

OTHER FOUNDATION CAN NO MAN LAY THAN THAT IS LAID, WHICH IS JESUS CHRIST

THE MENNONITE

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an urgent call for prophets

From Isaiah 6; from Acts 1, 2; from Vietnam; from America

Peter J. Ediger

In the fourth year of the reign of Lyndon Johnson as President of the United States, when the war in Vietnam was being escalated day by day, the Word of the Lord came with an urgent call for prophets.

Whom shall I send?
Who will speak for me?

And the people in America gathered weekly, as their custom was, in their houses of worship.

And they sang their hymn of praise,
Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts;
the whole earth is full of His glory.

And they thought, "Especially America."

And they said,
"Good for us, for we are saved.
For we are a religious people,
and we dwell in the midst of a righteous nation,
for we have been greatly blessed of the Lord."

And in that same country
in the state of Colorado, City of Arvada,
the sons of Menno were also gathered together.
And it came to pass, while they were worshipping
that the Word of the Lord came to them,
and the Spirit of the Lord shook them.

And the Lord said,
Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts;
the whole earth is full of his glory:
Except Vietnam, which is full of hell, hell, hell.

And much of this hell is imported,
and bears the trademark, "Made in America."
And some of this American-brand hell is hot
and falls from the skies in flaming sheets of napalm.
And some of this American-brand hell is cold—
cold and hard and sharp as steel.
And the hot hell and the cold hell work well together.
One will get what the other misses.
And those who escape the Saigon-American-brand hell
may get the hell from Hanoi.

And the sons of Menno,
gathered for worship in the house of the Lord
were disturbed at the sound of these words.
It had been some time since they had heard a hell-fire
napalm sermon.

And some were offended.

But the Word of the Lord continued, "Are you offended at those words? Isaiah, the prophet, spoke of people like you when he said,

Hear and hear, but do not understand;
see and see, but do not perceive.
Make the heart of this people fat,
and their ears heavy,
and shut their eyes;
lest they see with their eyes,
and hear with their ears,
and understand with their hearts,
and turn and be healed. . . .
Until cities lie waste

without inhabitant,
and houses without men,
and the land is utterly desolate.

And the Lord said to the sons of Menno gathered for
worship in the House of the Lord,

Whom shall I send?
Who will speak for me?

And the sons of Menno said,
Don't send me, Lord.

I don't know enough of the facts.
Who am I to pass judgment on our policy in Vietnam?
Don't expect me to protest, Lord.
Don't send me, Lord.

I won't go.
Besides, Lord, how do I know this is really You
speaking?

Now that I think about it, it probably isn't.

After all, there are plenty of ministers
blessing our efforts in Vietnam.

Surely you wouldn't disagree with Billy Graham
on this matter, would you, Lord?

Really, Lord, can't you tone down on Vietnam?
Why do you keep bothering us, the sons of Menno?
Can't you let us live in comfort and peace?

And the Lord said,

Sons of Menno

Do you think you are the only ones
through whom I speak?

Indeed you are not!

For I have prophets in many traditions,
sons of Luther and sons of Rome
sons of Calvin and sons of Wesley and sons of
Abraham

and even sons who name no sacred name,
who say they know me not,
who yet are speaking my Word on Vietnam.

Sons of Menno,

and sons of my son Jesus the Christ!

If you do not speak my Word
there are and always will be others.

Hear these words spoken by Erich Fromm:

I join with the many for whom our religious and
humanistic tradition is still alive by saying:
stop killing. Stop it now or we will lose the
capacity to ever stem the tide of death and
dehumanization. And do not forget that we are dealing
not only with what is going on in Southeast Asia.

We are dealing with what is going on in our own midst,
in the increasing violence at home, the brutal killings
in individual cases, and the ruthless destructiveness of
juvenile gangs. How do we expect our young generation
to respect life, if they daily witness destruction
taking place with the consent of their elders? There is
only one hope to stop the wave of violence, and that

is to become sensitive once more to all that is alive.

Can you hear my Word in these words, sons of Menno?
Or are you also growing deaf?

Are your eyes open, sons of my son Jesus?

Then did you see that headline article
in the March 24 issue of the *Denver Post*?

Sons of Jesus! Did you see that headline
and read that article?

SCORCHED EARTH DRIVE FANS FLAMES OF HATE

The Vietnamese woman ignored the crying baby in her
arms. She stared in hatred as the American infantrymen
with shotguns blasted away at chickens and ducks.

Others shot a water buffalo and the family dog.

While her husband, father, and young son were led
away, the torch was put to the hut that still contained
the family belongings. The flames consumed everything.

"Man, she'd cut you to pieces for a dime," one GI said.

"No, she'd pay 100 piasters an inch just to slit your
throat," another said.

The Americans were acting under orders: destroy every-
thing . . . remove all civilians who could give the enemy
a helping hand. . . .

The GI's didn't have much stomach for the job, but
orders were orders. The job was done in an area involving
more than 100 square miles.

"God, my wife would faint if she could see me now," an
infantryman said. "Killing ole Charlie [Vietcong] is one
thing, but killing puppies and baby ducks and stuff like that
—it's something else, man."

Sons of Jesus!

Are you hearing what he's saying?

Are you seeing what you're doing?

Sons of Menno, answer me!

Do you hear me? Answer me!

And the sons of Menno

gathered together for worship in the house of the Lord
shook at the sound of the voice of the Lord.

And they said,

Woe to us, for we are lost.

for we are men of silent unspeaking lips

and we dwell in the midst of a people of silent

unspeaking lips,

for we have heard the voice of the Lord

but have not spoken his Word.

II

In the fourth year of the reign of Lyndon Johnson
as President of the United States,

when the war in Vietnam was being escalated day by day,
the Word of the Lord came
with an urgent call for prophets.

Whom shall I send?
Who will speak for me?

And in that same country
in the state of Colorado, City of Arvada,
the sons of Menno were gathered together for worship.

And the sons of Menno said,
Lord, will you at this time
restore the Christian church?
Will you soon come
to set things right here on earth?

And the Lord said,
It is not for you to know times or seasons
which are in the hands of the Father.
But you shall receive power
when the Holy Spirit has come upon you;
and you shall be my witnesses in Denver
and in all America and to the end of the earth.

And when the day of the outpouring of the Spirit of God
had come, they were meeting together for worship. And
like a gust of wind, the Spirit of God came upon them
and freed their tongues to speak the Word of God.
And the people who heard them were amazed and
perplexed. Some listened and said,

This makes a lot of sense.

But others, mocking, said
They're a bunch of kooks—
a bunch of commie kooks.

Then Peter, standing with the congregation,
lifted up his voice and addressed them,

Citizens of America, give ear to my words!
For these people are not kooks, as you suppose.
For this is what was spoken by the prophets:
And in the last days, it shall be, God declares,
that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh,
and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy,
and your young men shall see visions,
and your old men shall dream dreams;
yea, and on my menservants and my maidservants
I will pour out my Spirit, and they shall prophesy.

Citizens of America, hear these words!
Two thousand years ago
Jesus the Christ came speaking the Word of God.
He was himself the Word—the Way, the Truth,
the Life.
But our fathers could not face the truth.
They killed Him.
But truth cannot be killed, and Christ is still alive.

Fellow citizens, I tell you the truth!
Today we go on killing truth and crucifying Christ.
Christ dies a hundred times a day in Vietnam.
Christ dies a thousand times a day in America
where weapons of destruction are mass produced
in efficient factories which keep the economy strong.
Christ dies a thousand times a day in America
where the will to kill is fanned into flame
by many winds of demonic doctrines
blowing from poisonous pens and blasphemous pulpits.
But let all men know, including you, Americans,
that Jesus Christ is Lord!
That though we keep on killing Him
in the killing of our brothers,
He always rises
and He comes to haunt us or to judge us—
or, if we will, to save us.

Now when they heard this Word
they said to Peter and the rest of the sons of Menno,
Brothers, what shall we do?

And Peter said to them,
Repent! Repent and start following this Jesus
in whose name you have been baptized!
Repent! Repent and change your way of thinking
about the world and its people.
Repent! Repent or perish!
For they who take the bombs will die by the bombs!
Repent! Repent for the promise is still to you
and to all the children of men.

III

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as President of the United States,
when the war in Vietnam was being escalated day by day,
the Word of the Lord came
with an urgent call for prophets.

Whom shall I send?
Who will speak for me?

And the sons of Menno
gathered for weekly worship
heard the Word of the Lord.
And the sons of Menno said
And the sons of Menno said
What did they say?

