

# Clarion

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# Beware of the Planners

Can we differentiate between socialism and socialistic actions? Only to a certain extent, since socialistic actions would not have been taken if the theory behind them had not "invented" and propagated them. "Socialistic actions" do not drop out of the clear blue sky: they find their origin within a system which is not derived from the Word of God but from man's own apostate thinking and which constitutes a threat to the human existence as the Lord our God wants to see it.

In His Word, the Lord does not impose upon us any economic system nor are the Scriptures a handbook for economic questions. Although it has been argued that Calvinism favours and associates itself with capitalism, the matter is too complicated to be comprised in that statement. If the description of capitalism as "an economic system based upon private property, private profit, and private initiative in business" is correct, then we must indeed say that this is a system within which the life can be lived as the Lord gave it: a life of individual responsibility, of individual undertakings and of private property according to what the Lord has bestowed upon each one. The Lord tells us in His Word to honour the private property of the neighbour, to be aware of each one's personal responsibility, and not even to desire that which belongs to our neighbour. No one, we confess, shall appropriate his neighbour's goods, whether by force or by show of right, as is the case via the government in a socialist state.

"Capitalism" as a system (but IS it really a system???) cannot trace its origin back to the Scriptures. And we realize that excesses did and do occur. Every "system" for that matter, can be and will be abused. But if we are to make a choice, then we must say that "capitalism" (when we take the description quoted above) is the "system" which treats man as the thinking, planning, acting, responsible "individual" creature such as God has created him and has given him a place on His earth, in His world. We do not deny that there is a sort of "corporate responsibility"; but this can never come into the place of the individual responsibility given to each man by God.

It is the individual place and the individual responsibility within creation which are denied by the socialist thinking. Individual initiative and individual responsibility can be recognized by socialism only within the system and insofar as it fits in the system. The socialist system is, by its very nature, totalitarian without regard for the individual person. And, once the first steps have been taken on the road of socialistic development, it is very difficult, if not well-nigh impossible, to stop the process and to reverse it.

Of course, even the most ardent adherent of socialist theories and axioms is convinced that only in the way he envisages the golden future will dawn. And so is, of course, the one who is a staunch defender of "capitalism". But the main difference between these two is that the former will compel everyone to follow the system and that the latter will leave the people free and will leave room for individual development even though it may be

different from what the majority of the people consider to be advisable.

Socialism implies comprehensive planning and the planner cannot but view man as mass. It, therefore, basically denies the position of man as such, man as he has been created and been given a place by our God. Socialism will always sacrifice the individual to the principles adopted and to the goal which, according to those principles, can be reached only when the nonconformists either repent and line up with the rest or are eliminated.

In his instructive and interesting book *The Society of the Future*, Dr. H. van Riessen asks,

Will the government of the future, or some organ which is dependent on it, decide wages and prices, the type and quantity of products to be produced? Will it direct investments and assume the right of final decision in the matter of hiring and firing? Will it prohibit strikes? Will the milkman have his customer assigned to him or housing be controlled and allotted to us by the government? Will the concentration of money by the State increase? Will the state be a Santa Claus that subsidizes youthwork, art, education, charity, and the building of churches, hospitals and foundations; will it pay the salaries of clergymen, scientific research and physicians? Will the government control and direct what it deems necessary, and thus guarantee the requirements of man for a life of security from the cradle to the grave? (Beyond this it certainly cannot go.) (Page 176.)

We see these things happening today: the freedoms are being taken away gradually and piece by piece.

We have wage- and price-controls; we have a crown corporation for investments; we have a crown corporation for oil exploration which also will refine and market oil and oil products; we have back-to-work legislation; we have a government that subsidizes all sorts of "cultural" and pseudo-cultural undertakings, art, charity, etc., etc.

We still are free to move around from the one house and street to the other and from the one city to the other, although we are not free to build whatever we wish to build on the property which we have purchased. For many years already, people in the Netherlands were not even free to move from apartment no. 210 to apartment no. 211 (across the hall) without approval of the local authorities. And if you owned a house and wished to put in a larger window in your kitchen, you needed permission from I don't know how many departments in City Hall before you were allowed to do so. Yes, all this in the name of progress, order, architecture, culture, and whatever other fancy name you could think of, but it is a nibbling away of the freedom nevertheless. Individual freedom must be sacrificed to the beauty of the city (as the planners see it, of course), the uniformity of design, the size of the houses in a particular neighbourhood.

Socialistic planning paves the way for the totalitarian state.

"All animals are equal, but some are more equal than others", Orwell has the sheep bleat after they have been "re-educated". Those who are "more equal than

others" are the ones who plan and (allegedly) have the know-how.

To say that socialism is just an economic and not a political system is closing the eyes for reality. The socialist planner cannot put his theories into practice unless he has the power to do so or succeeds in engaging the persons who have the (political) power. No planning will succeed unless everyone is brought into line either by subtle pressure or by open force, unless laws can be passed which make it compulsory to do either this or

that. The planner knows that and, in order to realize his plans for the golden future, he has to strive for political power. It is not strange at all that labour unions (which, officially forbid their members to discuss political matters at a union meeting) place themselves behind the socialistic political movement of the NDP.

Let us go through life with our eyes open lest we be dragged along with the stream and by our silence and apathy are co-responsible for the appearing of antichrist.

vO

## Drama and These Modern Days 2

*Fourth in a series of five, including: Drama and Preaching, Drama and Church, Drama and School, Drama and these Modern Days, Drama and Holy Scripture.*

### TWO LINES

We can distinguish two lines in the ideas of Ronald J. Goldman, whose books have widely influenced others in the field of religious education and stimulated them a.o. to reintroduce "religious drama". These two lines are: 1) the psychological aspect, 2) the religious aspect.

### PSYCHOLOGICAL

Goldman's theories are based on the ideas of Jean Piaget, who occupied himself with "the psychology of conceptual processes". In his *The Child's Conception of the World* (1969) and other books, this Swiss psychologist dealt with such questions as: What can a child understand? What concepts has a child? According to him there are three levels of thinking between childhood and adolescence: intuitive or pre-operational thinking in the age group of 2-7 years; concrete thinking between 7 and 11 years; and propositional thinking at the age of 11 years and over.<sup>15</sup> Piaget is one of the originators of the modern methods of learning Mathematics and other disciplines. Goldman, in agreement with him, wrote that children cannot understand much due to their intellectual immaturity, their linguistic limitations, and restricted experience.<sup>16</sup> Therefore he came to the conclusion:

The emphasis should be placed more and more upon using the natural experience of children so that the religious nature of that experience shall be known and placed alongside the experience of others, both in the past and the present.<sup>17</sup>

### RELIGIOUS

Consequently Goldman sees three stages of development in a child: a pre-religious one, a sub-religious, and a religious stage.<sup>18</sup> For what actually is religion? And what is the purpose of giving the children religious education? Goldman says it this way:

Fundamentally we must grow as persons towards God, and although many things external to us can help or impede our development, our religious growth is an individual and personal encounter with the divine.<sup>19</sup>

Well, does not this sound very subjectivistic? This is completely different from what the Holy Scriptures call "the fear of the LORD" which must be taught to the children. Besides, what Goldman says here could be said of any religion and is not distinctly Christian.

### FUNDAMENTALLY ONE

It may be clear that the psychological and religious aspects are running parallel and are fundamentally the same.

