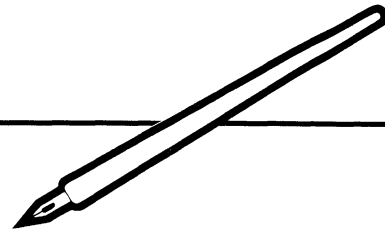




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One step forward . . .

Changing times

The end of the year and the end of a decade have brought upon us time of momentous change in the world as a whole, and especially in the countries of the eastern bloc. By now it has become clear to all the world that the flames of a new political consciousness are breaking out in almost every member country of the Soviet bloc. And in Russia itself, there appears to be little hope of stemming the tide of nationalist sentiment sweeping various provinces in the country.

The substance of the changes shaping the eastern world can be summarized in one word: reform. This implies the desire to move towards a more democratic form of government as well as a freer economic structure. In Leipzig, weekly demonstrations have become the order of the day. And speech after speech argues for the removal of the 'old guard' communists, free elections, and the movement towards a market economy. In particular, East Germany, Hungary and Czechoslovakia have seen sudden and remarkable changes.

As believers, we are bound to ask what the meaning of these events are for the church. This is all the more so in a world in which there is so much confusion concerning the real assessment of these developments. Many commentators see these developments as the end of communism and the return to capitalism for those countries involved. Many hail Gorbachev as a true reformer who is also friendly to the church and favourable to religion. Is this an accurate assessment? One also wonders whether the eastern leaders have the situation in hand, or whether they, too, are now being propelled by forces beyond their control. One thing is sure: winds of change are blowing strong! And all the signs show that the original theories of the socialists are being confounded by the God who rules all things in heaven and on earth. A brief look at the theories will help to point this out for us.

The original theory

The original theory of communism, which still forms its basic model, was propounded by Karl Marx (1818-1883). He adopted the leading principles of the idealist system of G.F.H. Hegel, and applied these to the economic sector, with the belief that the economic relations are the dominant relations and forces that shape society. The theory became known as *dialectical materialism*. Briefly this theory states that the forces of production existing at any given time are the product of an evolutionary development that eventually must lead to a classless society. Through a dialectical movement from *thesis* to *anti-thesis* and then to *synthesis*, the economic structure of society has changed from the primitive communal system through slavery and the feudal period to modern industrial capitalism.

Marx was in essence a determinist. For him it was essential that the movement through the stages of economic organization was not a product of human ideas, but was inexorably bound up in the economic relations themselves.

In the capitalist stage, the inner tension centers around the relation between labour and capital. Labour produces capital, and capital keeps exploiting more and more labour. These two poles need each other, and yet are continually opposed to each other. According to Marx, this will finally come to a breaking point in which the socialist, and finally the communist period would dawn in world history. This would entail the end of all class conflict, and the final stage of all development in which the workers would be the masters of their destiny and would be able to profit fully from the labour they expended on the objects of production.

The theory modified

Marx held that the revolution was imminent in the most advanced capitalist societies, notably in western Europe. But as everyone knows, the essential revolution never came. Rather, the ideals of communism found more popularity in Russia among the peasants who did not really belong to the working class. Russia had hardly reached the stage of industrialization found in the European countries. Therefore certain people felt that in Russia Marx's ideas could only be implemented with some modification.

The leader of movement to socialism in Russia was V.I. Lenin (1870-1924). His theory in implementing communism was simple. Where the revolution is not ready to appear because of backward elements in capitalism, we should help the revolution along and so bring it about anyway. The natural process leading to revolution must be aided by the committed, *professional revolutionary*. And Lenin's methods have become well known: besides legal organizations formed and controlled by the workers, he promoted the institution of secret revolutionary organizations, both legal and illegal, which were to be instrumental in seizing power at the right moment. In *What is to be done?*, Lenin argues that there is only one morality: you must do all you can to make the revolution a reality, as long as you continue to accept the consequences of the revolution. The party must become the vanguard of the revolution. He said: "The principal thing is, of course, *propaganda and agitation* among all the strata of the people."¹ "Those who make nationwide political agitation the cornerstone of their programme, *their tactics and their organizational work* . . . stand the least risk of missing the revolution."²

Lenin propounded a system of democratic centralism. He promoted free discussions, but insisted on allegiance to the ruling party once a decision had been made. In practice there was



Karl Marx: *the workers would be the masters of their destiny*

only one party in Lenin's day. All the decisions were made by the Communist party, and the official rule of the party was never questioned.

More revisions

This all was pushed to its ultimate and most totalitarian extreme in the period of Joseph Stalin, (1879-1953). Stalin himself had no new doctrines to add to the socialist philosophy built by Marx and amended by Lenin. He only carried Lenin's principles to their ultimate conclusion, thus giving communism its cruelest face. He left no stone unturned in instituting a program of rapid industrialization. Since his time many of the horrible atrocities committed in the name of the advance of socialism have become public. Basically, the stalinist era represents the institutionalization of sheer terror. Under Stalin, the doctrine of the absolute rule of the Communist party became entrenched in Soviet politics.

Reform

The process of 'reform' presently under way in the eastern bloc is marked by debate about the absolute rule of the Communist party. Discontent among the rank and file party members along with sheer economic disintegration have led to serious misgivings concerning the ability of party bosses to rule effectively. This, coupled with widespread corruption, has fueled the debate concerning the possibilities of a multi-party approach within the framework of the advance of socialism.

So one must be cautious in his assessment of the movement to reform in the eastern countries. Many labels are given to the process: destalinization, *perestroika* and *glasnost*. But regardless of the names, we should be clear that this is at present only a debate within the framework of socialist theory

and practice. Even Lenin acknowledged the possibility of more than one party.³ He was also ambivalent in his use of the word 'democratic,' and was not adverse to giving more people a chance to voice their opinions.

It is within such parameters that reform is being championed today. Few if any are looking for true freedom, especially the freedom of the gospel. Rather, people are frustrated with corruption, poverty and chaos, and a new generation wants socialism "with a more human face." Gorbachev himself is determined not to let the west interfere with his program of reform, a process which he sees not as a movement to capitalism, but as necessary within the development of socialism. Lenin, too, considered his battle with the Mensheviks as part of a dialectical process, necessary for the triumph of the principles of revolutionary Social-Democracy. He said that sometimes it was necessary to go one step forward, and two steps back.⁴ Sometimes you must accept major losses in order to move ahead in the long run. Still today there is no change of this basic underlying philosophy. If anything, communism is undergoing one of its regular adaptations to new circumstances. One step forward, two steps back. . . .

Also in the world of international politics, Satan remains the great deceiver. Men can speak in positive and friendly tones in order to attract much needed capital (the great enemy!) but at bottom there is no change of heart. People are still out to rob capitalism in order to build socialism — even if it must happen through handouts. Not the need for the *gospel*, but the need for *capital* marks the movements of our time.

Towards the end of the age (fin de siècle)

Entering the last decade of this millennium, however, should sharpen our minds to the *essential* struggle of this age. For the amount of ferment and unrest in Leipzig, Sophia and Prague — and ultimately in the whole Soviet bloc — is enough to tell us that the planners and bosses can no longer manage and properly control the situation. Except in the darkest regions, the leaders are losing their grip on the masses in all the eastern countries.

It is also clear that a new revolutionary mood is sweeping these nations. And is not *this* the direction to which prophesy points us? Not the return of the east but the *growing universal revolution* in east and west is the sign of the last days. And the upheaval of the east along with the friendly support of the west lays the basis for a universal opposition to the principles of reformation as laid down in the Word of God and upheld by His church. That remains the essential battle of the decade.

One step forward!

Yet we may enter the last decade of the millennium with confidence. For who can thwart the advance of the reign of God? Who can resist the kingdom of the Son enthroned in heaven? The nations conspire, the rulers take counsel together, the peoples plot in vain, (Ps. 2). For God's reign is coming, and faith in our King will prove us victorious. The world may turn against the church, but His word and His work stands sure. That may be our comfort in changing times:

One step forward . . . and we know: there is no turning back! For Jesus Christ leads history and drives it inexorably to its final consummation. Then our struggle will be over, and our joy complete!

¹V.I. Lenin, *What is to be Done? Burning Questions of Our Movement*, International Publishers, New York, 1969, p. 82.

²*Ibid.*, p. 170.

³C. Wright Mills, *The Marxists*, Delta, New York, 1963, p. 141, note 8.

⁴V.I. Lenin, *One Step Forward, Two Steps Back, The Crisis in Our Party*, Moscow, 1950, pp. 322-330.



Worthy of full acceptance⁴

By C. Trimp

Preamble

In our previous article we made a start with our commentary on some modernistic views about suffering in this world. By means of two remarks we did point out the fact that the Bible, however, speaks in a wholly different way about God the Father and the creation of the world and about God the Son, Who is by the Father revealed in this world as the Saviour. We intend to continue with our commentary by drawing your attention to a third point of view.

3. The reality of God's wrath on this earth

Our third comment concerns itself with the real manifestation of God's wrath in the existence of this world. In the course of history many attempts were made to disarm the testimony of the Scripture on this very point.

Yet the Bible continues to speak about the reality of God's wrath here on earth. It is neither a primitive concept of a primitive religion nor the product of a human being who is projecting his existential anxiety into some godhead. To speak about God's wrath is to acknowledge the power of God, Who takes objection to the spurning of His goodness and His love. As little as we can comprehend Christ's course in Gethsemane or Golgotha, so little can we grasp the history of mankind when we let our eyes be closed for the reality of God's wrath and power of judgment.

When the apostle Paul in Romans 1:16,17 has finished proclaiming the heart of the gospel for all people, he apparently has to introduce God's wrath in verse 18, He says: "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and wickedness of men. . . ." The gospel of justification is being proclaimed among the people, exactly for that reason. For in the gospel is *life*. The just shall live by faith. That is why this gospel must, of necessity, be proclaimed; for there is under God's wrath so incredibly much *death* here below under the dome of heaven.

Only when we are alive to these realities, first of all, may we venture to talk

sensibly about the state of affairs on this earth.

If we continue to examine Romans 1, we shall also find that the *course of action* of the wrathful God is revealed.

In the first place, He expresses His wrath by giving people up to themselves and to one another. Evidently, God's wrath is visible even then when He just lets people go their own way, or "do their own thing."

Thus, much light is shed on the unimaginable extent of misery throughout the history of this world. God lets people have their own way for a while, until such time as they have got themselves and one another into a complete fix, and have together been debased into total foolishness, beastliness and hopelessness.

In addition to all this, there are eruptions of God's wrath in catastrophes, and there are judgments in the destruction of numerous human accomplishments. The

book of Revelations shows us these destructions in all their stupendous dimensions. And these events are merely the *heralds* of the great day of wrath of God and the Lamb.

No wonder, then, that the universal fear for that particular day (Revelation 6:15-17) is so impressively portrayed! That day will stand for the ultimate bankruptcy of all human attempts for "survival." All insurance companies will then go bankrupt, simultaneously.

