded that World War II *did* meet the just-war criteria.

In the same iconoclastic vein, William Juhnke imaginatively shows how President Truman's atomic-bomb decision can be used to spur class discussions of war-peace issues, in the process exhibiting a close familiarity with current scholarship. (Teachers who follow his suggestion and stage a mock classroom trial of Truman as a war criminal might secure as defense attorney David Awbrey, editorial writer of the *Wichita Eagle*, whose contribution to *Nonviolent America* is summed up in its title: "Thank God for the Bomb.")

Carol Hunter also focuses on pedagogy in her fine essay "Teaching Peace Issues in U.S. Survey Courses." Hunter offers a telling critique of U.S. history textbooks, noting—among other failings—their generic similarity, their bland and sanitized version of the past, their focus on power and conflict, and their neglect of missed opportunities and options not chosen.

After these fascinatingly diverse historical forays, the volume ends by again addressing James Juhnke's proposed pacifist rewriting of American history. Charles Chatfield confronts Reinhold Niebuhr's argument, advanced on the eve of World War II (and recently restated by Guenter Lewy), that pacifism, however admirable as an individual moral stance, is irrelevant to the actions of nation-states, which are amoral. Chatfield vigorously rejects this marginalizing of pacifists: non-resistance remains a vital part of U.S. history, he insists, precisely because "it documents the reality of individual moral choice" (p. 253).

Duane Friesen's concluding chapter, which is something of a sermon, further criticizes the Niebuhr/Lewy "realistic" approach and reminds us that throughout history the "marginal" figures who stood alone against the mass have often ultimately emerged as the most influential and memorable historical actors.

Friesen also reiterates a point made by other contributors, including Rachel Waltner Goossen in her essay "Feminist Historiography and Teaching Peace": to incorporate a "peace perspective" into U.S. history teaching is not just to criticize the nation's propensity for war, or to laud peace heroes, or even to judge the past by a pacifist yardstick. It can also entail closer attention to a wide range of activities by individuals and groups, whether explicitly pacifist or not, who have worked for a more just, equitable, humane, and less conflict-ridden society and world. In furthering this project, *Nonviolent America* is part of a larger process that has been underway in American historiography for several decades, but that still has a long way to go. This book deserves a broad audience for the serious issues it addresses.

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Elfrieda Toews Nafziger, *A Man of His Word: A Biography of John A. Toews.* Winnipeg: Kindred Press & Centre for Mennonite Brethren Studies, 1992. Pp. 183. ($11.50) ISBN 1-895432-18-9

John A. Toews (1912-1979) was an important Mennonite Brethren leader and historian, and this biography by his daughter Elfrieda is a helpful recounting of his life and times. While the book presents a largely coherent, balanced, chronological account of Toews' life, and is well worth reading, it also has a number of weaknesses, including an inability to rise above petty detail to give the reader a deeper appreciation of Toews' intellectual makeup and abiding concerns.

The book opens with a good (if limited) discussion of Toews' Russian Mennonite origins, the wider Russian context, and central influences in his early years, like his experience in the Lichtfelde Allianz Gemeinde, a church in which his father was pastor and which sought to rebuild bridges between the Mennonite Brethren and the larger Russian Mennonite body. The book goes on to tell the story of the Toews family's migration to Canada and the difficult early years of settlement during drought and depression. The conditions in which individuals like Toews were able not only to survive, but also gain an education and become involved in church work, were very difficult, and it is this portion of the story which makes for some of the most interesting reading in the book.

Toews received a Bachelor of Theology from Tabor College in 1940, and a B.A. in History from the University of Saskatchewan in 1947, at which point he was appointed to teach history at the Mennonite Brethren Bible College in Winnipeg, Manitoba. Toews eventually went on to complete M.A. and Ph.D. degrees (the latter when in his 50's), and he served as president of MBBC and moderator of the General Conference of Mennonite Brethren, as well as on numerous boards and committees, some with an inter-Mennonite or peace orientation. He was a leading figure in a generation of strong-willed and hard-working men and women, a generation toughened by dislocation and difficult economic times, and strengthened by a strong biblical faith.