"Religion" is approached in a "psychological" way! Therefore it is no wonder that we read this also:

The basis of children's needs must be the starting point and the ultimate purpose of Christian education.<sup>20</sup>

An eye-opener is this sentence:

. . . critical thinking about the Bible and religious belief must be encouraged in the late junior years.<sup>21</sup>

### THE BIBLE

Herewith we have arrived at Goldman's ideas about the Bible. We quote the following lines that speak for themselves:

The Bible is the major source book of Christianity for adults. It is written by adults for adults and is plainly not a children's book.<sup>22</sup>

And also this:

If, however, life themes are couched initially in terms of the children's experiences, biblical material can then be used to illustrate them.<sup>23</sup>

Further:

Life is not used to illustrate Bible truths, but the Bible is used to illustrate life's experience.<sup>23</sup>

And this:

The use of children's experience illustrated by Bible incidents is consistent with the Bible itself. For the Bible is a narrative of men's experiences in their varying relationships with God.<sup>23</sup>

Goldman admits<sup>24</sup> he has been influenced by existentialism. This is what one can clearly notice here.

### LIFE-THEMES

We just read something about "life-themes". Let us explain what Goldman means by that. His starting-point is the thesis that the Bible is not a children's book, as we just heard. It is too difficult for them. Religious education has to start in a different way. It has to be "child-centred" and not "Bible-centred". Is not the language of the literature of religion, especially in the Bible, almost entirely based upon analogy and metaphor? Take e.g. Psalm 23: "The LORD is my Shepherd". But for the child to grasp this concept in any way, he must have some concept of sheep farming.<sup>25</sup> Well, this is the method to be used all during the period between the ages of 6 and 17 years, with the necessary gradual changes of course and adaption to the particular age of the child.

In his second book, *Readiness for Religion*, Goldman works out a system of life-themes. For early childhood he recommends e.g. dead pets, accidents, "Mummy having a baby", churchgoing. As for middle childhood there are e.g. homes, friends, people who help us, shepherds and sheep,

(Continued on page 10)

# To My Sister

Dear Sister,

Yes, I have received your letter and I have read it several times. I am glad that you wrote to me and that you want me to help you so that you may get out of your depression. I do not know where you live, whether that is where your letter was stamped or not. But if you live there, then you will find with your pastor an open ear and a heart that is only too ready to help. And would it not be doing just what the Lord has told us through His servant James if you should go to your pastor or ask him to come to talk to you? What does the Lord tell us to do when one is dejected, in low spirits because of his sins? Then, He says, you should call the elders of the Church that they may pray over you, and we also have the promise that the prayer of faith will save you and that the Lord will raise you up and place you on the height of redemption, for also this promise is

added: and if you have committed sins, you will be forgiven.

You ask me in the first place whether leading a sinful life can bring you to the point of a nervous breakdown. My answer is that that is not only possible but that it certainly will happen if you do not repent. You will recall what David said when he continued in his sinful attitude instead of confessing his sin and asking for forgiveness. Then he became an old man in a short time: his body wasted away, his strength was dried up as by the heat of summer.

If you are leading a sinful life, then you will certainly have a nervous breakdown if you do not return to your God. I hope, of course, that you will realize that leading a sinful life is something completely different from discovering many sins and weaknesses in your life. The latter is something which we do every day, but we all may comfort ourselves with the words from our Form for the celebration of the Lord's Supper: that no sin or weakness which remains in us against our will can hinder us from being received of God in grace. That many sins and weaknesses are still found with us is not the same as living in sin, and I hope sincerely that you will keep this difference in mind.

You further ask me whether you can get over a depression by asking for repentance and promising to live a good Christian life and hoping and believing in God.

Here I must say, "No, you cannot."

When your sins are pressing you down, then you can get away from underneath that pressing yoke only by confessing your sins to our God and by trusting His promise that with Him there is plenteous redemption. Remember what the father said when the prodigal son returned and blurted out, "I am no longer worthy to be called your son"? Not one word of reproach; there was only happiness. The son did not make any promises for the future: he just confessed that he had been totally wrong in the past. See, that is the only way in which you can be freed from your depression: Confess your sins to the Lord our

Father, and *ask* for His help for the future. Do not make any promises! If you do, your confidence would rest upon your own achievements or intentions, and you must have discovered that that is a very shaky ground to stand on. You cannot find rest and peace of mind unless you seek it in God's mercies alone, His mercies as He has made them known and given them so clearly and abundantly in our Saviour.

And when you confess your sins to our Father, then you will receive forgiveness. Then you will also ask something for the future: you will *ask* for strength to stay away from sin. Don't expect that you will have overcome sin completely all at once; it may be a long, long process. And I repeat it: Don't make any promises to the Lord for the future! Simply expect from His mercies the forgiveness of your sins and the strength to fight against that ever-returning desire to do it again; and expect and ask for that forgiveness and for that strength every day anew. When you do that, you will experience that the tension leaves you gradually and that the light of God's countenance shines upon you.

Did you ever read the Fifth Head of Doctrine of the Canons of Dort? Perhaps you did. Anyway, will you read it again, and read it aloud so that you can hear yourself, that you read it to yourself? (It starts on page 455 of our *Book of Praise*.) Will you?

And then: Would you go and talk to your pastor? I will be happy to help you insofar as I am able to do via our magazine. But you realize that via a magazine we can never go into details. You cannot write how things are for fear that someone may recognize you; and I cannot deal with every aspect of your situation for I do not know enough about your case. A talk of half an hour with your pastor perhaps will help you more than twenty letters of mine might do, although others, too, can read our correspondence and could benefit from it, for we all carry our sinful nature with us. But the Lord has joined the promise of forgiveness to the command to call the elders of the Church when one is depressed because of sin.

Would you do that, please?

Yours in the Lord,

W.W.J. VANOENE



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SORRY

"I'm sorry, I'm Canadian Reformed."

You've most likely never said it that way. No one of us goes around saying things like that. Some of us, perhaps, never even mention their denominational position; it's too risky, and besides, it demands a lot of explanation. "Canadian Reformed, what kind of church is that, sir?" And away we go, socking it to them about the Synod of Dordrecht, the Liberation, Guido de Brès, and all that stuff . . .

Recently someone said to me, "We continually seem to be apologizing for being what we are, Canadian Reformed." And I add sadly, some even have the nasty habit of downgrading the churches of which they are members. The other man's grass is always greener, it seems, also the grass between the pulpit and the pews.

Indeed, we're always explaining what we are not. Not Roman Catholic, not Presbyterian, not Christian Reformed. "I'm sorry, I'm Canadian Reformed." Whatever that is, because it always seems to raise a few eyebrows, "Come again, what did you say you were?"

I can remember that when I was younger I could sometimes dread the question, "What church do you attend?" I mean, the church I went to just didn't function publicly, it didn't relate, and for the majority of my fellow Canadians, it didn't even exist. Despite all my apologetic explaining, at most they'd conclude, "Oh, a DUTCH church." And the intonation would make me cringe. Who wants to go to a Dutch Church? Young people want to belong and be accepted. Sometimes I wished I could say, "I'm Presbyterian", like most people. Or perhaps even, "Sorry, I don't go to church". That would have been very acceptable to many people, I'm sure. People generally appreciate such nonsense.

You know, being a foreigner

## Circumspection...

or having a distinct ethnic background is one thing. This country is made up of displaced persons. But attending some far-out, unknown type of church, for some that's the limit. They may go, but would rather not talk about it. And when they do, the odd time, they apologize with that rather lame smile, "I'm sorry, I'm Canadian Reformed."

Isn't it time we rid ourselves once and for all of this apologetic attitude? The church is our "true love" and should not be a secret love. Sincere, true love needs no apology, carries no shame. "Now I'll shout it from the highest hill, and my true love's no secret anymore." We should crawl out of our corner, face the world and DARE TO BE. That's some positive thinking, which could be quite beneficial to ourselves and Canada.