In all these things man, with all his splendid potentialities, is going to be deeply humbled. God is cutting him down to size and is keeping him that way by means of disasters and wars, illnesses and death. In this way God cuts off all the alternatives and puts mankind into training for its final destiny: to look upon the *One*, the man of Golgotha and Easter. "Behold, He is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see Him, every one who pierced Him; and all the tribes of the earth will wail on account of Him. Even so, Amen" (Revelation 1:7).

Right now, there is as yet no hell on earth. So far only Golgotha was visited by hell. All the same, this hell on earth has been *announced*. Occasionally God permits man to make it into a hell within its own limitations. To bring this about, God only has to loosen the reins briefly.

Whenever God is leaving us to our own devices and is withdrawing His patience only to the minutest degree, by next day this earth's society will have become unrecognizable and unlivable. Then is happening what the book of Revelation tells us: God gives the beast elbow-room (Revelation 13).

This kind of language is completely different from Kushner's "God can't help but make way for the power of evil."

"Whoever is wise, let him understand these things" (Hosea 14:9a). When right in the midst of the highly developed civilized world of 20th-century Europe extermination camps emerge with names like "Auschwitz" or "Tremblinka", we are to discern therein the awe-inspiring ways of the revealed God. To the great humiliation of us all, God demonstrated there how quickly "civilization" can revert to "barbarism." This happens when we do

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not fear God in the pursuit of our cultural faculties. God has smashed to pieces the humanistic concept of man and his cultural idealism. He exposed, too, the folly of unilateral disarmament. Thus, disarmed, we ourselves made way for the beast. God taught us a lesson on the inherent perils of dwelling together as human beings in our society. God only has to let us (decent, civilized and artistic people) go our own way for just a few moments and give us a rifle and let our sadism take off, and, *voilà*, we all turn into concentration camp brutes, violators of God's most precious handiwork. The devil is going on a rampage in this world and, if God does not prevent it, this devil will, in his frenzy, chase us all into that kind of abyss.

In Auschwitz God's wrath was manifested first of all in giving latitude to the executioners. Not from the very outset did those executioners form the dregs of society. That would be, in retrospect, a most convenient rationalization which we, decent citizens, could use to soothe our consciences with. The truth is, however, that those brutes represented a society that was forgetting God and was busy trading the service of God for the pagan Germanic gods that had been renounced many centuries before. Thus, paganism did get an opportunity to demonstrate its life-destroying power in all its gruesomeness. The evil spirits did return (cf. Matthew 12:44,45).

At the same time the bankruptcy of humanistic idealism was publicly exhibited, and the rejection of the God of the Old and the New Testament was horribly punished. But contemporary man, born after W.W.II, wonders while placing his wreaths at cenotaphs and looking back at Auschwitz: "Where was God, actually?" And so he starts philosophizing about the "twilight of the gods" and the "absence of God." But God was not absent in Auschwitz. There, in particular, He was present in a most fearful way. He was present in the dreadful energy of his wrathful activities. God was present in the moral dissolution of life and the society of human beings whom He had collectively placed on this one-and-only world. Then and there, God had us as collective mankind deeply humiliated. But the Scripture has this to say about a generation that survived the Great War: "The rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands nor give up worshipping demons and idols of gold and silver and bronze and stone and wood, which cannot either see or hear or walk; nor did they repent of their murders or their sorceries or their immoralities or their thefts" (Revelation 9:20,21).

That is to say: those who escaped the executioners of World War II, hastily

"Do you think that these victims were worse sinners than all the other Europeans, because they suffered thus?"

returned after 1945 to the idols of materialism and the pursuit of affluence, liberty and lawlessness, sexism, autonomy and individualism. They complained about Auschwitz and were insolent to God and then went on to build their abortion clinics which, meanwhile, (in the so-called 'free West') have already destroyed more defenseless lives than all the extermination camps lumped together. Still, among all those complainers about Auschwitz, there has yet to arrive one person who stands up and says: "Since the inception and

legalization of abortion clinics in Europe and America I can't believe in God any longer."

This is giving us plenty of food for thought. At any rate, considering the heinous drama of Auschwitz, it should prompt us to speak out of our own personal faith in the living God and His genuine wrath, *and this first of all with a view to the perpetrators of injustice.*

And what, then, about those millions of victims of Auschwitz and the other extermination camps? We feel deeply humbled and ashamed when we think of all those destroyed families, those broken lives of both old and young.

Evidently, that is what we, human beings, can do to one another. No words can adequately describe these things; all human words fail us. But, at this juncture we do have to speak a word of God: "Do you think that these victims were worse sinners than all the other Europeans, because they suffered thus? No," says Christ to you, "but unless you repent and follow Christ you will all likewise perish" (cf. Luke 13:2,3). In truth, Auschwitz is not really the end or the lowest point or the final act. In all its colossal dimensions it was only a prologue of hell.

We must yet speak another word of God, a word that is being called out to us amidst the atrocities of our society: "And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul; rather fear Him who can destroy both soul and body in hell" (Matthew 10:28). C



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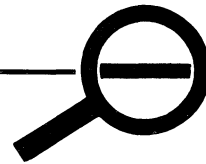
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Russian Christians in an age of glasnost

By C. Van Dam

How are Russian Christians faring under the much praised *glasnost* (openness) in Gorbachev's Soviet Union? With liberalization sweeping eastern Europe, Russia's intent on more openness and reconstruction (*perestroika*) appears to be serious enough. But how has this affected the lot of the Christians in that country which professes an official atheism? There are both positive and disquieting aspects. It is especially the latter that gives reason for concern.

More possibilities

The official line is quite positive. Gorbachev stated on April 2, 1989: "When will there be full religious liberty in the Soviet Union? . . . I believe this process is already under way. It is developing within the framework of *glasnost*, *perestroika*, and democratization. A discussion of a new policy was already begun by the new Supreme Soviet on the basis of new laws" (as reported in *Christianity Today*, October 20, 1989, p. 22). However, up to now no new laws which give Christians more rights have been adopted. Nevertheless, it is clear that within the context of *glasnost*, there are more possibilities for Christians than previously. More churches have been opened, more church-related activity is permitted and more freedom is tolerated in speaking about the Christian faith outside the church services. Also, more Scriptures were distributed within the Soviet Union during 1988 (1.2 million) than in all the preceding years of communist rule. It is estimated that for 1989 the figure will be 6 million Bibles distributed. And still a tremendous shortage remains! Bibles are a hot item on the black market (*Christianity Today*, October 20, 1989, p. 22). According to well-informed sources, there is a great spiritual hunger in Russia and the interest in religion and Christianity in particular is increasing steadily. All these are positive indicators of the effect of *glasnost*, as is also the fact that most known Christians imprisoned in labour camps for religious reasons have appar-

ently been released (*Christianity Today*, October 20, 1989, p. 25). Furthermore, Christian radio broadcasts from the West are no longer jammed, travel to the Soviet Union for Christian organizations is easier, and exit visas are less difficult to obtain.



"In view of the relentless persecution they have endured they have reason to have difficulty trusting the many promises they now hear."

Indeed, since 1988 about 12,000 evangelicals have left the Soviet Union (*Christianity Today*, November 3, 1989, p. 52).

Real change?

It is understandable that so many want to leave. In spite of all the good news, it is significant that there is a deeply ingrained skepticism about the new freedoms in the Soviet Union itself. Unregistered congregations are still very careful. In view of the relentless persecution they have endured they have reason to have difficulty trusting the many promises they now hear. The skepticism, however, has a broader justification. The reason for

the liberalization is almost certainly pragmatic. Thus when this new freedom is no longer necessary, it could be taken away at any time. Russian specialists, Anita and Peter Deyneka have noted that the reasons for increased religious freedom "are almost certainly pragmatic, produced by moral collapse and economic catastrophe that could threaten the control of the Communist party and the superpower status of the Soviet Union." They further stated that in an effort to strengthen the Soviet state Gorbachev has lessened repression and sought the support of all citizens, including Christians, who may constitute as much as 25 to 30 per cent of the population (*Christianity Today*, October 20, 1989, p. 23). This underlying pragmatism probably explains why there is still no law enshrining the rights of Christians. This is surely a very telling omission.

There are also other indicators that all is not as rosy as it may appear on the surface. Persecution and harassment still continue, especially against such groups as Pentecostals (*Christianity Today*, November 3, 1989, p. 54). According to Andrij Hluchowecky, director of the Ukrainian Information Bureau in Ottawa (in a letter to the editor, *Globe and Mail*, July 26, 1989): "The Ukrainian Catholic Church, with an estimated five million believers in Ukraine, has remained banned ever since Stalin forced it to merge with the Russian Orthodox Church in 1946. Many Ukrainian Catholics have since embarked in a delicate direction by observing their faith openly, at the risk of imprisonment and heavy fines. . . . The harassment and arrests of the Ukrainian faithful demonstrate that *glasnost* has still a long way to go."

Also in the age of *glasnost*, the KGB remains in full control of the religious affairs. According to Russian Orthodox Priest Gleb Yakunin, Konstantin Kharchev who had lamented the lack of progress in advancing new religious legislation, such as a new law on freedom of conscience,

was suddenly removed as head of the Council for Religious Affairs. Kharchev blames his demise on the KGB. Kharchev had also pushed for the legalization of the Ukrainian Catholic Church (*Chalcedon Report*, December 1989, p. 10).

In a revealing interview, Boris Perchatkin who had spent twelve years in a labour camp prior to his release in 1988, warned that the west not be misled into thinking that fundamental change was taking place in the Soviet Union over against Christians. According to him

the Soviet state still maintains a hostile attitude toward religion. The anti-religious articles of the criminal code are still on the books. Also Soviet officials have not been penalized for decades of repression against believers; and Soviet believers have not been compensated for the long, hard years they spent in labor camps, prison, and psychiatric hospitals. When anyone applies for permission to emigrate, he must request a pardon — which means acknowledgment of guilt. For these and other reasons, we believe *perestroika* is merely a breathing space for the Soviet government — an opportunity to gain Western favor and Western dollars — and then the anti-religious drive will accelerate again.

Russian Christians and we

It is clear that our prayers are still needed for the oppressed and harassed Christians in the Soviet Union, even if the last remnants of the cold war appear to be melting away with the warmth of *glasnost*. If you would like to and are able to do something in addition to the vital task of prayer, the Russian Reformation Foundation (Box 17966, Boulder, Colorado 80308-7966 U.S.A.) welcomes financial contributions in its ongoing work of seeking to help the cause of the Lord in Russia. They have recently translated the Westminster Shorter Catechism and are finishing work on the Westminster Confession of Faith. It will also interest our readers that the *Russian Reformation Report* (their newsletter), of January/February 1989 mentioned the Transcarpathian Reformed Church in the U.S.S.R. which is found in the region of the Ukraine bordering Hungary. In this newsletter we read that "the Reformed Church there is composed largely of ethnic Hungarians caught behind the Soviet border in the various redrawings of Eastern Europe. Soviet policy toward this Hungarian minority for decades has been characterized by severe repression both culturally and religiously."