The text recounts the many and varied challenges faced by Toews, and doesn't draw back from indicating the flaws and weaknesses in temperament which are inevitable in all human beings, particularly those who struggle through difficult and changing times. The author studiously refrains from committing the primary sin of biographies by descendants of the subject, that of neglecting to confront the weaknesses of their subject. Through it all Toews emerges as a principled, humane individual.

On the other hand, the book fails when it comes to providing a rich, multifaceted understanding of Toews, becoming instead at far too many places a cross between family history and a chronicle of names, dates, and places—whom Toews visited, when and where he went, what he saw. The reader learns about every major conference and family event, every trip and sojourn among the "Brotherhood," but relatively little about Toews as religious thinker, scholar, and historian. The man did have four academic degrees, after all, and wrote a major history of the Mennonite Brethren church, as well as important and widely-read treatises on the historic Anabaptist-Mennonite peace position.

The book does contain brief discussions of Toews' many concerns—with the maintenance and reinvigoration of the peace position, with the recovery (a la Bender) of the "Anabaptist Vision," and with inter-Mennonite cooperation, among other things. However, these and other important elements of Toews' life and work are never really delved into in any detail, and are only summarily woven into the larger story of Brethren struggles with faith and life in the first two-thirds of this century. Thus, for example, there is barely any mention of the Germanism issue, which dominated the early years of MBBC and which exercised the larger Canadian Brethren constituency from the 1930's through the 1960's. As a fluently bilingual man, familiar with Russian Brethren values and yet young enough to adapt to the North American scene, Toews was an important transitional figure for the Brethren, and much more could have been made of this as a defining element in his "ministry." As it is, the subtitle "A Man of His Word" is accurate, but is not developed thematically, and is far too general to really give much insight into just who this man was.

Furthermore, Toews' formative interaction with the likes of J. F. Harms, William Aberhart, and Harold S. Bender, not to mention Brethren patriarch B. B. Janz, are barely touched upon. Toews moved among interesting and important figures, and it would have been enlightening to learn more about his relationship with them and their effect upon him. A greater attempt to delve into Toews' confrontation with minds equal to his own would have helped to give the reader a better sense of Toews' intellectual and spiritual makeup. The reader learns nothing about his Masters' and Ph.D. theses, and remains largely uninformed about Toews' general intellectual concerns and aptitudes.

An issue which the author attempts to deal with, but at points falls victim to herself, is that of the marginalization of women in history. Thus, on page 3, Toews' aunt Sarah literally disappears from the page, in the midst of a description of what his father's siblings ended up doing. The author seems concerned with gender issues, but doesn't really confront the enormous sacrifices made by John's wife Nettie Toews in furthering, not to mention *maintaining*, John's career. More attention could have been given to her, and her role in providing the conditions in which someone like Toews could flourish. We learn very little about her. She spent long periods of time home alone with children, agreed to difficult relocations, and generally supported (both materially and emotionally) her husband. Yet on p. 135 we learn that in 1973 John was anxious for her to come along on a trip to South America, even though it would be at "his" expense. On the other hand, it does become clear that Nettie was her own person and mediated between John and the children with tact and love. Yet more attention to the dynamics of their relationship and gender issues at the time would have served to place Toews' busy schedule and achievements in their proper context, and thereby illuminate the dynamic whereby generations of such "great men" could emerge.

The foregoing criticisms should not obscure the fact that this is a credible book based on a good deal of research. The wider contextual issues are often at least mentioned, and an informative itinerary of its subject's life-journey is presented. The book takes its place on the shelf along with other short biographies like *With Courage to Spare*, John B. Toews' excellent treatment

of B. B. Janz, and should be read by interested Mennonite (particularly Brethren) laity and leadership alike.

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C. Norman Kraus, *God Our Savior: Theology in a Christological Mode.* Scottdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1991. Pp. 272. ($19.95) ISBN 0-8361-3551-2

While this book stands on its own as a complete theology, it also completes a two-volume systematic theology, in conjunction with Kraus's earlier *Jesus Christ Our Lord* (reviewed in *ML* 44.1 [March 1989]: 35-37). To give this volume a stand-alone status, the first chapter on christology is a summary of *Jesus Christ Our Lord.* Remaining chapters cover the classic categories. Chapter two deals with the nature of revelation, the Bible, inspiration and authority. Chapter three treats the character of God and trinitarian issues, while chapter four discusses the identity of humankind in the image of Christ. The fifth chapter deals with the Holy Spirit, followed by a discussion of ecclesiology in chapter six and eschatology in the final chapter. This review can only hint at the abundance of creative theologizing that the book contains.