The Case of the Gold-plated Refrigerator

Jacob T. Dick

MOST CITIZENS IN America are in debt. The total personal debt in our country is \$264 billion. It is alarming that in the past decade personal bankruptcies have more than trebled. The percentage of the total personal income of Americans last year which went for installment payments was 15 percent.

Two families I know form an amazing contrast in their money management. Both have the same number of children, and both earn approximately the same income. The first family is always in financial difficulty; the other family always seems to have control.

Family *A* became a broad consumer, they enjoyed a steady income, and spent their earnings for the goods of life. With the demands for a house, car, insurance, major appliances, and children, it was too much for them to pay as they went. Credit was easily extended to them, and both the husband and wife carried several credit cards in their wallets.

The breaking point came when the new copper-tone refrigerator with the automatic ice-cube maker, and self-defrosting equipment was purchased. Actually, the total amount of their income that went for installment payments had steadily risen from 10 percent to 15 percent; then it soared to 30 percent, and just before the purchase of the refrigerator, their payments in fixed installments was 34 percent of their take-home pay.

They both decided they needed the refrigerator; it would be of service for years in their home; so they made the purchase. Credit was extended

by the department store and payments seemed easy. But the family did not read the fine print in the installment contract for the refrigerator. Later they figured out the true annual interest charges and discovered belatedly that they were paying 19.3 percent for use of the money.

Later that same year, Family *A* had a major emergency in sickness involving the mother of the home, and if the family doctor would not have been understanding in his willingness to wait for his fee, it could easily have meant that the refrigerator would have been lost because of failure to keep the payments current and the credit rating of the family weakened, if not ruined.

Family *B* kept a budget and believed in family money management. The minister who married them suggested that they keep a budget for the first five years of their married life, at least. They did this and found it so helpful that they continued it.

Out of this experience they had developed a solid credit rating, and with the ability to borrow money they had acquired goods and services that would have been impossible for their grandparents. They never allowed their installment payments to exceed 25 percent of their income, excluding their house payments. They were willing to go in debt when they both felt that the goods they were purchasing was a needed item now and could not wait until more cash was saved. They took seriously what Emerson said, "Pay every debt, as if God wrote the bill."

Family B took as a religious obligation the necessity to put into a fund money for a rainy day. They knew that emergencies were bound to arise, and they needed to be prepared for them if financial disaster was to be avoided.

This family was an intentional family; they were not driven by circumstances but were in charge of their money through sound management. The climax of the good feelings became strongest to the father one Sunday when he sat with his wife in church as the weekly church envelope was placed in the offering plate. He scratched a few deft words across the church bulletin, "It's great to be a partner with God in our money affairs."

Americans are learning that debt is neither good nor bad in itself, for there is responsible debt and there is irresponsible debt. Most of us take our debts seriously, for today's rate of delinquencies is only 1.58 percent. Roger Shinn believes that debt is wrong only if it overburdens a person and thus restricts his freedom, or if debt is incurred for self-indulgence, without the intent to pay it back.

Even to this day, moneylenders in the Middle East have a bad connotation; yet, Jesus has very strong words against the person who hoarded his money and buried it in the ground. He felt that money was to be used so that interest for profit would be gained. This concept implied that there are those who would borrow money, as well as those who would lend.

However, the Christian concept of moneylending was hazy for centuries. Even today in Germany, the word for debt is *schuld* meaning "guilt." In many countries consumer credit and debt have remained pre-Calvin—pre-Calvin because there was a definite change in attitudes of the church leaders in his time. Luther, for example, speaking on usury said, "The greatest misfortune of the German nation is easily the traffic of interest . . . the devil invented it, and the Pope, by giving his sanction to it,

has done untold evil throughout the world."

But Calvin felt that money was to be loaned and that good could come of it. He wrote in his *Institutes*, "No member holds his gifts to himself or for his private use, but shares them with his fellow members. . . ."

We are knee-deep in the post-Calvin era. Our government in America encourages us to be spenders and consumers. Most interest rates are tax deductible to encourage purchases. Private businesses also encourage us to be broad consumers, to borrow and buy and let the wealth flow through.

Family A came to a family counselor and asked for help before they got more deeply into financial trouble. They told the counselor about their "gold-plated refrigerator" and of their total financial situation.

The counselor impressed the family with the value of credit and the need to keep their credit rating strong. "Debt," said the counselor, "is a means to help acquire the goods of life when most needed. When used properly, it can be the means of enriching life, but principles must be followed." In his outline to the family the counselor made these helpful suggestions as guidelines to follow:

1. Shop for money on a pick-and-choose basis, just the same as you would for the refrigerator. Avoid shopping for money with the attitude that you are a victim of circumstances and that you must take money from the first place that will grant you the loan.

2. Borrow the smallest amount of cash that you must have and offer the best security you can produce.

3. Listen carefully to the financial adviser to know the true facts about your financial situation. He will tell you important facts about your income, your ability to repay, the amount that you can handle.

4. Then it is extremely important for you to know the true interest rate. Interest rates can be confusing, and you can secure help in calculating exactly what you will be paying. Know the exact terms upon which you are borrowing the money; then later on

there will be no misunderstanding.

A recent survey in a large Eastern city indicated that when families get into financial trouble only 9 percent seek professional help; 50 percent do nothing at all; 41 percent go to the merchant with whom they have the trouble.

We live in a nation where we are trained to be consumers in order to win respect from others and also self-respect. No longer do people gain the historic respect that educational achievement or occupational position used to bring. Now, people seek respect through what they consume. Consumers are urged to throw away many items that used to be saved. Pie pans, furnace filters, bottles, handkerchiefs are all to be thrown away. But more and more, the consumer is being protected through legislation. Standard marking and packaging of products is being required.

Some Americans can be criticized for going into debt too deeply, for buying now and paying later, but, on the other hand, they can also be praised for developing their credit rating and for building their equity and acquiring assets. Through wise borrowing they have bought homes, acquired an education, and seen the world. And the Christian has been able to give proportionately to the cause of Christ and His church as a responsible citizen of this world.

During one generation alone, vast changes regarding the use of money have swept the nation. In the last generation, the idea was that "money is to save," but now the concept is that "money is to spend and keep in circulation" for the health of the economy as well as for the betterment of each individual. The main goal of an individual should be that his money is spent in a Christian way. In his spending, instead of hoarding, he will want his firstfruits (at least 10 percent) to go "on the first of the week into the Lord's treasury" and with this type of dedication, he will find guidance to use the other 90 percent for an abundant life for others, his family, and himself within the plan of God.

NEWS

Mennonites Discover Each Other and the World

ON JULY 23, THE Mennonite World Conference came back to Amsterdam.

The last world conference to be held in Amsterdam had met in 1936. War and peace had come and gone in the intervening forty-one years. Evidences were many that Mennonites both in America and Europe had grown more prosperous. But violence and injustice still troubled the Mennonite conscience.

The program of the eighth world conference was varied. It had something for everyone during the eight-day meeting. The main topic was the witness of the Holy Spirit.

When the last Mennonite World Conference was held in Europe the meetingplace was held in Karlsruhe, Germany. One hundred and ten North Americans attended that 1957 meeting.

Ten years later, two thousand persons from the United States and Canada registered for the Amsterdam conclave.

What had happened in the intervening years?

E. J. Swalm, Duntroon, Ont., and a member of the conference's presidium (general council), said, "We have more money now than we have ever had before." That seemed to be obvious. While special rates for transportation had been obtained, a trip to Europe was still expensive. But they came from all over.

"A spirit of travel is abroad," said Swalm, a leader in the Brethren in Christ Church.

C. J. Dyck, Elkhart, Ind., executive secretary of the conference mentioned a number of other factors. The 1962 world conference held in Kitchener, Ont., was strikingly successful. Twelve thousand attended, most of them North American.

"Things begin to snowball," said Dyck. "If one world conference has been happy, more people will come to the next one."

Aggressive promotion by travel agencies and enterprising individuals who chartered planes capitalized on the spirit of travel about which Swalm spoke. Not everything worked out as promised, but many were attracted and most were satisfied. For many,

the trip to the World Conference was the first they had made to Europe, and their first trip anywhere by plane. And not all of them were young people.

World conference leaders prepared a study booklet on the Holy Spirit theme which, according to Dyck, was distributed widely and sparked many church discussion groups.