One of the points that struck me while reading through the material related to this article is that some Soviet Christians worry that the church will be less fervent if it lives in more freedom. According to Anita and Peter Deyneka, a Russian pastor told them that "In Russia, Christians have been tested daily and their spiritual fiber toughened. This creates a contrast between Christian and secular life." He feared that more freedom may make Soviet Christians more like Westerners where it is sometimes "hard to tell the difference between Christians and secular people" (*Christianity Today*, October 20, 1989 p. 25). What a message of warning to us living with so many privileges and freedoms. All this reminds me of what I was once told. While we pray earnestly for Christians in Russia because of their hardships, they pray just as fervently for us lest we succumb to the temptations of materialism and prosperity that are eroding the faith commitment of many. That knowledge helps put the respective situations of the Soviet Christians and us in perspective. ©

Editorial Note: This Press Review was received just before Gorbachev visited the pope and spoke of freedom of religion for Russia. J.G.

PSALM 94

Geneva, 1562

1. O LORD of vengeance, show Thy glory;
 Judge of the earth, call all before Thee.
 Rise up, reveal Thy justice, LORD,
 And give the proud their just reward!
 Thine is the vengeance, Thine the might;
 Put Thou my enemies to flight.



One of my friends recently gave me a riddle to solve. He asked me whether I knew what "carc" was. When I answered that I did not know the answer, he said, "Try harder. Try to take the letters as the beginning of words." This made me write c. a. r. c, but it did not help much. I consulted a Periodic Table, listing the elements, and was thinking of calcium, which is Ca, or carbon, which is C, followed by argon, which is Ar, again followed by carbon, C. Carbon, Argon, Carbon. Was that the answer? "Wrong," he said. I was never good at chemistry anyway, so I was not all that disappointed that I failed this test too. At high school at least I passed, but that is more than fifty years ago.

I gave up. He then showed me a church bulletin. Here you have the answer, he said. There I saw CaRC, and suddenly the light dawned. It was supposed to mean Canadian Reformed Church. That little "a" was there, of course, to prevent the fatal mistake that someone might read the CRC as Christian Reformed Church. Happy that I had the answer to the riddle and could sleep that night, I still was greatly disturbed. When a letter is received from a sister church, do we have to write "Letter from the CaRC at A."? What is against it simply to write "Letter from the Church at A."? Is that not how it should be? If there is a letter from another organization, it is good to mention the full name of that organization, but among us it is not necessary to give some further qualification, is it?

I had to think of this when reading another bulletin. There the consistory report mentioned that a letter was received from "The Board of Governors of the Theological College of the Canadian Reformed Churches." Of what other Board of Governors would they expect to receive a letter than from our own? It is also not necessary to write that what the brothers and sisters are going to read here is a brief report of the meeting of the consistory of the Canadian Reformed Church or the Australian Free Reformed Church at A. They know that, for it is their own bulletin.

No, I am not in a bad mood and am feeling fine, having just completed a major undertaking. But it has bothered me for quite a while as there is something else that disturbed me greatly. Let me talk about that right away too.

It is something which I read in the press release of Classis Alberta/Manitoba of September 12 and 13, 1989. I am not speaking about the case as such, only of the advice which that classis gave.

A minister asked this classis "what he must do to qualify as an acceptable ministerial candidate in the Canadian/American Reformed Churches." Classis decided to inform him "(1) to become a member of a Canadian/American Reformed Church." The rest of the decision is not relevant to what I am going to say.

I cannot understand how the brothers could give such an advice to someone who is a minister. Does he not have a flock to take care of? If he does not have one, the advice was correct, there is no doubt about it. But if he does, the reply of classis amounts to nothing less than an advice to desert the sheep. And is that the proper advice by a Reformed classis? I am astounded and deeply disturbed by it.

Even if a Roman Catholic priest should come with such a question, I would ask him: "And where is your flock, the flock of which you have promised to take care? Have you placed them before the choice to follow you in the path of obedience

which you have discovered by the grace of God?" If he had to say that he did not do that, I would tell him that we don't want him. If the whole flock refuses to follow the shepherd, he is free to go; otherwise he is not. He has to put them before the choice.

That's what I told one of the Christian Reformed ministers who had simply abandoned his flock in an Ontario town, although there were some faithful brothers and sisters there. When he replied: "But they can call me," I answered that they did not have to call him, because he was still their minister, but then one who deserted the sheep of whom he had promised to take care.

If a brother is advised: "Leave your flock and join one of the churches," he is ill-advised and led astray. It is my heartfelt wish that never again a classis will err so seriously.

With the news from the churches we start in British Columbia, in the northern part, although you still can travel quite a distance farther north before you are out of the province. We stop in Houston.

The consistory received a letter "from a brother suggesting that the organists record the music of all the unknown tunes so that the congregation can buy these tapes to make them more familiar with these tunes through practice at home. This suggestion will be passed on to the organists."

In connection with this we quote from the Orangeville bulletin. It concerns Hymn 24, which most times is sung improperly. "Please note that the first note on the 2nd, 4th, and 7th line has been changed from a short (one-quarter) note to a longer (half) note." This means that the first note at the beginning of the above-mentioned lines is a two-count note. I, too, have noticed that the congregation sings all the first notes as one-count notes, and am planning to remind the congregation of the difference the next time I ask them to sing from this Hymn.

Speaking of Hymns, the Bedforddale consistory report deals with hymns. We read: "Books of Praise — the observation is made that church history shows that when hymns begin to replace Psalms in the church, this is a sign of deformation." We shall not analyze this sentence completely, but only make the remark that here a wrong impression is given. Indeed, when hymns *replace* the Psalms this is a sign of deformation. The above sentence gives the impression, however, that when Hymns are used *in addition to the Psalms* this is a sign of deformation, and this is definitely incorrect. The sentence as such is simply beating the air, and the church is not served by such incorrect suggestive remarks.

Back to British Columbia. There will be another church, the Lord willing, on January 21, 1990. A five-member committee was formed to prepare things, and they have progressed so far that on January 5 a "congregational meeting" will be held in Port Kells. At this meeting office-bearers will be chosen, who will be ordained on January 21. The membership of the new church will number some 241; at least that is the number of those who have stated that they will be "charter members" of this new church. Services are scheduled to be held in the Port Kells Community Center. If you wish to look it up on the map, look north of Cloverdale towards the Fraser River.

In Ontario there are also "rumblings" about another church. In Lincoln "this year several brothers have talked about the possibility to institute another church in the surrounding

area of Lincoln. Every one is invited to a meeting in the church basement to coordinate everyone's ideas on November 10." We haven't heard yet what the result was, but in all probability will be able to tell you next time.

The establishing of new churches will increase the workload of the ministers for the time being, as they will have to teach catechism classes at two different locations. In the long run, however, it will be beneficial. The Langley consistory expressed its concern about the workload of their minister. "As the membership increases this matter becomes a greater concern." Part of a solution was found in having a separate telephone line for the study and using an answering device, which Rev. J. Visscher does not like, as he writes, but for the sake of efficiency you sometimes have to put pet peeves aside. Pulpit exchange is also granted in larger measure, and this is a great help indeed.

Our church buildings are sometimes used for activities which are not directly connected with our own congregational activities. Other organizations like to make use of them as well, e.g., for concerts. In some instances a collection is taken, in other cases there is an admission fee. The consistory of the Maranatha Church in Surrey dealt with it. "The policy regarding the sale of tickets for events in the church building is discussed. Council is informed that ticket sales do not affect the tax status of the church, but will nevertheless be discouraged, and will in any case not be done by concerts organized by our own organ committee."

Vernon is growing "by leaps and bounds," as one bulletin had it. They are outgrowing the facilities which they have been using during the past couple of years. During the holiday season they already had to "take refuge" in a different building to accommodate the influx of guests. "The mail brought another surprise for the building fund when inside an envelope we found a \$1,000.00 bill. Many thanks to the anonymous giver." Not much is owing on the property any more, Rev. VanSpronsen wrote.

The congregation is seriously considering building a modest church building which will serve for many years and also will have an "overflow area" which can be used in case the number of attendants is too large for the actual auditorium. For this reason the brotherhood in the Okanagan Valley asks for the support of the general membership in the form of donations or loans. We gladly pass this on.

Various churches, or perhaps all of them in the Alberta/Manitoba region have received a letter from the Providence Church in Edmonton suggesting that an Office-bearers' Conference be held. The thought as such found a favourable reception with all that reported on it, but the feasibility was considered not all that great. The Winnipeg consistory realized the importance of an office-bearers' conference, but thought that it might be better for them to have one with the brothers from Carman. Carman did not make a definite commitment for a general conference either. The distances in the region of Alberta/Manitoba are sort of prohibitive with respect to such an undertaking.

Yes, and this brings us to Ontario.

In Toronto the "question was raised about the possible sale of the church's property. A long-term committee was formed to look into this matter." Although I do not know what a "long-term committee" is, I think that I get the meaning. Perhaps the problems with parking have prompted the question.

Also "the suggestion was made to obtain a TV-VCR for the use by all societies in the church for educational purposes. A decision has not been made." I do not know what precisely the brothers have in mind, but when reading various bulletins of various churches I am sort of disturbed by the use which is made of all sorts of videotapes by means of which our older and younger members are supposed to be instructed.

I realize that our ministers cannot do everything and that

more and more is demanded of them. When I hear once in a while what things are going on, also among our own people, I am amazed at the change which has come about in not all that many years. Nowadays my colleagues sometimes discuss difficulties and problems which I never encountered in all the forty-two years of my active ministry. These things take up much of their time. They almost have to be experts in practically every field, and this is an impossible demand. They are supposed to be able to "counsel" people expertly, and then "counsel" taken in the sense which it has acquired in these last couple of decades. I don't like the word in connection with the work of a minister, for he does not "counsel" but speaks with authority, the authority of his Sender. And so does an elder or a deacon.

Committees and societies sometimes make use of speeches and lectures which have been videotaped and then are shown to instruct our people or even those who have been attracted via evangelization. It is this activity which I consider dangerous and inadvisable. When we have to be instructed about things, let it be done by those who have been called upon to guide the flock of Christ, the office-bearers whom the Holy Spirit has made overseers. If there is someone in the congregation who is capable of lending his help, let us use it by all means. But let us be very careful with introducing all sorts of outsiders and teaching our people by means of their videotaped speeches and lectures. It should be possible to make videotapes of speeches and lectures by brothers and sisters in our own midst who are capable in specific fields. Those I can trust. But all others, however much they may be experts in their field, should be kept away. Rather some less-expert lecture which is truly Reformed than expert "counselling" by someone whose background and basis are different from ours.

This was a brief "meditation" which did not reflect on any congregation in particular.

We continue with Toronto. "Those elders who are in the final year of their term will visit the catechism classes and societies." Something to be followed also in other congregations.