The opening summary on Christology makes abundantly clear that the central affirmations concerning Jesus are that "the Jesus of Nazareth who died on the cross and whom God raised is the true disclosure of the way God is present and at work in the world," (24) and that "he shows us what it means to be fully human." (31) While Kraus does not characterize his approach as that of narrative Christology, it has a good deal of affinity for that category. Kraus depicts the incarnation in categories that come from the historical experience of the church rather than the Greek metaphysical categories in use after the church became institutionalized. (27-28) Kraus also states that the Greek philosophical language of the ecumenical creeds supplies the correct answer if the questions of Christology are posed in that framework.

Following the lead of Karl Barth, Kraus' theology is christocentric. Since the distinguishing claim of Christian faith is that God is revealed normatively in Jesus Christ (20), in each chapter Kraus makes plain how Christology shapes the theme of the chapter. The christological foundation of authority, for example, constitutes the context for Kraus's very effective analysis and critique of the classic rationalistic Protestant views on biblical inspiration, inerrancy, and authority.

Rather than dealing with God speculatively, Kraus approaches the knowledge of God through that which is disclosed in history, culminating in Jesus Christ. Thus the doctrine of the Trinity, which arose from the conviction that Jesus as savior shared in God's selfhood, is not a philosophical description of God's essence. It is rather a confession that the God known through Christ is revealed as an essential unity in the divine work, present already in the Old Testament, of creation, redemption, and judgment. For Anabaptists, this unity made it impossible to accept the separation of the justice of God and the grace of Jesus into distinct realms of church and state. (90-92)

In Kraus's interpretation of creation (treated in chapter 4), incarnation is the culmination of what was anticipated in creation, and thus Jesus Christ, rather than pre-fall Adam, is the fullest expression of the image of God. Jesus is thus the paradigm of authentic human existence which Christians are to emulate. (114-119)

Christocentricism is a very important component of Kraus's discussion of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit is not an individual deity in a triad, nor one part of God, (133) nor does the Spirit have a unique role—such as creation—not performed by the other persons of the Trinity. (136) Kraus argues very effectively for the "dynamic equivalence" (137) of the work of Holy Spirit and of Christ, so that the Spirit is the way in which the risen Christ, who reveals the face of God, continues to be present to believers after Christ's resurrection. (137-149)

Kraus points out, correctly, that while all Christian traditions claim Jesus Christ as Lord and center of faith, the way that confession is expressed through the church is what distinguishes the Anabaptist-Mennonite, believers church perspective (168-69). While the traditional Catholic ecclesiology gives visibility to the church through sacramental participation, and Protestant Orthodoxy defined the church's visibility in terms of preaching and nurturing functions, the Anabaptist, believers' church understands the church to be visible in the repentance and obedience of those who respond to the call of Christ (176). The church is thus a witness to the rule of God in the world (172-73), and is also seen as a social institution that can act as messianic agent of change as it

poses alternatives to worldly structures on a wide variety of issues (185-86).

Three sets of historical learnings give shape to this systematic theology. One is the set of distinctive Anabaptist-Mennonite concerns such as discipleship, the church as a visible community, peace and nonviolence. The second is the neo-orthodox theology which supplies Kraus's primary categories. Finally there is the world context and the need to think transculturally, concerns which Kraus developed while teaching in India and during the six years he spent in Japan after retiring from Goshen College.

The book was long in germination and flowers, and its discussion partners bespeak that length. Such names as Warfield, Barth, Brunner, Tillich, Aulen appear frequently rather than Moltmann, Pannenberg, Tracy, Lindbeck, Ricoeur, Frei, or Schüssler-Fiorenza. And the debate is primarily with liberals, evangelicals, and dispensationalists on issues like revelation, inspiration, biblical inerrancy, and eschatology, rather than about narrative theology, intratextualism, regulative principles, foundationalism, deconstructionism, and so on. Nonetheless, this is a fine book and must be taken seriously by the theological establishment as well as by church people. While it is clearly a work of serious theology, lay people might even find it the most accessible modern statement deserving to be called a Mennonite systematic theology.