Friendships and family ties served as a magnet to draw other people to Europe. After the 1962 conference, several groups of European Mennonites visited Mennonite communities in Canada and the United States. They were warmly received, which was gratifying to the hosts of five years later.

As an immigrant people, Mennonites, especially those who have come to America in recent decades still have close connections with relatives in Europe. Ten years ago, and even five years ago, financial conditions were less favorable. Publicity about the world conference tempted them to dip into their savings to go see the old folks (and some new ones) in the old countries.

Voluntary service programs and trainee exchanges have become established institutions in the last twenty years. William Dunn, administrator of the Mennonite Hospital, Bloomington, Ill., and David Schrag, administrator of the Meadows (Ill.) Home for the Aged, planned to visit in the homes of trainees that had served in their institutions during recent years.

And Mennonites are becoming interested in each other in general, as well as in each other as individuals. "Mennonites around the world have been estranged from one another," said George Brunk, Harrisonburg, Va. "Conferences like this help Mennonites discover each other. They help the world to discover the rather unique message that Mennonites can give to the world."

And on the first day, delegates got down to facing the world.

Delegates to the Mennonite World Conference have two decisions to make. They decide how the offerings taken at the evening and Sunday morning services are to be used. And

they approve the conference message which is sent from the conference to Mennonite congregations.

The offering schedule aroused little discussion at the Sunday evening meeting on July 22. Conference leaders had chosen a list of projects considered needy — Indians in South America, famine relief for India, aid to the Middle East, education in Indonesia, and a travel fund for delegates from Asia, Africa, and Latin America to future world conferences.

An offering for areas of special crisis was also suggested. Vietnam was given as an example. To this, one comment came from the delegate body. Stanley Bohn, Newton, Kan., suggested that the Vietnam offering be allotted for hospitals and medical aid in North Vietnam as an act of conscience.

But it was the discussion on the conference message that drew the most fire. The drafting committee working on the conference statement made three proposals. Two of them went largely ignored.

J. C. Wenger, Goshen, Ind., chairman of the committee, felt that a conference on the Holy Spirit should deal with renewal and with ecumenical dialogue.

"Are we concerned as a brotherhood for renewal in our congregations?" he asked.

And his second question: "Do we feel it is the will of Christ that we should give our witness to other Christians? Should we enter into dialogue?"

This latter was the ecumenical question. But ecumenicity or renewal drew no fire at the opening session. Delegates felt strange in the environment of Amsterdam's plush RIA convention center. The gathering of voting delegates (all persons attending the conference are delegates, but only a limited proportional group designated by their conferences have the right to vote) looked like a thousand people. Even the brave were reluctant to speak up in the strange surroundings.

But a handful dared to speak up on the third issue.

"Do we as peace-loving Mennonites want to say something about violence

The weight of the Spirit Equal to that of the Word

and injustice in many parts of the world?" asked Wenger.

"Yes," said a group of Dutch Mennonite pastors, a missionary to Vietnam, and others.

"No," said two delegates from Brazil.

For all of them, "violence and injustice" meant just one thing—Vietnam.

Several Dutch Mennonite pastors had prepared a statement expressing alarm about the escalation of the Vietnam war, suggesting a statement on Vietnam calling for the withdrawal of United States and North Vietnam troops, and replacing them with a United Nations peace-keeping force. The United Nations would also be asked to institute a massive relief effort.

The suggestion met resistance in varied degrees of intensity. The general direction of the proposal gained an equal amount of support.

Luke Martin, a missionary to Vietnam, agreed that Vietnam was crucial but that "it should not overshadow the conference." Rather, the conference should use the Vietnam issue as "a focal point to the needs in the other parts of the world so that other Vietnams will not happen again."

Henry Ens, Brazil, said that the conference was so diverse with people coming from so many different countries that they "stand on different sides."

He began his objection by saying, "In emphasizing this point, we give our conference a political flavor."

David Koop, another Brazilian, agreed. He asked, "What was Jesus concerned about? He was not concerned about politics." And since politicians in communist countries aren't influenced by political statements, it is pointless to speak.

But the drafting committee also heard comments in favor of a statement on Vietnam. The statement came up for consideration on Friday morning of the conference, July 28.

Other discussions at the opening session of the world conference dealt with future operations of the world conference. "Some people think that

Mennonite thinking through the years has put an equal emphasis on the Word and the Spirit. In this it has differed from both Catholic and Lutheran ideas which have emphasized one—the same one—above the other.

J. A. Oosterbaan told the Mennonite World Conference in Amsterdam, "Word and Spirit both are central: they are the two focal centers of . . . faith."

The Word covers two ideas: Christ

the world conference has had its time and should pass away," said Erland Waltner, Elkhart, Ind., conference president. "But others feel that its time has just come."

J. A. Oosterbaan, Amsterdam, vice-president of the conference, agreed that no one desired that the world conference become a large world bureaucratic organization.

"But, the world conference may need a stronger basis along with a stronger financial basis," said Oosterbaan.

Areas in which he felt that the world conference might make a contribution would be in world service such as missions and in the dialogue with other Christians.

Noting the growing participation of varied Christian groups including Roman Catholics in cooperative ventures, he asked, "Do we have a role in bringing the Mennonites into this growing dialogue? Should the world conference help in this direction?"

Oosterbaan received no immediate answer to his question. But the conference delegates actively supported a proposal that a travel fund be established to help delegates from Asia, Africa, and Latin America to attend future meetings of the organization.

Less than sixty representatives of the younger churches were among the more than five thousand people attending the conference. A vigorous effort had been made to secure their attendance. "Money is a problem," said C. J. Dyck, executive secretary of the conference.

In order to overcome the problem, the delegates agreed to support a voluntary travel fund.

and the Bible. And the Bible means "the essence of evangelism."

Oosterbaan, professor of theology at the University of Amsterdam, said, "By the Word of God, the Bible means the Son, who in the fullness of time has become a man, and who lived with us and has reconciled us to God."

And the understanding of the Word also included the gospel message of the Bible. "Not the literal form as it has been written down by finite people in finite words, but still the essential meaning and contents of the biblical message is generally called the Word of God in Christian faith," he said at the Monday sessions.

Christian thinking has not been clear about the relation between this Word and the Holy Spirit. Which has the most authority? Does a word from the Bible or an appeal to the teaching of Jesus Christ rule over the moving of the Holy Spirit? Or does the Holy Spirit give new light that goes beyond that which comes from the Scriptures and from Christ?

Both Roman Catholic and Lutheran positions have put the Spirit under the control of their understanding of Christ. Since Catholics see the pope as Christ's deputy on earth, "only he can give a legitimate and infallible explanation of the Bible." This gives the pope the power to regulate the Holy Spirit.

Luther had no use for the pope. He found the Spirit coming out of the Bible. "When the Word revealed itself to the reader and to the listener . . . then that was, according to Luther, the spirit working in the Word," said Oosterbaan.

But since the Bible is needed to find the Spirit, the Bible, even in Lutheran thinking, controls the Holy Spirit.

The same thing happens in modern doctrines which grow out of these Lutheran-Calvinist ideas and emphasize a literal interpretation of the Bible. "This doctrine tried to tie down the liberty of the Spirit as much as the Roman Catholic doctrine had done by means of purely ecclesiastical and papal authority," said Oosterbaan.

Politics haunts conference

"This was the reason the Bible has been called a paper pope."

The Anabaptists (the ancestors of the Mennonites) and their spiritual descendants — Baptists and the free church movement — have seen the Word and the Spirit working together. The Spirit brings understanding of the Word, and the Spirit completes the Word.

"The Spirit comes to every believer who prays for it because it is not only promised to priests and bishops. Rather, every believer is himself a priest and has access to understanding the Word when the Holy Spirit enlightens his mind," said Oosterbaan.

Conrad Grebel, the first leader of the Swiss Anabaptists testified that an understanding of the Scriptures came through special enlightenment and not through native human intelligence. Other Anabaptists agreed.

"Menno accorded a more independent place to the Holy Spirit than had been the case in Roman Catholic and Lutheran-Calvinist theology," said Oosterbaan.

But the inspiration of the Spirit does not move unchecked even according to the Anabaptists. "They saw the activity of the Spirit time and again in connection with the Word of the Scriptures."

And Oosterbaan noted the practical effect of this faith. "Because they relied on the Spirit, they did not need . . . creeds. Because they relied on the Word, they were not afraid of disruption in the congregations. . . . The liberty of the Spirit and the authority of the Word in the Bible were the two main characteristics of their faith and were also the deepest basis of the congregational structure."