The question whether one who does not have an attestation should be allowed to partake of the celebration of the holy supper is one which almost every consistory ponders once in a while. Toronto made the following decision.

"2. To accept the oral attestation of a member of the congregation, who is him- or herself in good standing, to serve as proof that the proposed visitor is a member in good standing of a sister church;

"3. The consistory may, instead of or in addition to such oral attestation, interview the proposed visitor that he or she is 'thus minded,' discussing with him or her the points raised under 'selfexamination.'"

In other words: a communicant member may "vouch for" someone who does not have an attestation, but the consistory may decide itself to examine the person irrespective of that testimony of a member.

A last item from that region: a meeting was held of delegates from the churches in the Toronto-Fergus-Orangeville area to discuss the distribution of the Bible Course "A Gift from Heaven." In the Burlington-Hamilton area this course appears to find increasing acceptance. The bulletin of the Ebenezer Church in Burlington tells us that "the 'counsellors' (those who mark the correspondents' answers) are sometimes kept quite busy by some who put a lot of work into their study."

Burlington South received word that the Waterdown Road property has been taken off the market. Now "the Committee is presently investigating the feasibility of commuting the 'Kingdom Hall' (Queensway Drive)."

Upon his return from a trip to the Netherlands, the Rev. J. De Jong could inform the congregation that the preparations

for his promotion are at such a stage that "the public, oral defense (of his thesis, VO) will take place, the Lord willing, on Friday, March 23 at 3:00 p.m." Was this date chosen in connection with the topic for the thesis, because on that day it will be thirty-eight years ago that Dr. K. Schilder passed away?

Hamilton decided "in consultation with the Board and our missionary that the Kroeze family will now go to Brazil on a 'tourist visa.' This is a more cumbersome procedure which may not give lasting results, but it does give immediate access to the mission field." It is expected that the Kroeze family will leave towards the end of January. A tourist visum is valid for three months, but is renewable. Too bad for Lower Sackville, but they knew that it would happen one day.

In the meantime enquiries will be made to get a second missionary.

The Hamilton "consistory with the deacons last week decided that the whole church property is to be considered a 'no smoking area.'" "I have one fear concerning it," the Rev. Stam wrote, "it is very difficult to enforce. Self-discipline will have to be exercised by all smokers to honour the decision."

In Lincoln "the Home Mission Committee has overspent their budget for the year by over \$1,000.00." This was approved retroactively. Although they should not have done it, I almost would raise a "Hurray!" for the Lincoln Home Mission Committee. These committees oftentimes have to work on a shoestring, if even that. At times it seems to be only a thread pulled from a spider's web. Our congregations should consider whether the amount budgeted for spreading the Gospel in our own neighbourhood should not be drastically increased.

Another time we mentioned the plans for a regional choir which were fostered in the Watford-London-Chatham area. They got off the ground and it was joyfully reported that "at the first practice three weeks ago, we sang a couple of pieces from 'Olivet to Calvary'; very beautiful music which was thoroughly enjoyed by all those present."

I fully agree that it is a beautiful piece of music. Years ago we performed the whole work, and last year we sang selections from it. Both singers and audience enjoyed it, just like in Southern Ontario. Much success.

We did visit Australia already in this medley, but go back there now to enjoy a little bit of summer in the middle of winter. The periodical of our Australian brotherhood received a facelift, and more than that. For several decades it appeared in the same format. Now it is even more presentable.

A synod was to be held in November, but it was decided to postpone it till May 1st. The reason was that the Tasmanian brothers were afraid that, due to the strike which affected air travel, they would not be able to make it. Some churches are not too happy about it, but nothing can be changed any more.

It was not all that long ago when a second church was instituted on the Island of Tasmania, or should we say the State of Tasmania? Now the brothers and sisters in Hobart mention with thankfulness that on October 9 they celebrated the first anniversary of services in that capital city. They have two services each Sunday and a Bible Study on a day in the week. They also enjoy quite regular attendance by non-members.

In Rockingham, west of the Armadale/Byford region, the number is growing as well. This prompted the Byford consistory to put two sets of candidates up instead of four for two newly created vacancies so that one brother would be chosen for the Byford area and one for the Rockingham area. Growth of the congregation made it necessary to add two elders; expectations of future developments made them choose the above course. The membership has passed the 350 mark.

The organ which the brothers in Byford had in mind appeared to be too small for the purpose, and a larger one was well over their budget so that the choice now fell on a "Monarc electronic organ," which they can acquire for some \$20,000.00.



I never heard of that brand, but hope that it will serve the purpose well.

The Bedforddale consistory report mentioned various points which are to be dealt with at the forthcoming synod. One was "Port Moresby's request for sister church relationship." Port Moresby, we add for the information of our readers, is in Papua New Guinea, and a church was instituted there, comprised for the larger part of refugees from Irian Jaya. The Rev. J. Koelewijn is working there.

The training of indigenous ministers has the attention of the Australian brotherhood. Initially there were plans to have a brother from Papua New Guinea come to Australia to be instructed there by the ministers available. This appears impossible, for most of them are refugees and will not be able to come to Australia to reside there for several years. Now the training will have to be done in Papua New Guinea itself, and this is quite costly. "This has as consequence that each communicant member will need to pay approximately \$140.00 per year. A suggestion that each congregation would support a student minister is not included in the \$140.00."

Bedforddale was allowed to start having meetings and services in their acquired church building. I have seen pictures of it at the Rev. Van Delden's place, and it looks nice. Approximately ninety parking bays are available, and this should be sufficient for the time being. The consistory already urged the members to combine as much as possible. It happens quite frequently that only one person makes use of a car and that there are several cars from one family on the parking lot. This is not something specifically Australian!

What I deplore is that the consistory decided that there shall be "fixed seating," which means that pews are assigned to families as "their" pews. I think that this is a miserable custom and am happy that it is more and more abolished. Pity the committees that have to make the arrangements. But pity even more the strangers that walk in and are chased from the place. We have experienced it, although not in Australia.

I understand some of the rationale behind such arrangement, I think. It keeps the families together and prevents that young people are flocking together in the far corners of the auditorium or, if it is there, the balcony. However, when we wish to be hospitable and welcome visitors and strangers we should do away with what I think is a Dutch custom, the custom of "reserved seats for every family."

The deacons in the Perth metropolitan area had their conference. "It is decided to maintain the conference as deacons only conference as attendance of other office-bearers would inhibit the conference and become dominated by elders." That is firm language, is it not! There is some truth in what the brothers stated. Topics at office-bearers' conferences tend to cover the work of the elders in by far the most instances and the work of the deacons often seems to be a stepchild, while I sometimes think that the work of a deacon is even more difficult than that of an elder, but then, I have never been a deacon. Be masters in your own conferences, brothers.

Well, it is about time that we say goodbye.

That's what I do.

Bye!



By J. Geertsema

At the College we had a "changing of the guards." Dr. J. Faber retired as active professor and principal per Jan. 1, 1990. As teacher in the Department of Dogmatics he is now succeeded by Dr. N.H. Gootjes, while his position as Principal of the College went to Dr. C. Van Dam, by decision of the Synod of Winnipeg 1989 (cf. Acts, Art. 61,D,5).

On Thursday December 7, the last day of the lectures of the Fall Semester of the courses 1989-1990, Dr. Faber presented to the College community his "last lecture," which was followed by the "chapel" conducted by Dr. C. Van Dam. (The reader may know that, at the College, we begin and conclude the weekly lectures with a "chapel." Professors and students take turns in conducting these devotions.) We thought it good to share this last lecture and this chapel address with the readers of *Clarion* in this first issue of 1990. Dr. Van Dam gave me the text of what he said, while Dr. Gootjes prepared the report on the "last lecture" of Dr. Faber.

It must also be mentioned that this last lecture was attended not only by all the Faculty and students presently at the College, but also by the Faber family, by a number of present and former members of the Board of Governors, and by ministers and former students. In the evening of the same day a special meeting was held in the Hamilton Cornerstone Church basement where Board members, professors, present and former students addressed Dr. Faber, all this under the "smooth" leadership of the chairman of the Board, the Rev. Cl. Stam. The nice evening was concluded with the usual social part.


Thus twenty-one years of work and leadership at the College came officially to a conclusion. During these first two decades twenty-seven students received their education at the College. Two of these former students serve as ministers in Australia, the other twenty-five serve the Canadian and American Reformed Churches. These twenty-five (-seven) active ministers, including one, Dr. Van Dam, who serves as professor at the College, form about two thirds of all the active ministers in our churches.

When we see these figures, we realize the important place which the College has in the midst of the churches, and after these first two decades we are the more thankful that the Head of the Church, our Lord Jesus Christ, guided the brothers at the General Synod of Orangeville, 1968, so that the decision was made to establish the Theological College. God blessed this decision. The next year, 1969, the opening took place.

The first years were not easy. Not long after the opening Professor F. Kouwenhoven was called home by the Lord from his earthly post. Until September 1971, when Drs. H. Ohmann took over, the instruction in the Old Testament subjects was given for a large part by Dr. Faber. During this same time the Rev. G. Van Dooren was not always able through sickness to give his lectures in the Department of Diaconology. Also during these first years the Rev. H. Scholten was ill for quite some time. Nevertheless, the lectures in church history and church polity continued. Both Dr. Faber and Professor L. Selles took care that the teaching continued.

Changes took place. Professor Ohmann was appointed in Kampen and was succeeded by Dr. Van Dam. Rev. Scholten passed away after more illness and was succeeded as lecturer by the Rev. W.W.J. Van Oene. And when the Rev. Van Dooren was to retire, the Synod of Cloverdale 1983 decided to replace the two lectureships by a full-time professorship and to appoint Dr. K. Deddens to take upon him the teaching in both the Departments of Diaconology and Ecclesiology. When in 1986 Professor Selles retired after seventeen years of teaching, the undersigned was called to take his place. Important was also that in 1981 the College received official government recognition.

During these and other difficulties and changes there was the leadership of Dr. Faber. With skillful hand and knowledgeable mind he led the College as its principal. Much was given in him. It also should be mentioned that Mrs. Faber served the College. Not only as helpmeet for her husband, but also as assistant in the library and in many other little things and ways. Much work was done. We thank the Lord for what He gave in them to the College and so to the churches. And we wish them an enjoyable retirement; a retirement, however, that will remain fruitful for the churches.

At the same time we wish Dr. Gootjes the strength, wisdom, and insight from the Lord now that he begins his teaching at the College, and we wish the same to Dr. Van Dam in his new position of principal. May the Lord continue to bless the College for the churches. 

Report of the last public lecture of Dr. J. Faber

By N.H. Gootjes

Dr. Faber finished his course on Revelation and Scripture with a lecture on the topic: The Doctrine of Holy Scripture in Contemporary Theology (1960 - 1980).