Dare to be, because we must be! If I could, I'd be something else, but I can't. I must be Canadian Reformed, it's what the LORD asks of me. Wow! Our churches do not only have the right to exist, they have the duty. Church membership is not a matter of traditional background or personal preference, it's a case of divine reverence. Obedience to the very command of the Lord to be "the pillar and bulwark of truth" [1 Timothy 3:15], to adhere to the full Gospel of salvation, defended and advocated unabridged and freely by our churches in our creeds.

When mom and dad came to this country, I'm sure they didn't relish the thought of establishing a "new church". As a matter of fact, such a church was never founded. "Those who organized the Canadian Reformed Churches did not initiate something new,"

Rev. W.W.J. VanOene capably wrote in his book, INHERITANCE PRESERVED. He is so right. It was simply a necessity to preserve, defend, and advocate the full heritage of reformed faith. Not something, humanly speaking, which they liked to do, but what they had to do. For Christ's sake.

We'll just have to carry on. Not like stubborn traditionalists, but as obedient children. And in doing so, we may set a few goals for ourselves. Hasn't the time come that this nation must be adequately confronted with the essence of reformed faith, ecclesiastically, socially, and politically? After 25 years, we now have a fully Canadian generation of people who know the country and the culture. People who owe it to the Lord and Canada to live and present the truth. People who certainly should be able to show under Christ's necessary blessing and with fitting humility that there is a faithful church in this country. A church KEPT faithful by the grace of God. Or am I asking too much?

We'll have to do a lot of explaining, yes. Many people just don't know. Many don't want to know. But cut out the apologetic smile. Simply invite and encourage people to share the rich treasures you've inherited. Which means, at least, that you've got to know your stuff. The lame smile often results from a basic ignorance of the Gospel and the Creeds, and in that sense only it is a foolish grin. Don't look stupid; be sincere, frank and to the point.

Say it with enthusiasm. Defend it well. "I'm glad I'm Canadian Reformed." It just might rub off. Cid

# press review

## THE LUTHERAN CHURCH— MISSOURI SYNOD.

In CHRISTIAN NEWS of December 29, 1975, an article appeared under the heading "LCMS President Refuses to Follow Will of His Church". As the reader may remember, a struggle is going on in this church between those who believe the Bible to be the inerrant Word of God and those who do no longer believe this. In 1974 Dr. Tietjen was suspended as professor of the Lutheran Concordia Theological Seminary because of his liberal teachings. With others he formed "Seminex" (Seminary in exile). In July 1975 the convention of LCMS, held at Anaheim in California, declared that students from "Seminex" could not receive a place in the ministry in the LCMS. Further it was stated in a resolution that district presidents who would not comply with the decisions and would ordain students from "Seminex" who followed the liberal theological ideas, had to resign or be dismissed. Literally it says (Resolution 5-02A) that when a district president refuses to resign, "the Synodical president, after consultation with the Council of Presidents, shall inform the said district at least 60 days before the beginning of the next regularly scheduled district convention, that a vacancy exists in the office of said district president, and that the said district is to elect a successor for the unexpired term in harmony with this resolution and according to said district's procedures." Before the Anaheim convention the president of the LCMS, the Rev. Dr. Jacob Preus, promoted the cause of the "conservatives", and many had great expectations of this man. How are things today? We read in the above mentioned article:

Last week President Preus opposed the will of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and refused to obey Resolution 5-02A of the synod's Anaheim convention.

After quoting part of the mentioned resolution the article continues:

Almost all "Seminex" graduates, who have not been certified by the LCMS, are defending the theology of their

"Seminex" professors. The LCMS contends that this theology is contrary to the Bible. "Seminex" professors maintain that the LCMS should be broad enough to allow for professors and pastors who teach (1) the Bible contains errors; (2) man evolved from an ape-like creature; (3) man has no immortal soul; (4) the first chapters of Genesis are not historical; (5) some of the miracles the New Testament says were performed by Jesus never really happened; (6) some of the words attributed to Jesus in the New Testament were fabricated by the early church; (7) Jesus was in error when He said that Moses wrote at least most of the first five books of the Bible; (8) the eighth century prophet Isaiah did not write Isaiah 40-66; (9) women should be ordained to the Holy Ministry; and (10) it is not sinful to murder unborn infants.

The LCMS had made it clear that it does not want pastors and professors who defend the liberal theological position of "Seminex". It does not want district presidents who support the position of "Seminex". It demanded that its president take action against district presidents who support the anti-scriptural position of "Seminex". Preus in the past in speeches prepared in part for him by conservatives has opposed the theology of "Seminex". Preus is no longer listening to these conservatives.

The office of Dr. Herman Neunaber, president of the LCMS's Southern Illinois District, was the office of the first district president defending the theology of "Seminex" which the LCMS 1975 convention resolution required President Jacob Preus to declare vacant. He had until December 22 to declare the office vacant. Neunaber has refused to comply with the LCMS resolution and is still defending the theology of "Seminex". Although Preus had led a number of his conservative supporters into believing that he would declare Neunaber's office vacant, Preus changed his mind and has now ruled that there should still be room within the LCMS for those like Neunaber . . . . Preus says that those who support the Resolution 5-02A of the Anaheim convention and want him to declare vacant the office of district presidents who defend the theology of "Seminex" and ordination and installation of "Seminex" graduates are the "crazies on the right". He told the LCMS that he should no longer be identified with these conservatives and that he has moved to "the middle". . . . "I am doing this for the sake of peace and harmony in the church".

It is a hard thing to obey the word of Paul in Romans 16:17, especially when so many are on the wrong track already, and are accusing of intolerance those who want to stay in the right track and to abide by the truth. Romans 16:17 reads (my own translation): "I admonish you, brethren, to have an eye on those who cause the dissensions and stumblingblocks contrary to the doctrine which you have learned; and turn away from them."

How far things are in the once orthodox Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, can also be seen in an article in CHRISTIAN NEWS of January 12, 1976. I quote:

In October the pastoral conference in the Florida-Georgia District passed a resolution mandating a joint communion service with fellow brothers in Christ in the LCA and ALC ("Lutheran Church in America" and "American Lutheran Church").

In connection with this, the following questions are asked:

Will the synodical administrators seek out the "guilty" involved in a joint communion service in Southern California a few weeks ago? Will District Presidents, especially those who do not follow the same practice themselves, begin the steps of doctrinal discipline against countless violators?

LCMS conservatives have been urging Preus to take action against those who are violating the fellowship principles of the LCMS, but Preus has refused to take any action and has been permitting LCMS clergymen to commune with liberal Lutherans not in doctrinal fellowship with the LCMS. These liberal Lutherans in the LCA allow their professors to teach that Jesus is not God and did not rise from the dead. The LCA has officially endorsed the murder of unborn infants . . . . LCMS "moderates" contend it is permissible to commune with those who support the murder of unborn infants.

We can see here again that when deviation from the truth as confessed in the Creeds is first allowed, it later on becomes the more difficult to do away with it. Let us therefore watch and remain faithful to the Confessions of the Church which we have in order to help us remain faithful to the Word of God. It will preserve the congregation of the LORD Jesus Christ for Him.

J. GEERTSEMA

*J-14 JERUSALEM, Israel: This aerial view of the Western Wall shows the proximity of the Wall, which was built as a retainer for the Temple Mount, to the Dome of the Rock. (Courtesy of Israel Government.)*

# school X crossing

"MOMMY DOES NOT LOVE ME ANYMORE!"