Oosterbaan's address was the second major address given to the Mennonite World Conference. The first address was given by Erland Waltner, Elkhart, Ind., who spoke on the fellowship of the Holy Spirit. A condensation of this address was published in *The Mennonite*, Aug. 1.

Commenting on the theme of the conference, Waltner said, "The tragedy of these days would be that we should speak thousands of words about

While some delegates to the Mennonite World Conference were opposed to introducing political elements into a religious program, the spooks of political problems came in from several different directions and sat down all over the agenda.

First came the call of the roll of delegates. The secretary called the names of thirty countries which have Mennonite congregations.

Forty thousand Mennonites live in Russia. None were present to stand for their country. A Mennonite repre-

the Holy Spirit and as people avoid confrontation with the Holy Spirit."

Expressing a concern for the renewal of the church, he added that "formulas for renewal are many." He suggested that God was the primary source of renewal. "Renewal comes only with the words of the Renewer."

Arthur M. Climenhaga continued a study of the Spirit and the church in the conference's third major address. Bishop-elect of the midwest and Pacific conferences of the Brethren in Christ Church, he emphasized the need of a church to seek the leading of the Holy Spirit in its affairs.

"The church that is man-managed instead of Spirit-governed is doomed to spiritual failure," he said. "A ministry that is theologically trained but not Spirit-filled works no miracles. . . . It is possible to excel in mechanics and fail in dynamics. . . . And thus while man can supply the energy, enterprise, and enthusiasm for human organization, the real work of a church depends on the work of the Spirit."

When it comes to interchurch cooperation, he favored a cautious approach. "We are hearing so much these days about the ecumenical movement," he said. "It is not all good and it is not all bad. Let us not fool ourselves—everyone of us in some measure or form is interested or involved in some way in an ecumenical spirit.

"The lowliest independent denominational church that wants to support some sort of mission program will have to be incipiently ecumenical about it by supporting some faith or

sentative had been expected to come with a delegation of Russian Baptists. Years of careful contacts and several visits to Russia had attempted to pave the way for such future contacts. But payday is still far away. For unexplained reasons, none of the expected delegates from Russia were allowed to come.

Instead they sent a greeting by way of telegram.

The telegram said, "The All Union Council of Evangelical Christian Baptists, including Mennonites, in brotherly love sends its sincere greetings to the Congress of Mennonites in Amsterdam and prays for pouring out abundant God's blessing upon the Congress and wishes that every participant could say, 'The Spirit of God is with us.' Haggai 2:5."

The greeting was signed by Ilia Ivanov and General Secretary Karev, leaders of the Russian Baptists, and by Victor Krueger, Mennonite representative of the Russian Baptist Council.

And then there was the experience of East Germany. A Mennonite leader from East Germany scheduled to speak to the conference did not appear. Reasons for his absence were not clear.

Of others from East Germany, John R. Friesen, a Canadian serving as a pastor in Berlin, said that he knew of people "that would have sold everything they had in order to come," but there are "certain barriers that keep people away."

To bridge the barriers, a number of Mennonites from America and Western Europe traveled to East Berlin to meet with East Germans in meetings on the weekend of August 6. It was a miniature world conference.

And it was reminiscent of an experience from an earlier world confer-

interdenominational mission program."

Climenhaga has recently completed a term of service as a chief administrator for the National Association of Evangelicals.

Reuben Short, Elkhart, Ind.; Samuel Gerber, Basel; and Don Jacobs, Tanzania; delivered the other three messages on the Holy Spirit.

On the woes of traveling

People who stay at home regard traveling as one big ball. Don't believe it. It's work and a generous share of grief. And so are many conferences.

Ask any of the many travelers who crossed many miles to attend and endure the Mennonite World Conference.

Yes, it was a good conference. Meeting new people and greeting old friends, being reassured of an old faith and slowly absorbing a new idea made the conference an experience long to be remembered. Indeed, the trip to the Mennonite World Conference was a rose. But each rose has a thorn, no matter how tiny, the beauty and perfume of the rose fade until the pain is gone.

Scratch most any Mennonite tourist, and you heard a tale of woe. At least, it seemed this way as one moved around the edge of the registration line on the opening night. Cancelled reservations at hotels, high prices, and lost travel connections caused grief.

One chartered plane carrying a group of Canadian Mennonites across the Atlantic treated its anxious passengers to a sixteen-hour flight with one of its four motors inoperative. While some of the passengers fretted

ence. It was the first world conference and it met in Switzerland in 1925 to commemorate the four-hundredth anniversary of the beginning of the Anabaptist-Mennonite movement.

At that time, the delegate from Russia, Jacob Rempel, received permission to travel across Europe. But when he got to the Swiss border, the usually hospitable Swiss would not allow him to enter. And since Rempel could not come to the conference, the conference got up and went to him. (In those days, the conference was smaller. Only one hundred persons were in attendance.)

In a meeting at the border, Rempel read a letter of greeting from the Mennonites in Russia who thanked their European and American brethren for aid during the revolution and famine period. That was 1925. Many of the same political problems remained in 1967.

and prayed, others gathered at a cabin window with cameras aimed at the idle propeller. "No one will believe us otherwise," they said.

Innkeepers in Europe in a few cases exploited the tourists. A group visiting France found itself suddenly refused admittance to a chosen hotel though reservations had been made early. The hotel had rented their rooms to others for more money.

Just as painful was the *demi-pension* affair in a few Amsterdam hotels. The Dutch Mennonite hosts had contracted for hotel rooms on the basis of a fee that would cover the cost of room rental and the price of a breakfast.

Because space in the city is scarce during the summer season, a few business-is-business hotel managers decided to take advantage of their seller's market. They insisted to their Mennonite guests that rooms were available on a *demi-pension* arrangement. This meant that in order to secure a room, guests had to pay for an extra meal which they probably would not be able to eat at their hotel since they would be attending meetings at the convention hall.

By American standards, the hotel prices were still reasonable even at the inflated price, or at least no more outrageous than American prices. But Mennonite thrift balked at paying for meals that could not be eaten. This did not happen in all of the hotels. But the one hundred and twenty who were exploited were irate and the conference managers were perturbed.

The names of the several offending hotels were taken to the mayor of Amsterdam, who expressed his apologies and sympathy. While he could promise no relief, he promised to intercede in behalf of the travelers and in behalf of the fading city image.

And the very bulk of the conference brought its own peculiar kind of grief. The RAI Congress center in Amsterdam has spacious facilities for big meetings. But gigantic conferences like a Mennonite World Conference are a little harder to accommodate.

Simultaneous translation equipment was available in the usual meeting rooms, but since the conference was

so large—with over four thousand at many meetings — delegates had to move to a hall that had no electronic equipment to pipe an individual translation to a delegate in his desired language when a foreign tongue was used. This meant that each statement had to be translated into three other languages one after the other. After a story had been told in English, German, Dutch, and French, attention had drifted and valuable time was lost.

The opening service dragged because of this. And the keynote address was not begun until after the designated hour for adjournment.

But even when delegates could meet in smaller halls with immediate translation available by the turning of a dial and a plastic listening device, all was still not smooth. Translation was not really always immediate. Speakers spoke too fast and volunteer translators though versed in their language were often flustered and not always accurate. They were sometimes absent from posts.

In spite of the thorns, the rose of the Mennonite World Conference had its own perfume. One thing was no problem. Weather for the opening half of the conference was clear and cool which for Holland was really remarkable, though many visitors were not adequately grateful. After all they had suffered, they felt they deserved it.

The RAI was comfortable and provided well for the needs of all guests. Though no architectural gem, it was functional and its halls and corridors were spacious.

Meetings, though long and sometimes tiring, were fewer than at other conferences. Program opportunities were varied.

The conference addresses were rarely inspiring works of art, but each person with an assignment took his work seriously and offered a well-prepared piece. Most hearers were grateful.

The displays were well done and attractive. They were also educational.

A city with centuries of history has to be fascinating. And the Dutch put American southern hospitality in the shade. Few ever felt far from home.

CHURCH RECORD

Hosts and guests learn

Dutch Mennonites found it hard to understand the Mennonite World Conference.

"Why waste time with Mennonites, when the time has come to work with other denominations?" is the way some of them might have raised the question.

Thus meetings of the World Council of Churches, of which the Dutch church is the only Mennonite member, would make more sense than a gathering of a separate denominational group. Denominations, in this view, represent the past. The councils of churches are the wave of the future.