Roman Catholicism

First he said something on the newer developments in the Roman Catholic Church. Since he had already discussed most of this in class, he could be short here. The Second Vatican Council formulated on a dogmatic constitution on revelation, called *Verbum Dei* (1965). It meant

a change in traditional Roman Catholic thought. But it did not take away the great objection of the Reformation. The Roman Catholic Church still does not hold to the *Sola Scriptura*, the rule that Scripture alone is the only rule for faith and life. The Vatican Council teaches, in the words of a Roman Catholic theologian, H. Küng, an "unholy trinity," consisting of tradition, Scripture, and the teaching office of the church. (Notice that tradition [as source] comes before Scripture and the teaching office of the church.)

The W.C.C.

Montreal 1963

Next Dr. Faber discussed the development of the doctrine of Scripture in the World Council of Churches. Here 1963 was a watershed, as Dr. Schrottenboer called it. For in that year the Committee for Faith and Order, at a meeting in Montreal, published a statement about Scripture, Tradition and traditions. Remarkable is the difference between Tradition with a capital T and traditions with a small t.

Tradition (with capital T) is something special. It is the gospel itself as it is being transmitted from generation to generation. It is Christ Himself as He is present in the church. The traditions are the result of the process of Tradition. We can speak of traditions in plural, because the process of Tradition brought about several traditions, the Roman Catholic, the Lutheran, the Reformed. . . .

Another important point is, that according to this statement Tradition precedes Scripture. This underlines the importance of the traditions. We here see a connection between the W.C.C. in 1963 and the Vatican Council in 1965. They are now united on the issue of Tradition. Tradition is first and precedes Scripture. "We exist by the Tradition of the gospel (the *paradosis* of the *kerugma*) testified in scripture, transmitted in and by the church." The expression "*paradosis* (tradition) of the *kerugma*" (preaching of the gospel) shows the influence of R. Bultmann. This was the result of the presence of E. Kasemann (who also put his stamp on the statement about the church at the same meeting). In this context the expression "the *paradosis* of the *kerugma* testified in scripture" means that Scripture is the human report of Tradition.

At this meeting in Montreal the representatives of the several churches found that they read Scripture differently. This in its turn caused the attention to focus on the hermeneutical problem: How do we interpret Scripture?

Bristol 1967

The next meeting of the Committee for Faith and Action took place in Bristol in 1967. It focused on this hermeneutical problem. The members studied the significance of the hermeneutical problem for the ecumenical movement. Previously Montreal had spoken about differing traditions resulting from the Tradition. Now Bristol spoke about differing traditions existing already in the original Tradition. The different interpretations existing in Scripture as well prefigure the differences between the churches. In this formulation we detect here the growing influence of Kasemann.

Leuven 1971

The next meeting was in 1971, in Leuven (Belgium). J. Barr presented a paper on the interpretation of Scripture. Two Dutch theologians, H. Berkhof and E. Flesseman-Van Leer, had great influence in the discussions.

In the discussion on the authority of Scripture the viewpoint was taken that authority is a relational concept. This emphasis on "relational" obscures the normativity of the Bible. It is quite different from what H. Bavinck taught about the

authority of Scripture. According to Bavinck Scripture has authority because of its divine authorship.

Great emphasis was put on the centrality of the Christ-event. In Scripture this event is central, but already in the Bible this event received different interpretations. There are relational centers (in German: Beziehungsmitten) in the Bible, e.g.,



Dr. J. Faber

the love of God. Therefore we have to explain what relation a statement in the Bible has to the center.

The central events received different interpretations already in the Bible. We, too, have to enter this interpretative process, and interpret the significance of the central events for today. It is evident that in this approach the fundamental difference between inspiration and interpretation has disappeared. It means that the believers today have to interpret the Christ event just as the biblical writers interpreted it, with the help of the Holy Spirit.

It is clear, then, that in this view the Bible has no absolute authority. The Bible can only demonstrate its authority when the interplay between questions posed by the text and questions put to the text is accepted. This kind of interplay reminds us of the theology of P. Tillich.

In the same statement it is striking that the canon is not defined. According to the conference the dividing line between canonical and non-canonical writings is not a very strict one. It is more a matter of a fluid boundary.

Also it says that we have to read the Bible in the expectation that it can disclose the truth to us. This kind of statement has elements from the reminiscences of the theology of R. Bultmann and also of K. Barth.

Dogmatically all this has been worked out in the book *Christian Faith* by H. Berkhof. The 16th chapter of this book is called "Fixation and Transmission." In this chapter he discusses Scripture and tradition. According to H. Berkhof, there are differences and contradictions in the fixation (Scripture). These encourage us to

hand over in our own time the same tradition. Berkhof states that we do not have the Word of God. The Bible too is not the Word of God. Therefore the authority of the Bible is indirect. There should be an interaction between the Bible and our understanding and evaluation of it.

The emphasis of the Leuven Conference on revelational centres in the Bible, brings Berkhof to a view that distinguishes four levels in Scripture. The first level is that of the passages that directly witness of God. They relate God's saving acts. The second level consists of insights based on this witness: the confession of creation, of sin, of eternal life, etc. On the third level we find representations in which insights are figuratively expressed, such as the concepts of heaven, angels and the devil. The fourth level shows influence of social traditions of that time: a worldview in which the world consists of three levels; the position of women etc.

The developments in the R.E.C.

The R.E.C., too, published statements on the authority of Scripture, in 1972 during their conference in Sidney, and in 1984 during the conference in Chicago. Dr. Faber mentioned these only in passing, to pay attention to the developments in two member churches of the R.E.C., the (Synodical) Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (GKN) and the Christian Reformed Church in North America (CRC).

GKN

During the sixties a number of booklets on Scripture were published, called "*Cahiers voor de Gemeente*." They were written by professors of theology, such as J.L. Koole, R. Schippers and H.M. Kuitert. Next was the decision of Synod 1967, to rescind the decision of Synod Assen 1926. This Synod Assen 1926 had maintained the reliability of the biblical account concerning paradise, overagainst Dr. Geelkerken. The following step was the publication of the Synodical report *God met ons. Over de aard van het Schriftgezag*.

Behind this development was the influence of G.C. Berkouwer and his school. They acknowledged that the Bible has authority, but they emphasize that we have to determine what the nature of that authority is. The answer is given in the form of a philosophical concept of truth. It is the idea that "truth" is a relational concept. This idea has its origin in the writings of the philosopher C. van Peursen.

The title *God with us* shows the direction of the argument. To understand the authority of Scripture we have to take into account both sides: God *and* man. "God

with us” means in effect “God and us.” The Bible has been written down through the mediation of man, and it speaks again today only through the mediation of man. Therefore we need to pay more attention to the role of man.

This leads to a different view of inspiration. The inspiration of Scripture means that you feel inspired, that you feel compelled to do something.

In this view it is acknowledged that the Bible, also in its historical parts, is reliable. But it is not more reliable than other sources are. The result of this view is, that a story like that of Lot and his two daughters is nothing but folkish humor: Israel poking fun at the ancestors of other nations.

In this view the gospel rests on the history of Jesus and the faith of the early Christians.

For ethics it means that the Bible does not give commandments for today, only models and paradigms.

CRC

The Synod of the Christian Reformed Church also published a report about Scripture. It was called *The Nature and Extent of Biblical Authority*. At its publication Dr. Faber wrote articles about it, in which he criticized it sharply. Also Synod of Toronto 1974 of the Canadian Reformed Churches sent out an appeal to the CRC. Some thought this criticism was too strong, but look where it led: Dr. A. Verhey published a book entitled *The Great Reversal, Ethics and the New Testament*.

Verhey uses the analogy of the natures of Christ to explain the character of Scripture. But this analogy cannot be maintained. (See the article of Dr. Faber in *Clarion* 26:25). The meaning of Chalcedon is: the human nature never becomes divine and the divine nature never becomes human. If this were a fitting analogy of Scripture it would mean that the words of the human writers remain men’s words. Consequently the Bible cannot be the word of God.

In November 1988 the same A. Verhey published an article in *Calvinist Contact*. He wrote there that we find in Scripture different paradigms. The concrete rules in Scripture, including those of the New Testament, may not directly be appealed to today to answer ethical problems.

From this it shows that there is a direct line from A. Verhey through the GKN to the reports of the WCC.

Final remarks

Where do we stand? Dr. Faber referred back to what he had said in his lectures about the proof for the inspiration of Scripture. To recall just the two most important texts: the *theopneustos* of 2 Timothy 3:16: All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction and for training in righteousness. . . . ;” and the *pheromenoi* of 2 Peter 1:21: Because no prophecy ever came by the impulse of man, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God” There is no getting away from it: Scripture is the Word of God. And we

cannot preach unless we recognize Scripture as the Word of God.

This does not mean that it is forbidden to us to study the manner of inspiration. In his lectures Dr. Faber had stated about this manner, that it is not mechanical. Can we say nothing more than that? We could draw a parallel between inspiration and providence. But Dr. Faber suggested that we also could use the analogy of the covenant, and could speak of covenantal inspiration. The covenant is *monopleuric* (one-sided) in origin, but *dipleuric* (two-sided) in existence. In the same manner God monopleurically takes up people in His service to write Scripture. Then He deals with them in a covenantal way in writing Scripture.

Concerning the characteristics of Scripture, L. Berkhof mentions the traditional four: authority, necessity, perspicuity and sufficiency. But today we can no longer be satisfied with these four, we have to add at least two more: reliability and unity. Scripture is one indivisible book.

Closing his lecture, Dr. Faber quoted the testament of Luther, spoken one day before his death. Luther said on that occasion that we can only say we have seen some of Scripture after having preached about it for a hundred years. Therefore we all remain beggars. Dr. Faber agreed. *Verbum Dei manet in aeternum*, the Word of God will remain eternally. We can go on studying it. “I hope that through God’s grace it will be granted to me to think and speak about God’s revelation eternally.”



Unworthy slaves¹

By C. Van Dam

Will any of you who has a servant ploughing or keeping sheep, say to him when he has come in from the field, ‘Come at once and sit down at table?’ Will he not rather say to him, ‘Prepare supper for me, and gird yourself and serve me, till I eat and drink; and afterward you shall eat and drink?’ Does he thank the servant because he did what was commanded? So you also, when you have done all that is commanded you, say, ‘We are unworthy servants; we have only done what was our duty.’ (Luke 17:7-10 in RSV)

The basic message of this passage is clear. Nothing that we do will ever earn us God’s gratitude or make Him indebted to us. This basic message also bears repeating if we want to safeguard the treasures of God’s grace uncovered in the

great Reformation of the sixteenth century. Two obvious questions arise when we are confronted by these verses. First, what is the precise context? And secondly, how specifically does this word of our Lord apply to us today?

As far as the matter of the context is concerned, it seems most attractive to see a direct relationship between this short parable and the immediately preceding words about faith. In view of the awesome demands the Lord placed before them, the disciples had cried, “Increase our faith.” Christ had then told His disciples what could be accomplished by faith as a grain of mustard seed, which is very small. Now when they through faith (which is that small) can bring about tremendous and impressive things, a danger may present itself. They may become puffed up and start imagining that

God can be happy that He has such good people working for Him, as if God would be indebted to them. And now, lest the disciples fall into that kind of temptation, the Lord tells this story.