In the previous article I referred to Matthew 24:12, where Christ says that because lawlessness is multiplied, the love of most people will grow cold. That is true for the world but also for the church. That is a word that parents and children and teachers and students must take to heart.

What should parents do when their children become more and more lawless? When they reject the authority of Christ given to their parents? Should parents then just sit back and complain about the young people of these days? Should they throw up their hands in despair and lament that they can do nothing about it?

When parents let their children get away with things, then they had better realize and never forget that they as parents are the ones to be blamed for it that the *love* between the parents and children grows COLD. If we do not discipline our children, we do not *love* our children. That is what the Bible teaches us several times.

I read a beautiful example recently. A little boy had been disobedient to his mother. At the time it happened that the mother for some reason did nothing about it. She simply let it go. She did not discipline her child for it. Do you know what happened? A few minutes later that same disobedient little boy came up to his mother and pulled at her dress and said: "Mommy does not love me anymore."

That little boy really hit the nail on the head. In these simple and few words he spoke a great scriptural truth. Do we understand this example? Do we really understand that our lack of discipline is a lack of *love*?

## LOVE IN THE REFRIGERATOR.

The Lord says that because lawlessness is multiplied, the love of most people will grow *cold*. It will cool off. It will be refrigerated. That applies also for the love between parents and children. And we should

not forget that it applies just as much to the love between the teachers and the children in school. That relationship in school is not a cold businesslike relationship, but a relationship of love. Our teachers are to *love* these covenant children of the Lord. And the students are to love their teachers as a father and mother. It is a remarkable thing that in the Bible the name father and mother is used not only for the natural father and mother. Joseph, for example, was a father to Pharaoh and Deborah was a mother for Israel. Our teachers, too, are fathers and mothers to our children in school. Is not the school the extension of the home? That may be of great comfort for the teachers. It also shows them the great responsibility they have towards these children. This is indeed a tremendously important *calling* for the teachers. Where the parents cannot give the children this education, there the Lord gives to the teachers the many hours of the day, five days a week, this wonderful calling to instruct the children as their fathers and mothers. Let the parents never forget this either. Let us all continually pray the Lord to give the teachers the same strength and wisdom and insight and love that we as parents need.

Now where lawlessness is multiplied, there the love of the parents and the children and of the teachers and the children will diminish. Yes, it will grow cold!

That stands to reason when we know our Bible.

For love is the fulfilment of the law! As such it is completely opposite to lawlessness. Love and lawlessness can never go together. They are always opposed to each other and always exclude each other. Where the one is, the other one cannot exist. Where the one comes, the other one goes. Where the one appears, the other disappears. Without the law there is no love. Parents may make themselves believe that they still love their children, but if they are not laying down the law for them, they are only fooling themselves.

Children may fool themselves in

believing that they still love their parents and teachers, but it is not true when at the same time they do not respect them in their God-given authority over them. Then these same children do not love their parents or teachers. Because lawlessness is multiplied, the love of most people grows cold. Do we only look to the world for this cooled-off love? Or should we not also look at ourselves to find out what the temperature is?

## OPEN THE REFRIGERATOR!

Let us all examine ourselves in this respect. Parents, teachers, and children. What is the temperature in our schools? That depends a lot on the temperature in our families. Have we taken our own temperature lately? How can we do that? Well, simply with the Law of the Lord. By submitting ourselves to the Word of God. When we don't do that anymore, then the Church itself will end up in the refrigerator. Then we ourselves will grow stiff with the cold. Then the flame of the warm love to God and to each other will gradually be extinguished. It will go out. Then we become just like the world. Then we will be just as cold and just as lawless. For we are either warm with true love or cold with lawlessness.

And where we have already grown cold in love, let us throw open wide that refrigerator. Let our love warm up again. Those very commandments of the Lord are indeed heartwarming! That Word of God warms up our love. It makes us burn with an ardent desire to serve the Lord in all things. And it assures us and our children and our teachers of the salvation of the Lord.

## ENDURANCE WILL BE REWARDED.

Lawlessness multiplied and love refrigerated! These are not very encouraging and heartwarming words. And yet the Lord has warned us that this will happen. But at the same time He adds Matthew 24:13 to it. He that endures to the end is the one that will be saved. There is hope. But then we must "endure", literally "remain under". That means we must remain under the good law of the Lord. We must continue to submit ourselves to the whole Word of our God. It is our calling to keep on living, and working and teaching and loving, under these commandments of the Lord. Doing that, we

(Continued on page 11)

# news medley

Thank you, thank you, all those who took the trouble of writing me about the proper word for the body of deacons. I could not find the word "deaconry" in the dictionaries and encyclopedias which are at my personal disposal; but there are readers who wrote me or even phoned me long-distance to tell me that in their dictionary (apparently specific Canadian-English) the word "deaconry" was given as "body of deacons". It is, therefore, correct to use that term, although deaconate seems to be more formal English. Satisfied? I am insofar as being at ease now that "deaconry" is not wrong. The help which I received via letters was sometimes even accompanied by praising words for our medley. Oh, I am not so conceited as to think that everyone is very happy with it. I know better. One of my best friends wrote me that medley should change since in many churches there is a measure of resentment against it. Someone else wrote me, "You should get out of that column . . . . As I see it this column should bring the Canadian Reformed community closer together. That unifying element that should be there simply isn't there the way it should be." But in another letter I read, "Further more I would like to take this opportunity to compliment you on our well-read, often criticized, nevertheless enjoyable News Medley. It is good, especially in our isolated west, to stay well informed about our sister churches. Your column does its part to bring the churches closer together."

Here I am again, smack in the middle. I think that I shall just continue the way I have been doing it. If you try to please everyone, you please no one. If you just go your own way, people know at least what they can expect from you. A weathervane shows only where the wind comes from but never points anyone to any particular goal.

Having solved our linguistic problem with the help of our readers, we now shall pay attention to the news. There is good news, there is bad news, there is news that can get worse, there is news that cannot be told.

For the benefit of the western readers we start in the East.

In the Brampton bulletin, the Rev. C. VanDam makes some remarks about those members who are ill and what they should do. He reminds the brethren and sisters who fall ill of their obligation to at least inform the elders of the Church. Neither the ministers nor the elders, he says, are "all-knowing". But a more important argument which he uses is: "In the calling of the office-bearers there is a recognition of the Lord's gift of the communion of faith in which one lives". It should not happen that the minister or the section-elders are informed that so-and-so is in the hospital and has undergone surgery. If prayer before an operation is not desired, what value has a prayer after a operation? I could understand it when a minister said, "If they don't want me to pray with them before the operation, I am not going to do it after the operation either."

Rev. VanDam also speaks about the prayer in the midst of the Congregation, the public prayer on Sundays. "Indeed", he writes, "the old custom of people specifically requesting congregational prayer for the sick, or any

other need, is a Biblical and therefore a good one." Here is another element that should not be forgotten. We all should be aware of it that in the communion of saints things do not go automatically but that the cooperation of all and everyone is needed to make this communion work the way it should work. Then things should come from both sides and not just from the side of the Congregation.

A last item from Brampton: Rev. VanDam was going to start (and has begun already by now) a series of lectures on the Epistle to the Galatians. "The book of Galatians will be studied in perspective of Home Mission," we read. I wonder how that can be done. I could see how you can speak about Home Mission in the perspective and the light of the Epistle to the Galatians. The other way around seems sort of strange to me. But I am sure that my colleague will have fixed that up.

From Brampton to Toronto is not that far.