But when over four thousand Mennonites come to Amsterdam, more than half of them from outside the Netherlands, and meet in the city's largest convention center, even the indifferent church member has to stop and take notice. So do the newspapers, radio, and television.

J. J. van Sluijs, a member of the Mennonite World Conference general council from the Netherlands, said the Dutch Mennonites were "alarmed" by the extraordinary attention given to the conference by the secular press. And members of a minority group must indeed be startled when major newspapers begin to headline their activities and talk about their history. Radio and television gave prime time. The morning worship service on the closing Sunday was televised on the Dutch network.

As an expression of their interest in non-Mennonite religious groups, the Dutch Mennonites invited some of their friends to attend the conference. Through these efforts, many guests attended the conference that the less-urbane brethren of the Dutch Mennonites might not have thought to invite.

At the opening session, the Roman Catholic Bishop of Haarlem, Th.H. J. Zwartkruis, represented the Roman Catholics of the Netherlands. His presence went virtually unnoticed, however, since he was welcomed in the Dutch language, and the translators for the English-speaking delegates failed to give the long list of special guests which also included twenty-

eight guests from the two Jewish and twelve Protestant bodies. Thus the Dutch who cared were aware; others were uninformed.

The general council of the Mennonite World Conference had decided against formal and official invitations for Roman Catholic observers and such ecumenical groups as the World Council of Churches. Said E. J. Swalm, a Brethren in Christ council member from Ontario, "With the lessening of prejudice, the presidium should be able in five years to invite Catholic representatives without prejudicing our situation."

Swalm noted the increasing participation by Roman Catholics in the meetings of Protestant ministers. J. A. Oosterbaan, Amsterdam, called the attention of the conference to the fact that, in many areas, Roman Catholics are taking the initiative in interchurch relations.

Various branches of the Dutch government also took notice of the presence of many foreign Mennonites in Amsterdam. On Wednesday evening, at a midpoint of the conference, the city council of Amsterdam and representatives of the Dutch nation held a reception for the presidium members and voting delegates in the famous Rijkmuseum. About three hundred delegates were able to attend. More would have attended had the reception not been scheduled on a day many delegates left town to visit other parts of the Netherlands.

Van Sluijs reported that an audience with Queen Juliana had been explored. He visited the palace to discuss the possibility before the beginning of the conference. An opportunity for the members of the presidium to appear at an official reception at the palace was considered. But the delicate problem of church and state relations came up. Would such a reception by the Queen for Mennonite representatives imply a special endorsement of a religious group?

Conveniently, the problem did not have to be faced. While the Mennonite World Conference was meeting in Amsterdam, the Queen was taking a family vacation in Italy.

Marriages

Kenneth W. Akten, Bethel Church, Pekin, Ill., and *Margaret Spraklen*, Methodist Church, Pekin, Ill., July 2.

Reinhold Berg, Bethel Church, Lancaster, Pa., and *Patricia Thaxton*, Methodist Church, Orville, Ohio, on June 25.

Walter Bergen, Osler, Sask., and *Louella Zacharias*, Eigenheim Church, Rosthern, Sask., on July 1.

David M. Boesker, Emmanuel Lutheran Church, Canton, Kan., and *Dona Lou Waltner*, Eden Church, Moundridge Kan., on July 1.

Gregory Berle Clark, Boise, Ida., and *Nancy Lois Dalke*, First Church, Aberdeen, Ida.

Steve Cross, Danvers (Ill.) Church, and *Marie Toews*, Bethel Church, Lancaster, Pa., on July 22.

Edwin Epp, Eigenheim Church, Rosthern, Sask., and *Ruth Neufeld*, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ont., on July 3.

Henry P. Epp, Hanley (Sask.) Church, and *Lillian E. Hirschfeld*, First Church, Saskatoon, on June 10.

Lee Ediger, Tabor Church, Newton, Kan., and *Joyce A. Funk*, First Church, Hillsboro, Kan., on June 16.

Michael L. Epp and *Carol Friesen*, both of Bethesda Church, Henderson, Neb., on July 14.

Orlando H. Friesen, First Church, Saskatoon, and *Jane W. Schneider*, Nazareth Lutheran Church, Cedar Falls, Iowa, on June 11.

Roger K. Funk, First Church, Hillsboro, Kan., and *Joan Suderman*, Ebenfeld Mennonite Brethren Church, Hillsboro, Kan., on June 16.

Larry Eldon Goering, Bethel College Church, North Newton, Kan., and *Margaret Rosine Hooper*, Methodist Church, Hiawatha, Kan., June 24.

David Charles Graybill, North Canton, Ohio, and *Beatrice Delores Moser*, Salem Church, Kidron, Ohio, July 7.

Jonathan Hofer, Minneapolis, Minn., and *Madelon Welk*, Simpson Memorial Church, St. Paul, Minn., June 24.

Jack Hardy, Pryor, Okla., and *Mary Helen Unrau*, Eden Church, Inola, Okla., on June 30.

David J. Holsinger, Hesston, Kan., and *Carol Louise Waltner*, Bethel College Church, on June 4.

Loren Jantzen, First Church, Beat-



Kliewer



Kliewer



Pankratz



Pankratz

rice, Neb., and *Faye Leuder*, Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, Denver, Colo.

Myrle Jost, Koerner Heights Mennonite Brethren Church, Newton, Kan., and *Aleda Amstutz*, Emmaus Church, Whitewater, Kan., on July 1.

Joel D. Klaassen and *Nancy K. Unruh*, both of First Church, Hillsboro, Kan., on June 8.

Jerry A. King, Pentecostal Church, and *Linda Franz*, Lorraine Ave. Church, Wichita, Kan., on July 6.

Daniel Kravitz, Keswick Ave. Baptist Church, Glenside, Pa., and *Ethyl Regina Cupo*, Germantown Church, Philadelphia, Pa., on June 17.

John J. Mumma, Calvary Independent Church, Lancaster, Pa., and *Darlene J. Ranck*, Bethel Church, Lancaster, Pa., on July 15.

Dale McNabb and *Dianne Klassen*, both of Cedar Hills Church, North Surrey, B.C., on July 8.

Monte Nelson, American Lutheran Church, Sioux Falls, S.D., and *Mae Schrag*, Salem Zion Church, Freeman, S.D., on May 20.

Workers

Martin Duerksen, Evangelical Mennonite Brethren Church, recently completed over fifteen years of service with Mennonite Central Committee, and has moved with his family to Steinbach, Man. For twelve years, he served as pastor to Mennonite refugees living in Buenos Aires. In 1963, he transferred to Asuncion, to give leadership in the voluntary service program for South American Mennonites and to represent the Mennonite Central Committee Peace Section in Latin America.

Ray and Loralee Kliewer, Community Church, Fresno, left for Japan in July. They will be houseparents in a boarding school for children of missionaries. He is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Daniel H. Kliewer, Kingsburg, Calif. Her parents are Mr. and Mrs. Leland O. Weinbrenner, Fresno.

John M. Mecartney, a Methodist minister and sociologist, has been named head of the Bluffton College Sociology department. He has been

an instructor at Albin College.

Mr. and Mrs. Orville Ortman, Salem Church, Freeman, S.D., have accepted a three-year TAP assignment to Nigeria.

Jerry Regier, Comins Church, Mio, Mich., will become a full-time staff member of Campus Crusade for Christ following a training meeting at Arrowhead Springs, San Bernardino, Calif.

Steven and Elizabeth Pankratz left June 23 for San Jose, Costa Rica, where they will be enrolled in a Spanish language study, after which they will go to Colombia to do community development work. He is the son of Mr. and Mrs. John J. Pankratz and a member of Bethel Church, Mountain Lake, Minn. She is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Howard Raid and a member of the First Church, Bluffton, Ohio. Both are graduates of Bluffton College, and Steven has attended Mennonite Biblical Seminary.

Mary Bair Schafer, a former instructor at Findley (Ohio) High School, will teach physical education at Bluffton College beginning this fall.

William T. Snyder, executive secretary of the Mennonite Central Committee, was recently elected chairman of International Voluntary Service, a nonprofit agency which sends young Americans to work overseas in development projects alongside counterparts in other countries. It, for example, has administered agricultural, educational, and community development programs in Vietnam since 1957. The agency works closely with the United States Agency for International Development.

Frank Spoto, a June graduate of the Oberlin College Conservatory of Music, has joined the Bluffton College faculty as an instructor in voice.

Deaths

Adam J. Amstutz, Salem Church, Kidron, Ohio, was born Nov. 25, 1897, and died July 17.