The Lord makes His point in a very strong and effective way by using the form of the rhetorical question. The answers are so obvious that the disciples will find themselves signalling their approval. The RSV renders: “Will anyone of you who has a servant. . . .” This translation is somewhat unfortunate for the original word *doulos* is of course not a servant but a slave. The concept of a slave is rather inimical to modern thought for to be a slave means that your autonomy and freedom has been set aside in favour of the will of another having the say over you. If you were a slave you literally no longer belonged to yourself. For this reason the

concept was not very attractive to Greeks or for that matter to the hellenized Jews of Christ's time either, in spite of the fact that the Greek translation of the Old Testament called Abraham, Moses, David and the prophets slaves of God.² As far as the rabbis were concerned, one of the worst insults you could hurl at another man was to call him a slave. You could be excommunicated for it. A current rabbinic proverb stated that "A dog is more honourable (i.e., of greater worth before God) than a slave." Now a dog was considered the lowest of creatures.³ When therefore the disciples heard the Lord speaking about a slave they knew what was meant — one who is simply the property of his master and who exists so to speak for the master. Even what he does or produces belongs not to him but to the master.

Well, the Lord Jesus says, "Will any one of you, who has a slave ploughing or keeping sheep, say to him when he has come in from the field, 'Come in at once and sit down at table?'" The answer is so obvious that it does not need to be given directly. Of course they would not say that to a slave. Why should they? The slave owes this kind of service to them! To say this would be to turn the relationship upside down! The Lord Jesus can therefore continue by saying "Will he not rather say [or better: 'on the contrary will he not say'] to him, 'Prepare supper for me, and gird yourself and serve me, till I eat and drink; and afterward you shall eat and drink?' Does he thank the slave because he did what he was commanded?!" O, to even raise this question is to answer it. Of course not! The master is not indebted to the slave! The slave has only done what he was bought for, namely to work for his master. Did all the slave's energies and talents not belong to the master? There is therefore no question of having to thank the slave. It is inconceivable.

And then a remarkable thing happens. The Lord makes the application of this story Himself so that there is no doubt about its meaning. He starts off by saying; "So you too." Who is Jesus speaking to? Luke usually specified the audience, whether it was the crowds, disciples or apostles, the inner circle. He does so here too. Although we read of disciples in verse 1, verse 5 speaks of apostles. We must therefore understand disciples in a restricted sense. The apostles, that is the twelve, are addressed here. They are like the slaves of the parable. Indeed, how strong that realization was given to them!! In spite of the negative connotations that being a slave had, Christians prided themselves as slaves of God or of Jesus Christ. Some examples: James speaks of himself as slave of God (James 1:1) and Paul's self-characterization as slave of Jesus Christ is well-known. Although all Christians are slaves of God (1 Peter

2:16; Romans 6:22) or of Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 7:22; Ephesians 8:6), the application of this short story is in the first place to office-bearers, the apostles; but, therefore also to ministers of the Word and those who aspire to that office. Indeed some have seen in the work which the slave in the story did allusions to the work of apostles and preachers of the gospel, — allusions given by the Lord in order to reinforce this point. Like the slave in the story the apostles and preachers of the gospel also work the field, which in their case is the people of God (1 Corinthians 3:9; 1 Corinthians 9:10). They also shepherd the sheep and serve or minister to the needs of the people.⁴ However that may be (whether we need to read this much into it or not), this passage clearly has something to tell us as ministers (serving a congregation or otherwise) and those aspiring to the office.

Christ says "So you too, when you have done all that is commanded you say, 'We are unworthy servants; we have only done what was our duty'." When a job is done there can be a certain amount of self-satisfaction. Indeed within the context of men, and as humans speak and think, a minister can easily be very much praised. Especially when he receives a call, then there is no better person. However, Christ teaches us here that especially as office-bearers we must look beyond the human relationships in life and look to God. How does *He* measure our labours? Ministers do not work for consistories and ministers set apart for teaching at the College are not in the service of the Board of Governors, regardless what the human fine print says. Ministers are slaves of Jesus Christ, as any Christian is, but with a special burden. When a certain part of the task is done, then we do not expect a thank-you from God. That is not becoming of a slave who is owned by Another and whose energies and talents are the property of the great Master of us all.

Furthermore, if we know ourselves as frail human beings, then the wise minister who has finished a particular task will always say, Lord bless the good and forgive the evil! When one looks back, then one can see many shortcomings and weaknesses in the execution of one's task. Especially with the passage of time these shortcomings can become more evident in our mind. We are all part of a very frail and broken world and sin cleaves also to theologians. Does God owe us thanks!?

The Lord Jesus places the words in our mouth which we must say when a particular task is done. "We are unworthy slaves; we have only done what was our duty [i.e., lit., 'what we ought to have done']". The term "unworthy" requires some elucidation lest we misunderstand. It means that we have done nothing be-

yond what was expected of us. It does not mean that we are good for nothing; but, it shows that we are unprofitable in the sense that the Master, the Lord Jesus, did not get more out of His slaves than He had expected. It may be humbling for us all to read this, but this is reality. But it is also a comforting reality.


I chose this text for chapel meditation because as a student this is one of the texts I remember Dr. Faber referring to the most often. I suppose it was a favourite with him because it helps to maintain the true perspective and prevents us from getting carried away with our own importance. But it also is comforting. As slaves of the Lord Jesus Christ we have very little to worry about, except doing our task and office. The Lord therefore wants us to work with single-mindedness. As slaves we live in a very simple universe. The Lord is our Master and we exist for Him. What does that mean when we "retire," if I may now make a personal application to our esteemed principal. Well, it is like the slave coming in from the field. He was finished with one task, but the Master had another waiting for him. Slaves are never finished. And therefore every point of rest is a new beginning. The task is endless, for all of us, also for those who retire. We are slaves! There is no end to the service! Indeed *when* our task as slaves of Christ in this world is over, then either the day of our Saviour's return has come, or, we are called from this life into His glorious presence. Only then will children of God hear the words: "Well done, good and faithful slave, enter into the joy of your Master" (Matthew 25:21). But, as long as God gives life and strength, we have our work here and the Lord will show that to all of us, also to you Dr. Faber. But, although the task is endless, so is His help and aid. After all, we are under the complete care of the Master!

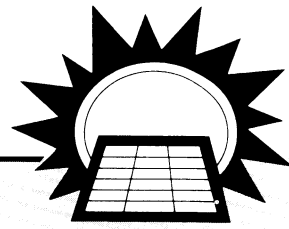
May that reality encourage us all. Whether we as students stand near the beginning and tremble sometimes at the awesomeness of what awaits us, or whether we stand at or beyond the day of our retirement. And let's not forget the main point. We don't have to earn our salvation by our labours. We would fail miserably. Thanks be to God that we can confess *sola gratia* and that not we, but He is the object of all praise and honour: *soli Deo gloria!*

¹The text of a "chapel talk" on December 7, immediately after Dr. J. Faber's final lecture at the Theological College. The Scripture reading was Luke 17:1-10. We sang Psalm 115:1,6 and after the talk Psalm 52:6.

²K.H. Rengstorf in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, II, 268.

³*Ibid.*, 271-272.

⁴See P.S. Minear in *Journal of Biblical Literature*, 83:1 (1974) 85; also cf. R.C.H. Lenski in his commentary on Luke, *ad loc.* 



By Mrs. J. Mulder

And the LORD went before them . . .
Exodus 13:2a

Dear brothers and sisters,

After the LORD had delivered His people from the land of bondage, He set them on their way to the promised land. Knowing the many dangers which could confront them on their journey through the wilderness, the LORD promised them, "I will go before you." That meant, He would guide them, He would choose a safe way to protect them from their enemies (Exodus 13:17). He would guarantee that they reached their destination, the land of God's rest (Hebrews 3:11).

There was only one condition, namely, that Israel would trust Him and humbly follow Him even when He led them along paths that seemed long and difficult. We know that many Israelites did not reach their destination. However, that happened not because the LORD was unfaithful or unable to fulfill His promises, but they refused the LORD's guidance and went their own sinful ways. They hardened their hearts and provoked the LORD to anger so that He swore in His wrath, "they shall never enter My rest" (Hebrews 3:8-11).

We as Church of the New Testament are standing at the beginning of another year, a year closer to our final destination. And the closer we get the more difficult the road will be. The Church of Jesus Christ is symbolized by a woman in the wilderness, and satan the dragon is eager to destroy her (Revelation 12:16). As God's children we are confronted with trials and temptations on our journey through the wilderness to the land of God's eternal rest.

We sometimes wonder how will we, how will our children, be able to resist the temptations with which we are faced? When in Jesus' days the temptations came, many of His disciples drew back and walked no more with Him (John 6:66). How will it go with us and our children? Our greatest temptation is that we would refuse to follow the Lord, because the way He leads us is not to our liking. That we would give in to the attractions of this world and go the path of our own choosing.

We too have the LORD's promise that He will go before us. He who led Israel in a pillar of cloud and of fire promised to lead us today through His Word and Spirit. Only by forsaking our own will and following Him wherever He leads us will we reach our destination, the place of eternal glory, prepared for us by Jesus Christ. Our Saviour who freed us from the bondage of sin will guide us safely onward. Therefore let us entrust ourselves and our children to Him. And while the promise of entering His rest remains, let us fear lest any of us be judged to have failed to reach it (Hebrews 4:11).

Our birthday calendar for February

ALBERT DORGELOOS
199 Westwood Road, Unit 16
Guelph, ON N1H 7S1

Albert will be 21 years old on February 12th.

CONNIE VANAMERONGEN
Russ Road, RR 1
Grimsby, ON L3M 4E7

Conny hopes to celebrate her 25th birthday also on February 12th.

CORA SCHOONHOVEN
24 James Speight
Markham, ON L3P 3G4

Cora's birthday is on February 18th. She will be 39 years old.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE THREE OF YOU!

A Request: Mr. Hoogstra from Langley B.C. asked me to include the name of a student of his, Duane Homan, in our column. He writes:

"Duane is 13 years old and it was recently discovered that he had Hodgkin's disease and has to undergo four cycles of chemo-therapy. So far he has reacted remarkably well to the treatments. But since the future effects of the medication will likely be more demanding, it would help to have him receive some mail to encourage and occupy him during that time."