Catechism classes are more or less in the center of the attention the last few months. They are in Toronto, too, as you will recall from previous times. In that city, however, they appear to bear a richer fruit even: they are of importance not only to the students but also to their parents. Listen: "Occasionally parents who have children in different classes stay at church and instead of waiting upstairs they join us in the classroom. This interest of the parents is highly appreciated and is good for the young people. If you want, feel free to join us. One is never too old to learn."

It is a good thing that the parents show such interest. I am certain that the minister also enjoys it. And: for the parents themselves it is beneficial. They see what their children learn or have to learn; they can check whether their offspring behave well, whether they know their lesson, whether they pay good attention, and, besides, they can pick up a few grains of wisdom themselves. Is it not so oftentimes that in many instances no special study is made of the Confession of the Church after one has made profession of faith? And then we do not even speak of Church history! Perhaps more parents should join their children in this manner. However, then the facilities may become too crowded and that would bring its own difficulties.

Hamilton's bulletin tells us "Catechism instruction facilities are discussed because the present rooms used are too small." I do not know, of course, which rooms are being used. Many moons ago I was shown the facilities with a certain measure of pride and satisfaction. They appeared quite satisfactory to me. It could be, of course, that the classes are getting bigger and, since Hamilton does not have its own minister, it will be difficult to split them and to have classes another evening too in order to relieve the situation. And that would be a better solution, but for that you have to be free also with respect to a minister and his time.

Another item in Hamilton's bulletin made me exclaim, "Oh, Oh, here comes trouble!" It was the following part from a brief report on a Consistory meeting. " 'Family pews' is discussed and the consistory stimulates the idea of an old 'good custom' of families sitting together. All those who wish to have family pews are requested to inform the consistory with the number of seats wanted."

Yes, it is a good old custom that families sit together. And a consistory that tries to promote that is to be commended for this. But I have my grave doubts about the



manner in which Hamilton is going to promote that. There will, if I understand this well, be many "reserved seats" in the Hamilton churchbuilding. Thus someone who comes in to visit will have to look for a pew which does not bear the card "Reserved". That makes a miserable impression. And if a stranger comes in, or a strange family, and inadvertently lets itself down on a reserved pew, I foresee what happens. I see it happen in my mind, for that is what happened to ourselves: an angry family is standing in the aisle and gives us to understand in no uncertain terms that this is their pew. Meanwhile, the auditorium has filled up to a great extent, the non-reserved pews are taken, for people with a reserved pew take the liberty of coming rather late, and the strangers are looking left and right where they might find an empty pew, for they like to sit together, too, being strangers. Finally they locate a place here, another place there, and so on, if, namely, they have not decided to march out right away. That's what I would do in all likelihood if I had entered a churchbuilding somewhere and had received a neat bulletin with the words "We welcome any strangers who might worship with us today", and then discovered that I was not so welcome after all.

I wish the brethren well and much wisdom, for they will need it. Perhaps there will never be a general synod that is burdened with appeals about the pews, but I can forecast that the consistory will have to spend many an hour, trying to iron out difficulties concerning the pews and, if they appoint one, frequent changes in the committee to arrange the reservation of pews! After one has served on such a committee for six months he will be happy to yield his place to another victim.

From Hamilton to Ebenezer Burlington.

Apparently the Consistory found time to discuss a few odds and ends, some of which had been on the agenda for quite a while. One of these points was "the issue of 'being away on weekends', be it in summer or, for longer periods, in winter . . . . When a growing number of members of our churches go 'down south' in winter time, they should consider to come together on Sunday to listen to God's Word and have the communion of saints." That is the conclusion and the advice to which the Ebenezer Consistory came.

The same Consistory decided to ask the Toronto Church three questions regarding the Church at Butiptiri. These three questions are:

1. How are things going in and with this new sister-church?
2. In what manner should official relationship with this sister-church be established?
3. What is done in Irian Jaya to establish a kind of 'federation of churches' with those who are the fruit of the mission from The Netherlands?

It is good that some interest is shown in the sister-church which was established some years ago. We should, of course, watch out that we are not going to try to regulate things from Canada. We can offer any help that we are able to give, but the action should come from the Churches there which have been established and which still enjoy the presence and the advice of a missionary even though it is not one sent by one of the Canadian Churches. And as for correspondence, I think that correspondence should be with a federation and not with individual churches. That is, of course, the reason why Ebenezer Burlington also asked about a federation. Let us not forget the Churches there. Especially now that the Rev. Knigge has left the mission

field and, besides, another area has been chosen to start work in, we tend to pay attention only to the new developments. It is good to remember.

A last item from Ebenezer Burlington: the Committee for Evangelism and Public Relations wrote, "Although, perhaps, the Committee has no direct task here, it was considered from a public relations point of view, whether the front page of our bulletin could not use a face-lift. (Second Debut, no doubt, vO) No matter how beautiful and important the content, the outside is a rather drab looking affair. Suggestions for improvement will be forwarded to the consistory in due time." I like bulletins with a picture on them or some other figure or drawing. But I wish to comfort the brethren with the information that, even though there is only type on outside as well as inside, it looks neat and compares favourably with bulletins I have seen from "other churches" which did have a picture on the cover but were poorly mimeographed and sloppily edited.

Rehoboth Burlington deserves some attention, too. Because of the growth of the Congregation it was decided to increase the number of elders by two and to make six wards instead of the present five. Oh, oh! One of the largest Churches and still growing. I wished the Churchbuilding had been two-thirds the size of what it is. Then there would already have been a movement to institute another Church in this area. It will become somewhat easier for the elders with a re-division of the Congregation into wards. But when the Congregation grows to such a size, then there is the danger that a minister either becomes very lazy (everyone knows that he cannot keep up with all the work and therefore he does very little) or that he becomes a nervous wreck because he wants to do everything and he cannot do it, it is too heavy and it becomes an obsession. I hope that my brother Stam will succeed in avoiding both these pitfalls.

It is a reason for gratitude that we are so blessed also materially. But material prosperity brings with it the danger that the gifts of God are not used properly or that they are wasted. Perhaps I quoted it before, but I recall that prof. Ohmann said at an office-bearers conference that it is one of the most difficult things: to fully enjoy what the Lord has given and to enjoy them in such a manner that the Lord can bless also the manner in which we enjoy His gifts. I had to think of that when I read a warning in the Rehoboth bulletin against the misuse of God's gifts and then specifically the abuse of alcohol. It was more a general article, and therefore I mention it here. Let us realize for what purpose the Lord has given us His treasures and gifts and let us also in the manner in which we use them show our gratitude to Him, without letting ourselves being brought into the power of anything, as the Apostle Paul commands us.

It is about time that we leave Ontario and proceed towards the western provinces. In the Calgary bulletin the Rev. Boersema wrote an extensive article on the celebration of the Lord's Supper. (In spite of the fact that criticism has been levelled against the use of the word "celebration" in connection with the Lord's Supper, as was done in **The Banner**, I still stick to the use of that particular term.) The Consistory decided to have the celebration more often and then only in one service on that particular Sunday.

Edmonton has its Schobert Organ now officially for sale. Perhaps it has been sold by the time our readers see these lines. Besides, I do not think that they would have

had a chance, for "Bids from members of the Canadian Reformed Church will be given preferential treatment over outside bids." Since the word "Church" was written in the singular, I took it as referring to the Edmonton Church and therefore assume that bids from Toronto or Brampton would have no chance even if they were higher. Anyway, I have some better organ news for you, so we proceed hastily to Smithers.