Melita Basinger, Ebenezer Church, Columbus, Ohio, was born in January 1907, and died July 10.

Henry J. Brandt, Tabor Church, Newton, Kan., was born Nov. 9, 1879, and died July 10.

Helena Toews (Mrs. Jacob L.), Bethel Church, Mountain Lake, Minn., was born Sept. 15, 1889, died July 10.

John C. Klassen, Cedar Hills Church, North Surrey, B.C., was born May 21, 1892, in Altona, Man., and died July 10.

Albert H. Penner, First Church, Hillsboro, Kan., was born Dec. 29, 1894, and died July 3.

Dale Schubert, Apostolic Church, Trenton, Ohio, was born Sept. 25, 1920, and died July 9.

David F. Voth, Tabor Church, Newton, Kan., was born Mar. 24, 1895, and died July 6.

Mrs. Reinhold Weicht, Salem Church, Freeman, S.D., was born June 12, 1887, and died July 6.

Baptisms

Bethel Church, Lancaster, Pa., on June 4: Judith Harnly, Paula Hornet, Frieda Toews, Karen Wimer, Rick Schroeder.

Eden Church, Inola, Okla., on June 11: Alma Ruth Froese, Bernice Jantz, Susan Pankratz, Joe Stutzman.

Ebenezer Church, Bluffton, Ohio: Jane Gratz, Kevin Gratz, James Thompson, Barbara Thompson, Beth Thompson, Andrew Burkholder, Robert Sommer, Rodney Lugibihl, Charles Spallinger, Dwight Deeds, Mrs. Dwight Deeds, Ray Wilch, Mrs. Ray Wilch, Mrs. Marvin Augsburg.

First Church, Beatrice, Neb., on May 14: Linda Claassen, James Ensz, Judy Hamm, Lawrence Penner, Larry Thimm, Harold Wiebe.

First Church, Upland, Calif., on May 14: Dennis Remple, Mikell Basinger.

Grace Church, Dallas, Ore., on July 9: Melvin Sumpter, Leroy Lepp.

Cedar Hills Church, North Surrey, B.C., on June 18: Dale McNabb, Kay (Mrs. Stan) Pavlis.

Greenfield Church, Ft. Cobb, Okla., on June 18: Darrel Dean Nightingale, Darlene Ruth Nightingale, Brenda Ann Unruh, Orlin Lynn Nightingale, Stanley Doyle Unruh.

LETTERS

Science can aid faith

DEAR EDITOR AND READERS: For years I've heard chapel talks, read articles, and (patiently?) listened to reports which claim to find great dangers for Christianity in logical reasoning and experimental observation. I have high regard for Walter Klaassen, a wonderful friend, but must now answer some points stated again in "Experience Beyond Syllogism" [May 30] and other articles. He writes that "A syllogism is a formal method of reasoning" which is "one form of unbelief," is "artificial," "still causes us untold trouble in our adventure of faith," and "growing like a tropical plant, has been the occasion for idolatry." He says that the truth of a syllogism "depends on the validity of the major premise" and points out that many syllogisms used against the Anabaptists have fatal flaws at that point. He seems to deny "that what is logically true is also true in fact. If you could prove the existence of God by logical argument, God existed in fact even though no human being knew of His existence from experience."

The article mentioned, however, depends on its own syllogistic reasoning, which could be stated this way: "Things that have deceived people in the past will deceive us in the future. Syllogisms have deceived people in the past. Therefore they will deceive us in the future."

I would defend this argument: "Everything that exists either has existed forever or was made by some agency other than itself (in other words, nothing can create itself). From thermodynamics and astronomy we are gathering evidence that the physical universe has not existed forever. Therefore we are gathering evidence that the physical universe was made by some agency other than itself." By faith we add that the Maker of the universe (who has existed forever) is a loving Person.

But, someone will object, scientific theories change. Of course. (And this is one valid reason for Christians not to depend only on this argument.) But does that prevent us from accepting proofs that the earth turns or that

The picture

The following letter was sent to our sister publication and forwarded to us by its editor. The writer refers to our May 30 cover illustration of a young couple embracing in an open automobile, an illustration related to a feature on courtship and engagement in that same issue. The free translation of the letter is our own.

TO THE EDITOR OF DER BOTE: We in Vancouver receive *The Mennonite* from the General Conference in Newton, Kan. As long as it keeps to the Christian way in its content and pictures, it is good. But in my opinion and in that of all those with whom I have spoken, the picture on the cover of the May 30 issue was not at all appropriate.

What are our brethren in Newton trying to show us? Such pictures we can see all around us every day. A picture like this does not belong in a Christian publication regardless of any interpretation that might be given to it. Little wonder that the Apostle Paul in his day had to write time and again to the congregations and admonish them. Today as always we must mutually exhort each other (but without criticism) in order that we all may continue to be disciples of Christ. *Rudolph Hildebrand, 1265 East 60 Ave., Vancouver 15.*

electricity exists? Many unbelievers think that present-day science provides some arguments *against* God and ought to be told that present-day science provides some arguments *for* God. Should we ignore people (for example, some students here at International Christian University) for whom reason may be a first step toward faith?

Let's not equate most reasoning with syllogisms any more than we equate most experience (often meaning inner experience) with bad emotions. Church splits, for example, over methods of baptism, have not been prevented or repaired by excesses of inner experience or by failure to "Come, let us reason together."

In another article of the series we read that "Some say that the stars tell us something about God; they

Fiddling while world burns

TO THE EDITOR: Enclosed find clipping as regards the 391 students at Cornell who advertised their opposition to the Vietnam war in the Cornell Daily Sun. They said that they will refuse to be drafted. Here at the University of Kansas an announcement on a bulletin board in the administration building asks for those opposed to the draft and needing help and information as regards conscientious objection, appealing classification, and emigration to see one of several individuals.

The lack of Mennonite involvement in these efforts is noticeable. I suspect that one of the reasons is the preoccupation of the leaders of our church and our church colleges with trivial social issues such as whether dancing or smoking is permitted on the college campus or not.

Just as the United States has become drawn into the Vietnam fray so have our leaders been drawn into endless discussions on these issues—none of which to me have any relationship, historically or otherwise, with the Mennonite faith.

Let us examine our faith and not keep fiddling while Rome burns. *Arnold M. Wedel, Department of Mathematics, University of Kansas, Lawrence, Kansas.*

certainly do not tell us anything about man." [End of Astrology, May 16] But to know something about God is to know something about man, who was made in His image, with the power of reason. To say that we certainly cannot learn anything about man from (any) physical science is to deny His partly-physical nature, which Christianity affirms. From the stars we can learn or confirm: that man lives in a dependable universe, that similar beings probably exist elsewhere, that man is far more likely to destroy himself than to be destroyed by comets, that the elements of man's body were once distributed over vast spaces ("without form and void"), that man is given the ability to penetrate some of the "secrets" of the cosmos, far beyond our own.

Ronald Rich, I.C.U., Mitaka, Tokyo.

YOUTH

THE WELL

Rudy H. Wiebe

ONE EARLY SUMMER as the November sun stood so directly overhead that it cast no shadow, Tina Fehr discovered when she leaned over the rim of the well she could not tell whether she was looking into the well or out of it.

The well was Schoenbach's most valued possession. It stood at the north end of the village, the last of Simons Colony on the crooked trail to the rail-end. When they drew lots for the village in 1928 the settlers did not know they had it; they had no well whatever and the arid *campo* did not so much as suggest the ancient passing of a stream, leave alone a beautiful one. But wherever these Mennonites had lived, whether in Russia or in Canada, there had always been a 'Schoenbach' and if they were going to live in Paraguay's 'greenhell' Chaco, as they were since their elders said so, then one of the thirteen villages must be so named. The village was named while they were still at sea and only five of them had ever seen the Chaco and none the campos on which they were to settle: Schoenbach.

The well being what it was, their nostalgic lack of imagination simply proved their thoughtless faith. A thoughtful man hauling his family through the brush to the campo and raising his tents on his lot-assigned strip of sand and bittergrass would have cried, or laughed, at such a name. In the privacy of their work the women did cry; the men had no time for either. Wells had to be dug. At some level they found water in every shaft but when they hauled it up the gaunt oxen swung their muzzles over it and bellowed. Not even adobe bricks they tramped out with their bare feet held together; it was brine. After the eleventh hole, four families left to plead for another campo. The others persisted to the very rim of the bush, laboring inside the cribbing that was to prevent another such sand cave-in as had already buried one digger forever at the

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Art by Allan Eitzen

village center. Near a paratodo tree, a moisture one evening became by next morning the sweet well. Everyone gathered bareheaded in the sun and thanked God, drinking.