Readers should deal with this book for what it is rather than what it is not. Kraus does not an attempt to borrow and reformulate as many concepts and terms as possible from a wide range of theological movements, so as to give an impression of having learned from and synthesized all theology. Kraus is committed to a christocentric theology, and he gently shows how that perspective challenges some movements and perspectives. Neither is this book an effort to reassure or convince Mennonites that their theological identity can or should merely repeat the theology of Protestant Orthodoxy. While he does not reject that theology outright, and his chapter titles show that he works within the classical outline, Kraus is willing to show how assumptions from the Anabaptist-Mennonite, believers church tradition will provide different perspectives from Protestant Orthodoxy on any number of issues.

This book occupies an important point in the development of Mennonite systematic theology. In one sense, this book belongs to the just eclipsing generation of Mennonite theology. In its historical sequence, it is the successor to J. C. Wenger's *Introduction to Mennonite Theology*, which in its turn was a holiness-oriented, warmly evangelical move away from the harder edges of Daniel Kauffman's fundamentalist-shaped *Doctrines of the Bible.* Kraus's theology was conceived at the height of the influence of neo-Orthodoxy on Mennonite thought. It makes a comprehensive synthesis of Mennonite theology from that perspective, offering an alternative both to liberalism and to the several versions of rationalistic Protestantism. Readers should deal with the book in terms of that content and intent, rather than critiquing it for not taking on a complete set of additional concepts, issues, and authors beyond those which originally shaped the book. Besides, as recent history has shown, if the book had appeared twenty years earlier, it might not have received the acceptance it so richly deserves.

Along with my great appreciation for this book, I might indicate four points of critique. First, in light of the effort to write a summary statement on Christology in order to make the book a stand-alone theology, I question the decision not to treat atonement in this volume. I would hope that the Herald Press editors would request a short chapter on that theme for a second edition.

Second, the treatment of the feminist critique of traditional God language seems too brief. While that agenda would not have been a primary issue when this book was first conceived, when it is treated, it merits more discussion than the two pages allotted to it. I would be particularly interested to see Kraus develop further Christological implications in relation to the metaphorical nature of all theological language, the feminine images of God in the Bible, and the Bible and western theology's dominant use of male metaphors. Even when we know that Kraus has his heart in the right place—he supports the full equality of women in all roles in the church—the footnote which explains that "he" when used for God is an "inclusive, gender-undetermined" pronoun (233,n45) does not assuage my accumulating uneasiness at reading of God in exclusively masculine terms throughout the book.

Third, the treatment of creation would be strengthened with more use of Enuma Elish, particularly in light of the intercultural agenda of the book. Specifically, depiction of the divine origin of earth and astral bodies given in the Enuma Elish, would strengthen Kraus's argument that the Genesis accounts identify all physical reality, including humankind, as creaturely, which means that only God is to be worshipped (107-09).

Fourth, the final chapter on eschatology would benefit considerably from more awareness of the historical context of the book of Revelation. Kraus makes a very effective statement about Jesus' resurrection as the first fruits (down payment) of the future Reign of God, and consequent result that Christians may both live and die without fear of death. Kraus argues quite correctly that the culmination of the Reign of God will not reveal characteristics or actions inconsistent with the normative revelation of God in Christ—such as a future, violent overthrow and submission of the forces of evil (171). However, while clearly cautioning against seeing apocalyptic writings as a calendar to the future, Kraus does deal with the future culmination in terms of coded predictions, whose meaning we cannot decipher because God's kairotic time differs from our chronological time. The argument would be both strengthened and somewhat recast, if the discussion looked at Revelation in terms of the social context in which it was originally written.

These points of critique reveal, if the point needs to be made, that no theology is ever really completed. Thus discussion of these points can supply the impetus for dealing gratefully with this fine piece of systematic theology for the modern Mennonite churches.

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