In the Smithers bulletin we are reminded of the small beginning of the school: Five dollars was given by a brother visiting from the Netherlands; now the school has a budget of seventy-five thousand dollars per year. Taking courage from that, we are told that the organ fund has started with a gift of ten dollars. "The organ committee has been busy in gathering information and have received encouraging news that it is possible to have a real pipe organ installed in the church." Congratulations!

Yes, and now for the organ news to New Westminster. They did it again. Two brethren presented a number of suggestions to the Consistory and the result is: "It was decided to buy the organ of the First Presbyterian Church in Vancouver (slated for demolition this year) and a new, enlarged console, and to install an organ using parts of the Presbyterian organ and our own organ, selling the remainder (a virtually complete organ with 14 ranks)."

Up Smithers, up Smithville, up Winnipeg, here is your chance. Where can you get a fourteen rank pipe organ from such a trustworthy address? Yes, the best parts will be gone, have disappeared into the innards of the New Westminster organ, but what is left will be sufficient for even a large congregation. Don't thank me when you have succeeded. My sufficient reward will be your singing the praises of the Lord at the accompaniment of an instrument which, of all instruments, I love most.

A final word from the Valley.

Taking advantage of a planned presence of Prof. L. Selles in the Valley this coming summer (summer??) the Board of William of Orange School is attempting to organize a teachers course in the Valley, similar to the one held in Hamilton during July. It will deal with historical, cultural, and religious background of the New Testament. Beautiful thing when also in other parts of the country the blessings of our College can be received and when our professors are willing to spend part of their summer holidays to further the cause of Christian education.

I am coming to a close.

Not all news has been reported. But the above will do, I presume.

Thank you for your attention.

See you next time, I hope.

vO

### DRAMA AND THESE MODERN DAYS - Cont'd from page 3

the seasons, gifts. For late childhood and pre-adolescence there are a.o. myself, creation, light, water, law and order, names, stories. From the last-mentioned group we give a brief quotation to give our readers a fair idea of what Goldman means. Here is what he suggests as to be used by the children on the life-theme of Light (with a capital!):

- 1) The Growth of Light - man's discovery of various artificial lights. As light has come, so man has been less afraid. Jesus casts out fear.
- 2) The Source of Light - the sun. Without light there can be no life. Man first worshipped the sun, then the God who created the sun. The sun as the centre of our universe. Men use light for describing God and Jesus.
- 3) The Image of Light - we need light to see. How the eye works. Seeing things in different ways. Mental images. Jesus as the image of God.
- 4) The Path of Light - finding our way by day and night. Looking at the sky. Lights that guide and warn. Jesus gives guidance.
- 5) The Power of Light - light as a source of energy - mechanical, chemical and electrical. People who employ this energy. The power of Jesus.
- 6) The Wonder of Light - light and colour. The artist's, poet's, and musician's use of light. Now they have been inspired by Jesus the Light.<sup>26</sup>

There is even a separate "Readiness for Religion" series, designed deliberately to help the children explore and experience as much for themselves as possible.<sup>27</sup>

Goldman himself summarized all this in the name which he would give to this pattern: "Developmental Religious Education".<sup>28</sup>

### DRAMA

Now finally, what does Goldman say about using drama? He is very much in favour of it, as may be clear from the following quotations:

Because children cannot always reason their way into a situa-

tion, especially where there are problems, they will feel or fantasise their way into it. This is why play is an important educational activity. It is not merely a letting off of steam but play makes a serious contribution towards children's discovery of knowledge.<sup>29</sup>

Perhaps this is one major problem for religious teachers that they find it difficult to concede that such a serious topic as religion can be approached playfully or the child encouraged to fantasise about God. Yet this is his natural method of thinking, of expressing himself and searching.<sup>30</sup>

So far about playing in general. Now about drama:

It is essential that children themselves present their own findings, or produce a dramatisation, or talk about their exhibition of work.<sup>31</sup>

Concerning the pre-adolescents Goldman wrote this:

Looking up their own material, translating stories into their own experiences, dramatising on a tape-recording or on the stage their own interpretations, painting, drawing, . . . is important in any subject. In religious education it is vital.<sup>32</sup>

We realize this sort of "drama" is not directly biblical. However, we have to take into account that these dramas are supposed to be on "life-themes" which work themselves towards the Bible — although they are performed in the children's own interpretation, according to their own "experiences" — which means "existentialistically"!

We would not like to accuse all the "Christian" schools of fully agreeing with the above-mentioned theories when they have introduced "biblical plays". Yet we are afraid that they are somewhat under the influence of the "spirit of the times".

(To be continued)

G· VAN RONGEN

<sup>14</sup> R.J. Goldman, *Religious Thinking*, page 2 — <sup>15</sup> Same, page 19ff — <sup>16</sup> R.J. Goldman, *Readiness for Religion*, page 38 — <sup>17</sup> Same, page 39 — <sup>18</sup> Same, page 40 — <sup>19</sup> Same, page 11 — <sup>20</sup> Same, page 65 — <sup>21</sup> Same, page 69 — <sup>22</sup> Same, page 71 — <sup>23</sup> Same, page 72 — <sup>24</sup> R.J. Goldman, *Religious Thinking*, page 3 — <sup>25</sup> Same, page 14 — <sup>26</sup> R.J. Goldman, *Readiness for Religion*, pages 143-4 — <sup>27</sup> Same, page 119 — <sup>28</sup> Same, page 193 — <sup>29</sup> Same, page 78 — <sup>30</sup> Same, page 86 — <sup>31</sup> Same, page 123 — <sup>32</sup> Same, page 150.

# A Thin Wall — A Fiery Wall

The antichrist is always only one step away. That sounds alarming but is the simple conclusion from the word of our Saviour, "I send you in the midst of ravening wolves."

Although no one is completely immune from their attacks, it stands to reason that satan's attacks are concentrated on the 'seed' of the Church. He understands better than most christians that one who has the youth has the future.

Another conclusion: there is only a *thin wall* between christian education and antichrist.

Two quotations will illustrate that.

After the *Burlington Gazette* had been so kind to make room for public relations of the Trinity Christian School and the John Calvin Canadian Reformed School, the following letter appeared in the next issue:

*We Will All Have Another Extra Cost.*

Dear Editor,

In 1633, in Rome, Italy, Galileo was forced by the Church of Rome to recant

## SCHOOL CROSSING — Cont'd

have the assurance that we will be saved. Saved also from the destruction of our families, as we see so much of that all around us. Saved from the destruction of our schools. Other systems of education may deteriorate more and more. But a school where parents and teachers and children keep submitting themselves to the law of God, will be saved from that destruction. They will flourish and blossom and be a blessing to all.

That is not an easy thing to do. At least, not when we do it continuously. With all sorts of lawlessness around us, we may be tempted to give in also. In some cases I am afraid we have given in too much already. Let us be more and more reformed in our families. Then our schools will also become more and more reformed.

The Lord, our gracious God, grant us His grace that, whereas in the world it is getting colder and colder, in our families and in our schools it may get warmer and warmer continually. M. WERKMAN

his conclusion based on evidence, that the earth revolves around the sun and is not the centre of the universe.

In 1975, in Burlington, Ontario, Trinity Christian School and John Calvin School teach children "to appreciate the place religion has in the dissemination of facts."

Says Principal Mel Elzinga, "Let's face it, facts are facts but it is the interpretation of those facts where we differ."

The sacrifice of intellectual freedom and integrity to such religious barbarism (lvD) is one "cost" the parents of these children will not bear alone. We will all suffer for the blatant and transparent dishonesty inculcated by such an "educational philosophy."

Virgil D. Duff.