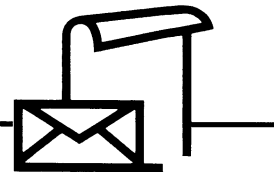
I trust that you will remember Duane in your prayers and will send him a letter or card. His address is: Duane Homan, 23017-72 Avenue, Langley, BC V3A 6H4

P.S. Knowing that Mr. Hoogstra, principal of the Credo Christian High School in Langley, himself also suffers from Hodgkin's disease, I contacted his parents-in-law to inquire about his health and heard that he at the moment is doing extremely well. During his illness Mr. Hoogstra and his family have experienced the comfort and strength of the LORD and the spiritual support of many brothers and sisters. I think it would be appropriate to write and let him know that you share his thankfulness to the LORD for his recovery. His address is: Mr. H.E. Hoogstra, 4493-197B Street, Langley, BC V3A 5R5

In all the strife of mortal life
Our feet shall stand securely;
Temptation's hour shall lose its power,
For Thou shalt guard us surely.
O God, each day direct our way;
Renew us by Thy Spirit
Until we stand at Thy right hand
Through Jesus's saving merit. (Hymn 43:3)

Greetings from **Mrs. J. Mulder**
1225 Highway 5, RR 1 Burlington, ON L7R 3X4

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



Dear Editor,

We feel compelled to respond publicly to Rev. VanOene's public attack (*Clarion* Nov. 10, 1989, "Unsuitable Melodies?") launched at the consistory (Coaldale's), which supposedly stated, in a submission to General Synod Winnipeg, "regarding Hymn 1A 'that the present melody is not suitable, for it contains Gregorian elements.'"

It is not the language and the tone of Rev. VanOene's attack which make us ask for room in your magazine, Mr. Editor, although we do find both somewhat shrill and notably out of tune with the style of *Clarion*, — not 'Gregorian,' so to speak, let alone 'Calvinian' ("poids et majesté"!)). However, we do want to set straight the alleged statement ascribed to the consistory.

With your permission, we quote the following segment from the consistory's submission to General Synod.

"We regret not only that the committee failed to address its mandate, but also that it failed to give grounds for its judgment that the proposed melody is unsuitable. As such, the committee gives the impression that its judgment is nothing more than the expression of a subjective preference. The committee is entitled to its preference. But so are the churches. They should not be forced to bow under the subjective preference of some people, however highly regarded they may be. It would be something else if the committee had given objective grounds why the proposed melody is unworthy for the purpose of professing the faith of the church in worship to God. Your assembly is well aware that for many in the churches the present melody of Hymn 1A is not suitable for that purpose, on the objective grounds that it contains Gregorian elements. That has been sufficient ground for previous synods to mandate the committee to look for an alternative melody.

It would not be correct to force a segment of the churches to profess the faith with feelings of irritation about the melody, or to force it to refrain from singing the Creed at all for that reason, while there is a melody of which the unsuitability has not been proven and of which the adaptability to the 'new text' has been proven, — just as desired and mandated by previous synods.

What more does one want.

We request synod to make available to the churches the melody composed by Dirk Zwart Jr., either the original one as proposed to Synod Burlington or the one adapted by him to the 'new text.'

Without unduly stressing it and without using it as an argument, we still want to mention that Dirk Zwart-Jr., is a brother belonging to "our churches." If the Lord gives gifts to His churches, we do well to use them, unless there are good reasons for not doing so. There is something beautiful about singing every Sunday our Creed on a melody composed by a brother in the Lord."

It will be clear from the above that the consistory of Coaldale did not state that the present melody "is not suitable for it contains Gregorian elements." The consistory only reminded Synod of what previous synods had observed as an opinion living in the churches, and of the mandate those synods therefore had given to the committee (Acts 1980 and 1986). We believe that it is simply a matter of integrity to honour synod-decisions, including these which meant to accommodate desires living in the churches in general, and not necessarily in the church at Coaldale. As to the latter, the church

at Coaldale professes the faith ever since early 1986 by singing Hymn 1A, to the general satisfaction of consistory and congregation, while the few who do not particularly like the singing of the Creed as such, or do not like to sing it on this particular melody, happily sing along. Nevertheless, we are open to improvement, and if(!) the Zwart-melody is such an improvement, it ought to be given a fair chance. That is what our submission to Synod was all about.

We realize that Rev. VanOene could lay the blame on the incorrect *Press Release* of Synod Winnipeg (and, for that matter, on the incorrect Art. 145, B, 9 of the recently published Acts). Nevertheless, noticing that Rev. VanOene would like "to see any member of that consistory," we suggest that he would have done wiser not to wait for one to fall into his hands, but rather to look one up, before launching his public attack.

For the consistory,
J.D. Wielenga

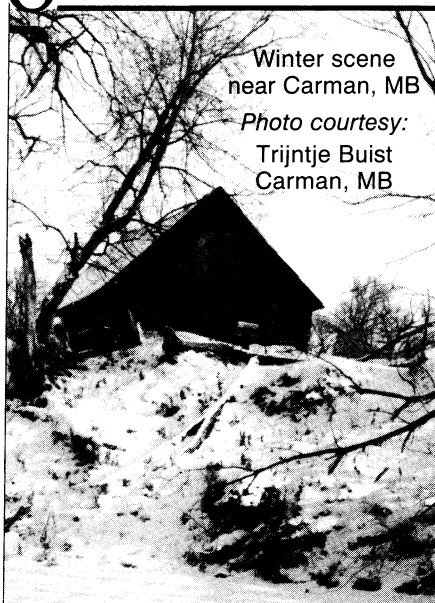
Dear Editor,

With great interest I read Rev. VanOene's article "Unsuitable Melodies?" in *Clarion* Vol. 38, No. 23. My interest became even greater when I read the last section of his article, under the heading "A Shock." Rev. VanOene is shocked when he reads in the *Press Release* of Synod Winnipeg 1989 that a consistory stated regarding Hymn 1A "that the present melody is not suitable for it contains Gregorian elements." Not only is he shocked, but he feels that this consistory made a very irresponsible statement, a statement which he says may impress some, but only the ignorant! From the Acts of Winnipeg 1989 it becomes clear that this consistory was the consistory of the Church at Coaldale.

The undersigned is a member of the consistory of the Church at Coaldale, and rather than wait for Rev. VanOene to get a hold of me (I do visit the Church at Abbotsford once in a while), I thought it better to answer Rev. VanOene's questions with a letter to the Editor, in the hope that it may benefit not only Rev. VanOene, but others as well.

Rev. VanOene is greatly disturbed when it is said about Hymn 1A that it contains "Gregorian elements." He would like these "Gregorian elements" pointed out to him, and he would like to be told

OUR COVER



Winter scene
near Carman, MB
Photo courtesy:
Trijntje Buist
Carman, MB

“what then these Gregorian elements are.” I find it remarkable that Rev. VanOene in all his research did not find an answer to his questions.

Rev. VanOene states that he also has found “Gregorian elements.” He has found these in the Genevan tunes, our Psalm melodies. He reasons then that, if having “Gregorian elements” renders a melody unsuitable, what will we have left over? All *our beautiful melodies* among the Geneva melodies are gone. He even alludes to the possibility that we will return to Moody and Sankey, to the Wesleys and others (John. De Heer?), brrr!

I believe that the answer to Rev. VanOene’s questions can only be found, if we come to an understanding that the “Gregorian elements” of which Rev. VanOene speaks, and which he found in the Genevan tunes, differ completely from the “Gregorian elements” referred to in connection with Hymn 1A.

The “Gregorian elements” Rev. VanOene speaks about can mainly be found in the fact that the Genevan Melodies have their roots, *in accordance with their different historical sources*, in the all-embracing realm of the church modes. And in that way the connection can indeed be made with the early church, synagogal song etc.! It is a fact that Calvin also stressed the connection with the “old” church. There is a real connection between Calvin and Augustine in respect to congregational singing! Augustine recognized the great value of congregational singing. He saw it as a great tool to worship and praise the Lord God. Of congregational song Augustine said that there is no better thing to do for Christians when they are gathered together in worship, than to sing! Of course, one should remember that in Augustine’s days the church was severely restricted in its song. And Calvin said that music (congregational song), because it has great power and force to move and inflame the heart of man, should drive him to invoke and

to praise God (J. Calvini; Opera Selecta II 15).

In order to make this become a reality in the Church at Geneva (Calvin had already some experience with this in Strassbourg, where he met Greitter, who composed the melody we use for Psalm 36 and 68, and where he also met Dachein, who composed the melody we use for Hymn 46), Calvin worked diligently towards a *distinctive melodic and rhythmic* style suitable for Reformed Congregational Song. Calvin’s demands for a melodic style with “poids” and “majeste” and at the same time “modere” and “modeste,” were carried out by *believing Reformed composers*, who, guided by Calvin’s principles, had come to an understanding of the importance of *congregational* song. In order to do that they had to break radically with the musical practices that took place in the church before the Reformation!

This brings us then to *our* “Gregorian elements.” Calvin and others with him realized that the “Recitative,” an important “Gregorian element,” had outlived its usefulness. One of the characteristics of the Gregorian recitative is the reciting or singing (chanting) of a text or verse *on or around* the same tone. This element you do not find in any of the Geneva melodies, but you do find it in the melody of Hymn 1A. The repetitive character of the recitative is shown throughout this melody. To make this clear, look to line 3 of the Apostles’ Creed: 6 x G, and line 4: 7 x C, and so we could go on to give proof that indeed great importance is laid on the recitative in this melody, and that therefore the character of this melody is not in keeping with the principles Calvin set out for Reformed congregational song.

The melody does not “reign” as in Calvin’s Genevan tunes. The melodic lines at best are weak and very much in keeping with the Gregorian Chant. Not “poids” and “majeste,” so to speak. Also

the many short notes in succession, as in the last four lines of Hymn 1A, convey the idea of the recitative.

The character of the melody of Hymn 1A can easily be explained by the fact that the composer of this melody was a true Roman Catholic, born and raised in the Gregorian music tradition so to speak, and then of course it is logical that he wrote this melody in the way he did. I even believe that the Committee B.O.P. was aware of the character of Hymn 1A, when it suggested, when this melody was first introduced to the churches, that this melody should be sung at a certain tempo. The suggested tempo given by the Committee was certainly more in keeping with Gregorian Chant than the Genevan tunes. In later editions the suggested tempo was omitted.

Our arguments are not intended to break this melody down, and so pave the way to have it declared “unsuitable.” They only serve to show the difference in character between the Geneva melodies and the melody of Hymn 1A. It is therefore absurd to even suggest, be it with tongue in cheek, that by our criticism: “Gregorian elements,” we want to do away with the beautiful Genevan tunes. If that was not clear, it should be clear now! It is ironic, though, that we for *congregational singing* of the Creed use a tune which has elements hostile to congregational singing, which were precisely for that reason eliminated by Calvin when he introduced the Genevan tunes! Therefore it remains my wish to have an alternative melody for the Apostles’ Creed, a melody more in keeping with our beautiful and beloved Genevan tunes and also with our hymns as we have them in our *Book of Praise*.