Neither the entire village nor the Lengua Indians who soon heard and camped nearby in their wanderings nor the high oxcarts squealing on toward Endstation had ever dipped the well dry. After Schoenbach there was nothing on the railroad trail except puddles, if that, and though Endstation was only seventy miles away, by oxcart that meant undoubtedly six, perhaps as many as fifteen days, depending. The irony of Chaco

cartage was invariable: in dry weather the road was fast and dust-choked and the oxen might thirst into immobility between water holes; if it rained hard enough to plow in the settlement so that eventually there could be some produce to sell for the staples that had to be hauled in, the level trail vanished in miles of bottomless mud that demanded three floundering yoke of oxen on a four-hundred-kilo load to gain two, perhaps four miles in all the daylight one day provided. The Chaco day too was invariable: twelve hours of light and then at one stride the darkness. After the moon rose there was light again, but the oxen

must graze; they did so even more deliberately than they walked.

Before the day's heat but considerably after the cattle watered and wandered away to forage what they could among the spined bush, the women and older girls of Schoenbach went to the well. They did not come like the Lengua women, one pot balanced on their head and the other in their hand, staring wherever their eye strayed; their pails hung from a wooden yoke, the weight of which sat mainly on the back of the shoulders. As a result, though Lengua women always walked about like stallions in spring, the women of Schoenbach stooped for-

ward whether they carried water or not. Which was a becoming posture for a woman, according to Elder Wiebe the Younger. Humility is required, a humility in keeping with a bowed head and eyes fixed upon the earth from which all come and to which all must again return when He comes to judge on His mighty throne. Looking everywhere with unblinking shamelessness can lead to nothing but —things like the Lengua women who in their savage dances were said to lay their hand on any man they pleased, to lead him away out of the firelight. Not that anyone, and certainly not the Elder, had ever seen an Indian dance. But they had heard, and knew. It was what must happen when women stared about and held themselves so erect, so fluidly and powerfully free.

And Tina Fehr knew it very nearly happened to her.

Not that she ever walked like that. She never knew how she walked because no mirror is necessary to re-braid hair and there was no water or even windowpane to reflect her posture. But she knew that once she did not keep her eyes where they belonged and that one seeing was enough. She never thought it through, piece by piece; she never had or would think that way. It was equally impossible for her to think directly of herself as behaving like one of those brown women who with one casual shift slid her sleepy child from breast to hip. There was nothing as precise as that, only something she might have recognized as a passing aroma of possibility, of capability perhaps, if she could have worked out her sensations so articulately. She could not, of course. She knew only that once she did not keep her eyes where they belonged and that suddenly she was terrified at the sound or sight of the Elder and could not sing from the Hymnbook or as much as think her prayers to herself when she knelt with her six oldest sisters, but only mumbled sounds that would have horrified them had they not been too exhausted to listen to each other at the end of each day when they fell upon their

blankets. And what had happened, happened because of the well.

Everyone knew without any direct mention of the matter that it was especially proper for the Canadier women in a village such as Schoenbach to keep their eyes and heads down. In 1930 a group of Mennonites from Russia had settled just west of Simons Colony; their carts, too, must pass through Schoenbach on the trail to Endstation. These Russlander were Mennonites, of course, and had the same family names and spoke the same Low-german as the Canadier. But they spoke it with a different accent, with some unheard-of words, and they had emigrated only once for their faith. Not that the Canadier were proud; Elder Wiebe the Younger preached that pride was the most devilish of the Devil's many weapons. Besides there was no need for pride. It was simply a fact that a child in Simons Colony might know: their fathers left Russia in 1874 and emigrated to Canada because the Russian world was becoming impossible for their beliefs, but these Russlander found it compatible with theirs to stay on until 1929. How they had become modern it was unnecessary to discuss; some, they heard, had attended technical schools and universities in Petersburg or Kiev or Moscow. No wonder the communists had to take their land away before they would leave.

Elder Wiebe the Older, who remembered the trek from Russia to Canada fifty-seven years before very clearly and who had led them from Canada to Paraguay in 1928 not because the Canadian Government was taking land away from anyone but because it no longer allowed them to run their own schools as they wished, as it had promised them it would allow forever when they moved to Canada in 1874, held his last sermon three weeks after the Canadier drove to Endstation to cart the first Russlander to their land. He did not mention Russlander. Without raising his thin old voice but with his great jaw thrust forward as Tina had always seen him, he intoned that the Bible,

the Catechism and the Hymnbook, the plow and the shovel were the faith of their fathers. It was enough for them, and it is enough for their children and children's children, now and evermore. New ideas, book learning, singing in several voices are unnecessary and dangerous. The desire for knowledge leads to pride and self-deception. To long for change is to fight one's destiny. Fighting one's destiny is rebellion against God. Man's duty is to obey, pray, work, and fear God's wrath.

So when Russlander men began driving through Schoenbach, as they must on their way to Endstation, cracking their whips above the ambling oxen and sometimes yodeling greetings in Low-german, Tina had no problem about where to look. Her older brothers told her that when they met the Russlander on the trail, or perhaps camped nearby, they would hear them sing German songs never found in the Hymnbook; of millers and soldiers and riding to the hunt, and lovers. Sing them in different voices that sounded like wolves under the moon in Canada, and laugh and quarrel far into the night. Hearing this, Tina knew without being told, as did every Canadier girl, that despite their Mennonite names and talk, these men were too different, too wrong and—obvious—to think about, leave alone remember where their carefree greeting brushed something to an unwonted shiver. They would not get into heaven. When their slow procession stopped at the well it was best to wait on the path far down the road, or better yet, return later. And remember, as Tina did, that on Saturday Abraham K. Reimer would come and with her sit another long tongue-heavy evening away.

Abraham K. Reimer was never much in her thoughts. Why he should be there when the Russlander drove by she did not try to understand; whenever it happened she simply felt later that he should have been. Neither did she explain to herself where he had been so lost that her thoughts had never once found him the day she looked into the well, but she felt

a discomfort that morning which she sometimes experienced in early summer, a discomfort that came with the North wind rising with the sun and roaring like a furnace down the village street, tearing at grass roofs, blasting sand through cracks in curled doors and into windows hung with canvas. Under its shriek they heard the Russlander carts creak by south; they could not be seen for the blanket of sand winding about them. Once in an eddy Tina made out a hunched shape high above the eight-foot wheels and the piled sacks before it was again hurled away. But for her dress pasted tight over her body and the crunch of her teeth, it might have been a Canadian blizzard.

When the last sounds had been by a long time she shouldered her yoke, folded a cloth inside each pail for cover and told her mother she would try now. Past the gate she went backwards, lunging and pausing, the pails banging together before her when she could not hold them, staggering in the drifts of the hollowed path and lunging on again. Once the North wind betrayed her and she fell backwards, her palm striking down on a cactus spine swept mercilessly bare by the sand. She scraped it off against a pail and pulled her yoke on again. When she reached the well at last she sank behind the shelter of its high box. After a time the pain of her hand burned through her exhaustion and she began to fumble at the thorns. She leaned against the well, picking with a corner of broken fingernail, putting her teeth to her hard hand. It comforted her; she was doing something necessary and need not, for the moment, face the wind.

That was how Isaak Hiebert found her. His left ox had gone lame overnight and before he reached his village he would be a day behind the others. But he did not much care. One trek on this road taught there was no companionship in a storm; each driver must remain with his cart and a minute or a day behind made no difference to the misery. The Schoenbach well emerged briefly and he cupped his hands, bellowing to his

span. Before he had his canteen and matte-horn unstrapped the lame ox was already kneeling, sinking to the hot earth, the yoke dragging the other down also. He bent forward against the weight of the wind and coming round the well-corner almost bumped head-on into the girl with the heel of her hand to her mouth.