It is quite easy to point out the various stupidities and biases that are apparent in this expression of hate against christian education. That's why pointing them out is superfluous for our *Clarion* readers. Be it only added that this was not the first expression of hate. In previous years some have suggested that we all return to Holland, or even better to South Africa, that bastion of racism, and . . . of Dutch descent. The present writer lost the friendship of what had been for years good and nice neighbours. "Your own church? All right . . . but your own school? Unbearable!"

\* \* \* \* \*

The second illustration is taken from the *Christian Inquirer*, January 1976.

In Columbus, Ohio, "charges of child neglect laid against parents attending an unaccredited school have been dropped."

Good! says the reader.

But, before you say that, read on: "The Franklin County prosecutor had filed charges last November of child neglect against three couples, parents of five children enrolled in the Winchester Christian Academy. The action, which could have resulted in removal of the children from their homes, brought on a storm of protest from Christians throughout the state." And as a result, the charges were dropped.

Beautiful, says the reader.

But wait a moment! On what ground were they dropped? The American Constitution, which

pretends to protect liberty? Certainly not! Or maybe any other law that gives the parents the right to give their children a christian upbringing? Certainly not!

The charges were dropped after a demonstration of about 10,000 people in front of the Capitol building. If you then keep in mind that in the U.S.A. judges c.s. are elected by the population, it becomes quite clear that *there* is the reason for dropping the charges: fear of being voted out of office.

The article continues to inform us that "Heretofore, parents have been fined for failure to send their children to public or 'accredited' schools. According to attorney David Gibbs, there have been at least eight cases against Christian day schools in the last two years. Cases are actually against the parents rather than against the schools as such."

Eight cases in two years . . . and then not a public outcry. Those parents had to pay the fines in addition to the high education fees. This, then, is possible in the country with the Statue of Liberty. If I had told you that it happened in Russia or Cuba, you would have readily believed it. Those are communist countries.

For one who is not blind and deaf, the worst part of this second illustration (and were it only an 'illustration' . . .) is that the charges were *not dropped on the basis of the Law*. Without that massive demonstration the case would have been won by the prosecutor "according to the Law".

That makes you realize how thin the wall is in between our schools and antichrist.

\* \* \* \* \*

One would get scared, if there were nothing more than that paper-thin wall. But, Jesus, sending his sheep among the wolves, added: "Fear not, I have overcome the world."

There is another wall between our schools and antichrist. The LORD is a fiery wall around those who fear Him. And, "As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the LORD is round about His people, from this time forth and for evermore." (Psalm 125)

So, rest assured. But only because of the LORD's protection, and not because of any right that this apostate world, on either side of the Curtain, will ever 'grant' us. Their wall is paper-thin. G. VANDOOREN

## Letters-to-the-Editor

Dear Editor:

I was not surprised when your magazine and several of the churches objected to the fact that "The Good Word" publishes articles written by men who are not members of a Canadian or American Reformed Church. To do this was said to be "wrong". I was not surprised because I am well aware that this way of thinking is well established among members of our churches.

Now when I think about it again some time later, I am surprised. I ask myself, "How is it possible that this way of thinking has gained such a broad acceptance among us?"

It is said that when others write in it, the periodical is no longer Canadian Reformed, and that we sacrifice our identity by borrowing material from those outside of the churches. When this is said it is assumed that it should be evident to every one that this is the case, and so no one even tries to show from the Bible or from the Confessions or from decisions of assemblies of the churches that this is a part of the Canadian Reformed identity. I am surprised that it is felt that this does not need any further proof.

However, since when has it been the Reformed faith to believe that we are to accept and use only materials that are written by members of the churches with which one is affiliated? It is not the Canadian/American Reformed position and therefore part of the Canadian/American Reformed identity to say that God's gifts are limited to the Canadian/American Reformed Churches. There is nothing in our Confessions or Church Order which supports such a view.

The point is that this is a *new* teaching. I do not mean that this is the first time it is being promoted in the churches. I mean that this doctrine has never received official sanction in the churches.

Let us not act as if this is the official position of the Canadian/American Reformed Churches. Let those who hold this *new* view defend it thoroughly from Scripture and Confession and otherwise let them not promote it.

RALPH F. BOERSEMA  
(Calgary, Alberta)

Dear Editor:

Having read your article, "Interference" (*Clarion*, Volume 25, Number 1, January 10, 1976), I was appalled by the remarks about the duties of our civil authorities.

You seem concerned that too many (Reformed) people feel that the government "should take measures and regulate things". In my opinion, that is precisely the

task of the government; namely, to promote the general welfare of the public and to exercise the power of the sword. Article 36 Belgic Confession, upon which you, too, have called for support, claims as much when it directs that the "dissoluteness of men might be restrained". This does not call for a capitalist State. Nor does it call for a Socialist State. A government is not necessarily socialist when it implements socialistic programs. We need to distinguish between "socialistic" and "socialism".

A government is not called upon to "take-over" the economic aspect of our society; it is not a business institution. However, that does not mean it should allow economic enterprises to do whatever is expedient for them, for that would infringe upon (interfere with) other aspects of society. It must control the business enterprise in such a way that the general welfare of the public is promoted. Such a control does not at all call for a "take-over" of, or interference with, a citizen's (or businessman's) rights.

Nor does a free-market system work. It has never worked because "a government that governs least" cannot work best, for then it is not living up to its God-given task of promoting the general welfare but is allowing "dissoluteness".

I am rather perturbed that too many (Reformed) people are content with, and even desire, an individualist/capitalist type of government — a "laissez-faire" government. I, for one, cannot be at ease with this system when at the same time we are to confess the communion of saints and Article 36 Belgic Confession. We are inclined to use the same criteria to evaluate our governments' actions as the humanist political parties do. We, too, like to interpret our government's duties in economic terms. This is what Socialism does, as well as Capitalism. They are economic systems, not political. They have elevated the economic to the point that it determines all aspects of our life. And they have been adapted by governments as norms for governing. Both are convinced that only when their respective directives are followed "the golden rule will arrive". Both are working for the same end, only their means are different. This evaluation applies also to all our political parties.

To be sure, Mr. Trudeau definitely expounded his political philosophy in his televised speech concerning the free market system. I am sure that he, too, expects a golden future to arrive, and am apprehensive about his Socialist inclinations. But are we offering the right (Scriptural) solution when all we do is swing over to the other extreme of the pendulum which stands on the same Humanist principle?

Let us not start pushing panic-buttons

for our 1984 Orwellian Big Brother, but, rather, let us take up the challenge to which our Prime Minister has called us; namely, to debate the task of the State. And let us "supplicate for (our civil authorities) in (our) prayers that God may rule and guide them in all their ways, and that we may lead a tranquil life in all godliness and gravity".

J.A. ROUKEMA  
(Orangeville, Ontario)

*Your very letter proves that my warning was very timely, perhaps even overdue. vO*

## Books

Br. W.H. DEVRIES, 250 John Street, Fergus, Ontario N1M 1E9, has written another booklet for children, WOLF THE DOG.

Our brother does not claim to be a literary artist, but, whereas others who might master that art, fail to show us the products, he feels called to help filling a gap.

There is a great need for truly christian reading-material for our children. 'Christian' means for br. DeVries also (of course!) to admire God's handiwork in creation and creatures. The result is that there is a christian message in his booklets which, I am convinced, children will understand.

That's why we should promote such endeavours.

If even public school teachers welcome his efforts and products, should we, then, not encourage him by, first, buying his booklets for our children, and then, possibly, help him in whatever he might lack in trained and expert mastery of literature? Talents have to be worked with. They must be doubled. Here is an example.

It would not be the first time in history that a brother in all his simplicity shoots his arrows, thereby setting in motion a movement that should be carried further by others in our midst.

We boast, or rather we thank the LORD, in the growing number of Reformed Schools. But '*noblesse oblige*'. In Dutch: adeldom verplicht.

This announcement was written, not only to introduce this booklet to you, but also to challenge those among us who have writing talents, to get to their typewriters, and provide our schools, our children and their parents with something better than the 'baloney' that is offered in most of children's booklets.

Better a booklet from a not-perfect language-artist than a product from "the pen of a ready scribe" (Psalm 45) that leaves the Creator and Redeemer out of the picture.

G. VANDOOREN

## *The Dutch Churches on "Church & Evangelizing"*

The General Synod at Kampen saw fit to 'replace' the directives given by Synod Utrecht 1923 for the work of Evangelizing or 'Home-Mission'.

These 1923 directives, which can be found in *Get Out!* (page 37), have repeatedly been criticized, also in this booklet.

Now that more and more among us the awareness grows that we, either as Canadian Reformed Churches or as Canadian Reformed members (or both?), should become more active in this respect, and — as a result — questions multiply, asking: "in what manner must we set up and do this work?" — we should take notice of the new directives set up by the sister churches in the Netherlands.

We'll try to translate them as correctly as possible.

1. It belongs to the essence of Christ's Church to seek with the Gospel that is entrusted to her, also those who are strangers to or have become estranged from God and His service.

According to the apostolic command, the Church intercedes for all men before God, her Saviour, because "supplications, prayers, intercessions be made for all men" to Him "who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth." "This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour." (I Timothy 2:1, 3, 4)

The Church desires to reach all these men with the Word of God and to call them to the communion with God and His people (Canons of Dort II, 5).

2. The office-bearers shall, especially, by means of the preaching, catechesis and family-visitation remind the members of the congregation of this calling, and also equip them for this ministry.

3. The consistories shall 'accompany' (I can find no better word for the modern Dutch expression, vD) this ministry of the membership by means of supervision and instruction.

4. Public activities of Home-Mission shall not be started and done without consultation with and permission by the consistory.

5. In case Churches combine their activities in Home-Mission, they shall, as much as possible, have regard to the division of the federation of churches in (classical, regional, vD) regions.

6. Home-Mission activities of regional or national organizations are not allowed to take place without consultation with and permission from the consistory at the place where such activities are undertaken.

Thus far the new directives.

In *Opdracht* (Mandate), from which I quoted them, we also find a model *Instruction* for local Home-Mission Committees, which I hope to translate and publish in a next issue. (*Opdracht* is the 'contact-magazine' published by the national organization of Home-Mission Committees; every consistory and/or Home-Mission Committee should subscribe to it: c/o Mr. P. Van Hartingsveldt, Kanaalstraat 249, Lisse, Netherlands.)

From the remarks by M. Brandes in the same issue I summarize, first that it is to be appreciated that a General Synod tried hard to avoid, on the one hand methodistic practices, on the other a too strong binding of this work to the ecclesiastical offices. To the membership is granted the possibility and opportunity to take the initiative in this work.

However, these new directives say nothing about the calling of consistories to appoint committees to do the work, although synod stated that it is the calling of the *Church* (see directive No. 1).

Why not?

It is good to stimulate Home-Mission and "that the office of believers gets the possibility to take the initiative" (I quote here on purpose, vD), — but why then not assign to the consistories the *responsibility* that the congregation fulfils this mandate?

It is good to say, "The *Church* . . .", but is not the Church more than the sum of its members? Is it not the Church as organized under the authority of the special offices?

Now the real issue remains vague. If 1923 left too little room for initiative by the believers, 1975 leaves somewhat in the dark with whom the responsibility lies. The stress is, indeed, more on the responsibility of the members than was the case in 1923. This, however, produces a somewhat strange impression because 1975 wanted to put more stress on the need that all 'Evangelism' has to originate with "the Church".

Take again directive No. 1. If we take every word in its full meaning, the conclusion must be that the *only* difference between (Foreign) Mission and Evangelism is that the former takes place in a region where the Church is not yet planted, the latter in

a territory where the Church is already established.

\* \* \* \* \*

Thus far these remarks by M. Brandes.

Referring again to my booklet *Get Out!*, I trust that the reader will understand my (partial) agreement with these remarks.

It seems to be very difficult to formulate in precise terms which is the responsibility of the special office ("the Church") and which is the task of the believers, members of "the Church".

I have even some more questions. At the present I only mention my doubts (to say the least) when I read that consistories not only have to supervise evangelistic activities (complete agreement here) but also, in some way or other (these directives are not overly clear on this point) have to grant 'permission' (of all things!) to the believers, even if they want to hold a 'congress' or something in a certain town or city.

I wonder whence this "right to permit" originates!

Do parents have to get permission from a consistory to start a parental school? Is not, to stick to Evangelism, "to profess His Name" (Catechism, Lord's Day 12 and "to win our neighbour also for Christ by our godly walk" (Lord's Day 32) — and 'talk' is a very important part of 'walk' — is not, I repeat, this calling inherent in being a professing, mature, committed christian?! Does anyone, even a consistory, have to give me, together with fellow-believers with whom I want "to do something", permission? Do I, to say the least, have to 'consult' with the consistory first, before I-together-with-others can 'do' it?

Then, as you may expect, I agree with Brandes that also with these new directives, it is not yet clear to what extent evangelism has to be an issue, even on the Agenda of major assemblies! Right now not even Foreign Mission is on that Agenda!

Our Churches, and especially our membership, will do well by considering and discussing these matters seriously. It is about time that we get out of the mist and Get Out!

In conclusion: after all, Mr. Brandes may be completely right, that there is not that much difference between (Foreign) Mission and Evangelism. The only difference might be the locality. Are we not surrounded by 'modern' paganism? G. vD

BRAMPTON

Effective March 7, 1976 the time of the afternoon Church service will be 3:30 p.m. and no longer 4:30 p.m.

\*\*\*\*\*

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Mr. D. Van Amerongen,  
Russ Road, R.R. 1, Grimsby, Ontario

Puzzle No. 14

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52	P	N	E	A	E	A	U	L	E	A	R	
55	S	U	E	D	D	R	S	Y	E	N	S	

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BERNICE TUINGA  
and  
MARTIN PETERS  
January 1, 1976.  
Box 7, Neerlandia, Alberta  
T0G 1R0

Engaged:  
LOIS OOSTERHOFF  
and  
ARIE MUIS  
January 14, 1976.  
R.R. 1, St. Ann's, Ontario  
601 Bennet Court, Burlington,  
Ontario

With great thankfulness to the LORD, Who has given life and sustained life, we announce the birth of our first child:  
NATHAN EDWARD  
January 16, 1976.  
Hans and Rose Diek  
(nee Lubbers)  
R.R. 2, St. Ann's, Ontario.

With joy and thankfulness to the LORD, the Creator of Life, we wish to announce the birth of our daughter:  
PATRICIA JOYCE  
January 15, 1976.  
A sister for *Bill, Tom, Hilda, Yolanda* and *Debbie*.  
Frank and Janny Jongsma  
(nee Huizinga)  
R.R. 3, Wellandport, Ontario  
L0R 2J0.

*Lo, children are an heritage of the LORD. Psalm 127:3*  
With thankfulness to the Lord the Creator of Life, we announce the birth of our first child:  
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Martha and Harry Moes  
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\* \* \* \* \*

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and

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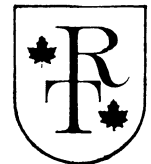
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