For Tina, what followed was like the whole day, tangled in impossible convolutions of sweat and heat and sand and an unwanting to remember. Bits flashed at her sharp as diamonds unbidden. His name was there, though he had no face, and his voice suddenly laughed and his hand, not any larger than her own but with a steel-like tension, clamped hers so tightly while he pricked at the thorns with a needle he pulled from a pocket case that even when she twitched involuntarily her hand hard on his hard knee moved not the slightest. And the new drink the Paraguayan soldiers, his voice said, had discovered: cold water drained over yerba leaves made terere, and it strained out scum and sand and puddle-water taste. It felt scratchy in her throat as she sucked it up through his metal bambillia; that was really no worse than drinking from his canteen since the pail was impossible in the storm. Yerba with hot water gave matte, a drink only Canadier men drank, but yerba and unheated water gave terere, unknown till then and so outside regulation. Like the day, it was new, strange. And the stories his voice told—perhaps they sat in the well's shelter for hours with the sand blasting by them down the street, removing paratodo tree and cart and oxen and Schoenbach—of the jokes he tried on Canadier boys like telling them that one edge of the world was just beyond a few yards of bush north of the trail and how some of them always drove on the south side after that—did he think she believed the world was round or how could he expect her to laugh at such blasphemy, as she did?—or how far he had ridden down the trails west till he saw where the end of the world was nailed shut with boards or how he was teaching four Canadier boys

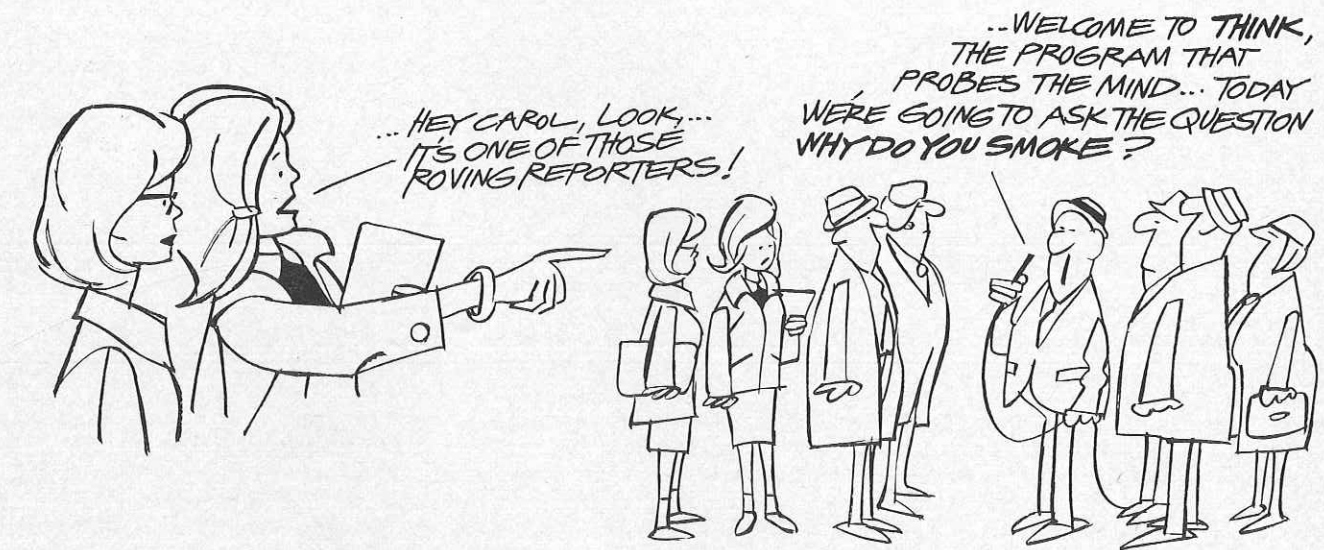
"Kommt ein Vogel geflogen" in four-part harmony so they could sing something new at the next Simons Colony engagement. There, exactly there she should have said about Abraham K. Reimer; she should have thought at least. But she had done neither, neither then nor before that when for some unnecessary reason she looked over the well-rim with Isaak Hiebert at the fading ripples of his sunken pail and after a time the wind lulled an instant and the fierce sunlight showed them strangely side by side looking together at themselves, and on into the endless blue sky.

Once after that she saw him. He came with one of her older brothers on the yard where her father was fixing Abraham N. Reimer's cultivator. He left alone a little later. She could just make him out from where she stood on the back field, leaning a moment against the smooth warped handle of the grubbing hoe. From somewhere she learned his father was a Russlander preacher who usually preached from the Bible, but who leaped around behind the pulpit. One day she heard young Hiebert had piled his load of cotton bales onto the flatcar at Endstation and then climbed up, too. To the men standing about his yoke of oxen, staring up at him, he yelled, "Keep them, butcher them up!" Years later it was heard in the two colonies that he was in Buenos Aires. The streets there were said to be narrower than Chaco roads, cut between unbelievable buildings of stone and glass and jammed with millions of people, black, white, brown. It was said someone had seen him eating and drinking at a table with a painted woman.

There came a time when Tina Reimer no longer remembered, from one year to the next, how once with Isaak Hiebert she bent down and looked into (or was it out of) the Schoenbach well at the blue sky. Then she would think, "I last remembered, oh, it must be almost three years. I have almost forgotten." And she would smile a little at her baby of that year, a quietness she knew as joy moving within her.

NEVER TOO YOUNG TO LEARN . . .

Harbaugh



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COVER

Amsterdam, scene of the Eighth Mennonite World Conference: "In spite of the thorns, the rose of the Mennonite World Conference had its own perfume." See "News."

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Jacob T. Dick, 5780 North Bond, Fresno, Calif. 93726, is pastor of the Fresno Church of the Brethren. His article was published in the *Messenger* on Jan. 19. Persons interested in exploring further the matter of money management are encouraged to write to the Stewardship Office, Box 347, Newton, Kan. 67114.

Rudy H. Wiebe is the author of "Peace Shall Destroy Many." Formerly editor of the Mennonite Brethren Herald, Winnipeg, he joins the faculty of the University of Alberta this fall to teach creative writing. This story is fictional though the background is historical and is related to the two stories published in our issues of June 20 and July 15. The writer says, "The stories are of ordinary people in the throes of living. None are exceptionally good or bad, though some are clearly more one than the other. . . . In moments of personal and group crises, human beings reveal their loves and hates, often passionately. I personally do not endorse or condemn any action revealed in these stories. I am trying to show people as they are."

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W. H. Yoder

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The following article appeared in the July-August issue of In Dit Amsterdam, the publication of the Amsterdam Mennonite Church. The author speaks about the theme of the Mennonite World Conference.

IN YOUR PAPER for January, 1962, I contributed an article on the question, "Do the Mennonites of the world have a reason to exist?"

Most of what was said then is still an open question. Do the Mennonites of the world, in addition to their very strong social identity, such as is maintained most effectively by any very small religious group, have in addition a theological or a spiritual identity to justify their continuing to exist in the twentieth century? Are Mennonites seeking to be and to become increasingly a church of believers? A church of peace? A church of servants? A missionary community? Does our coming together this summer contribute to making us more faithful to that "anabaptist vision" or does it make us more committed only to our own narrow history and our organizations and our identity?

This is the kind of question we must ask whenever we meet. We should ask it as well if we did not meet. But what does it now mean that the subject of our common study this time is to be the work and the witness of the Holy Spirit?

It means first of all that Mennonites will not be able to meet without a frank acknowledgement of issues which have divided them in the past. Some Mennonites have seen in the principle of believers' baptism an insistence upon the responsibility of the individual human spirit to test all things and to make an autonomous commit-

ment. This can look to the outsider like mere philosophical humanism. Other Mennonites have seen believers' baptism rather as a safeguard of the insistence that the believer is one in whom the Holy Spirit has worked in such a way as to free him from intellectual autonomy and to overwhelm him in an experience of conversion. This has seemed to others to be too deeply interested in merely human emotional states. As Mennonites around the world gather to study the nature of the work of the Spirit of God they cannot avoid facing, and let us hope, moving beyond, the traditional opposition of nationalism and pietism as the pictures some of us have of one another.

That Mennonites from around the world gather to speak of the Holy Spirit means, secondly, that they will be turning their attention directly to the power which goes beyond the resources of human planning. The Holy Spirit is discernible where men discover as *given* to them a unity which they could never have created by their own engineering. Mennonites cannot talk long about the Spirit who gives unity, without being driven to repentance for their dividedness from one another and from other Christians. Yet, in the recognition that it is that Spirit who, by the wonder of His presence, *gives* unity to the church, Mennonites can as well be made sober about the usefulness of formal schemes of union, whether among Mennonites or with other Christian bodies.

There is probably no point where the difference between the reality and talking about the reality is more crucial. Will world Mennonitism be meeting about the Spirit? or in the Spirit?

Following our summer biweekly schedule, our next issue will be dated August 29.