Rev. VanOene does not have to agree, that is fine with me. I do wish however that he would try to show more understanding for our point of view, and if he could show a little more kindness in his criticism, this letter will have served a double purpose! C. Hoogerdijk

With thankfulness to the Lord, who made all things well we wish to announce the birth of

KATRINA CHRISTINE

Daughter of Barry and Sylvia Post
(nee Selles)

A sister for *Leo, Jennifer*
Kees, Philip

250 Scotland Street
Fergus, ON N1M 2B6

With thankfulness and joy we announce that God has blessed our marriage with the birth of a son, whom we named:

DANIEL HENDRIK

Born November 30, 1989

Jan and Yvonne Harink
(nee Viersen)

RR 3
Wellandport, ON L0R 2J0

With joy and thankfulness to our heavenly Father who made all things well, we announce the birth of our daughter:

PATRICIA DANIELLE

Nick and Monica Van Luik
A little sister for *Henry, Robert*
and Joanne

Born November 17, 1989

RR 1
Beamsville, ON L0R 1B0

With great thankfulness to the LORD who made all things well, we wish to announce the birth of our daughter:

MELISSA ANNE

Born December 17, 1989
A sister for *Casey, Corrine
Jennifer, Benjamin*
Bill and Theresa Heemskerck
4358 Central Avenue
Beamsville, ON L0R 1B6

Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above. James 1:17

With thankfulness to the Lord who made all things well, we wish to announce the birth of our daughter

BRITTANY JOANNE

Born November 24, 1989
A sister for *Dustin and Shawn*
John and Joanne Hutten
(nee Lodder)
RR 4
Fergus, ON N1M 2W5

With joy and thankfulness to our heavenly Father who made all things well, we would like to announce the birth of:

BRITTANY MARIE

Born December 12, 1989
A sister for *Courtney*
Bill and Monique Jongsma
(nee VanWyngaarden)
RR 1
Fenwick, ON L0S 1C0

We thank and give praise to our heavenly Father who has again richly blessed us with the birth of our son:

CLARENCE JOHN

Born November 30, 1989
A brother for *Charlene, Janina
and Margaret*
Clarence and Pat Veldman
(nee Linde)
35315 Selkirk Avenue
Abbotsford, BC V3G 1A5

I will sing of Thy steadfast love, O LORD, for ever; with my mouth I will proclaim Thy faithfulness to all generations. Psalm 89:1

With joyfulness, we give thanks to our heavenly Father who has richly blessed us with our first child, a daughter

JOHANNA AGATHA

Born December 12, 1989
Bert and Agatha Veenendaal
3 Ainsley Ct.
Westfield, 6111
Western Australia

Every good and perfect gift is from above . . . James 1:17

We thank the Lord, who has again richly blessed us with the birth of another healthy son whom we named

COLIN MICHAEL

Born November 29, 1989
A brother for *Jeremy, Bryan, Aaron
Brenda and Jason*
Art and Mary Grim
12113 New Mclellan Road
Surrey, BC V3W 1E3

Psalm 127:3

With thankfulness to the Lord, the Giver of life, we wish to announce the birth of our first child, a son:

MARTEN JOHN KORNELIS

Born December 1, 1989
Clarence and Anita Jansen
(nee Tenhage)
RR 1
Grand Valley, ON L0N 1G0

We thank our heavenly Father for making all things well in the gift of a third child, a daughter:

AMBER ELISABETH

Born November 27, 1989
A sister for *Joshua and Mark*
Paul and Evelyn Aasman
(nee Hordyk)
P.O. Box 225
Grand Valley, ON L0N 1G0

With thankfulness to the Lord, we announce the birth of our second child;

BRADLEY SHANE

Born November 10, 1989
His thankful family;
Gerald and Juliet Van Spronsen
Angela
(nee Selles)
Box 533
Coaldale, AB T0K 0L0

With thankfulness to the Lord who has entrusted into our care another covenant child, we are pleased to announce the birth of

LAWRENCE REUBEN

A brother for *Brian, Ann-Marie
Bruce, Billy
and Duane*
Nick and Janet VandenOever
Quarry Road
Beamsville, ON L0R 1B0

The Lord has richly blessed our marriage with the birth of another girl

SHELLEY AMANDA

Born December 15, 1989
A sister for:
Nadia, Barbara and Steven
Cor and Irene Bultena
(nee Vanoene)
270 Prince's Street
Fergus, ON N1M 1X9

With thankfulness to our heavenly Father, who has blessed us with our second child, a daughter, we announce the birth of

ALYSSA CAROLYN

Born November 10, 1989
A sister for *Samantha Christine*
Tom and Alice Jongsma
(nee de Jager)
224 Brock Street
Smithville, ON L0R 2A0

For Thou, O LORD, hast made me glad by Thy works; at the works of Thy hands I sing for joy. Psalm 92:4

With great thankfulness to our heavenly Father, who has entrusted us with one of His covenant children, we announce the birth of our fourth child, a daughter:

RACHEL DIANE

Born December 6, 1989
A sister for *Henry, Jeffrey*
and *Robert*

Bert and Dinah Hutten
(nee Thalen)

20 Wilson Crescent, Box 979
Elora, ON N0B 1S0

*Know that the LORD is God!
It is He that made us, and we are His. Psalm 100:3*

With these words of joy and gratitude, we announce the birth of our first child, a daughter;

SHANNON MARIE

Born November 29, 1989
Willy and Betty Kamphuis

1st grandchild for
Henk and Hennie Bouwers
36th grandchild for
Menno and Roely Kamphuis

RR 7
Orangeville, ON L9W 2Z3

The Lord has blessed us by entrusting to our care another son
JOEL CHRISTOPHER

Born December 6, 1989
A brother for *Aren*
Arnold and Ingrid Jansema
(nee Feenstra)

RR 1, Lane Road
Dunnville, ON N1A 2W1

With thankfulness to the LORD who brought us together, we wish to announce our engagement:

ANITA M. MEINTS
and
GARRETT DAM

December 2, 1989
15081-92A Avenue
Surrey, BC V3R 7A6

Give thanks to the LORD for He is good, His love endures forever. Psalm 106:1b

With great joy and thankfulness, we

BRENDA BARTELS
and
ANDREW VANDERVELDE

wish to announce our engagement.
December 2, 1989
450 Book Road W.
Ancaster, ON L9G 3L1

Every good endowment and every perfect gift is from above. James 1:17

Recognizing this, we:

LINDA VANDENBOS
and
WILLEM VANDERVEN

wish to announce our engagement.
December 1, 1989
8175 English Church Rd.
Mt. Hope, ON L0R 1W0

Psalm 100

With gratitude to the Lord who guides and directs our paths, we,

HELEN VANDERVEN
and
MICHAEL TENHAAF

joyfully announce our engagement.
10 December, 1989
Kelmescott, Western Australia

1950 — February 16 — 1990

With thankfulness to the Lord for His guiding hand in blessing our parents and grandparents with 40 years together.

GERRIT BONTEKOE
and
TJITSKE BONTEKOE (nee v.d.Heide)

Their thankful children and grandchildren

Hamilton, ON: Harry
Oshawa, ON: Douglas and Greta Gaudaur
Edwin, Nancy and Jeremy
Grimsby, ON: Dan and Alice Beliserio
Laura and Eric

Ancaster, ON: Cecil
Beamsville, ON: Jerry
Hamilton, ON: Joe

An open house is to be held, D.V. on Saturday, February 17, 1990 from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Cornerstone Canadian Reformed Church, 353 Stonechurch Road E., Hamilton, ON.

539 Mohawk Road W.
Hamilton, ON L9C 1X5

1955 — January 21 — 1990

With thankfulness to the Lord who has kept them in His care we joyfully announce the 35th Wedding Anniversary of our parents and grandparents:

JOHN VANDENBOS
and
BAUK VANDENBOS (nee Vanderwoude)

Their children:

Caledonia, ON: Henk and Annette Nobel
Diana, Jaclyn
Albany, Australia: Teresa Vandenbos and Jan van Duyn
Caledonia, ON: Ron and Marcy Vandenbos
Jeremy, Daryl, Laura, Colette, Marc
Stan and Shelley Vandenbos
Sharalee, Jonathan, Christi, Rachel
Bernice Vandenbos

We welcome relatives and friends to an open house on Saturday, January 20, 1990, D.V., from 2:30 to 5:00 p.m. in the Cornerstone Canadian Reformed Church, Hamilton.

RR 1
Caledonia, ON N0A 1A0

July 6, 1925 — January 1, 1990

The Lord in His infinite wisdom called unto Himself:

JELTE GERRIT FEENSTRA

Beloved husband of

Adrianna Feenstra (nee Sol)

Dear Father and Opa of

Winnipeg, MB: Theresa & John VanDoodewaard

Wellandport, ON: Cornell & Wilma Feenstra

Geraldine, Andrea, Rhonda

Jason

Byford, W.A. Australia: Arlene & Clarence Bouwman

Harwin, Jared

Guelph, ON: Peter & Jeanette Feenstra

Jeremy, Reuel, Bonita, Adena

Dunnville, ON: Edward & Lorraine Feenstra

Luanne, Amanda

Ingrid & Arnold Jansema

Aren, Joel

In this time of grief we find comfort in the words of Isaiah 42:9.

The funeral service was held on Thursday, January 4, 1990 at 2:00 p.m. in Attercliffe. Rev. D.G.J. Agema officiated.

RR 1

Fenwick, ON L0S 1C0

*He has not dealt with us according to our sins,
Nor rewarded us according to our iniquities.
For high as the heavens are above the earth,
So great is His lovingkindness toward those who fear Him.*
Psalm 103:10 and 11

The Lord, in His infinite wisdom and mercy, called His child home. On December 9, 1989, my beloved husband, our dear father and grandfather:

SIMON TUINGA

at the age of 70, was relieved of his earthly body and pain. Although he will be greatly missed by us all, we thank and praise God for relieving him from his suffering.

Neerlandia, AB: Bertha Tuininga (Wierenga)

Taber, AB: Sheila and Louis Ypma

Lyle, Tanya, Lloyd, Keith, Dale

Surrey, BC: Joanne and Harry Boessenkool

Ken, Brian, Jeff, Duane, Randall

Neerlandia, AB: Carol and Pete Werkman

Jason, Shawn, Melanie, Wesley

Krista, Russell, Darcy

Bruce and Davida Tuininga

Teresa, Daryl, Marcia, Leroy

Byron, Charlene, Kimberly

Melissa, Ashley

Bernice and Martin Peters

Marcel, Trevor, Curtis, Randy

Anthony, Justin, Nelson

Box 7

Neerlandia, AB T0G 1R0

London — England

We wish all our brothers and sisters in Canada and abroad the Lord's blessing and guidance in the New Year.

BEN and RITA FABER, *Joel*

TONY and JACQUELINE JELSMA, *Derek*

ROB and AGNES VAN SPRONSEN, *Alyssa*

Hardenberg — the Netherlands

Aan familie en kennissen gezegende Kerstdagen en Gods zegen gewenst voor het Nieuwe Jaar.

Hartelijke groeten vanuit Holland.

Mevr. S. Hofsink-Brink (Tante Stien)

Hessenweg 30

7771 RE Hardenberg, Holland

Grand Rapids — Michigan, U.S.A.

DR. K. SCHILDER SCHOOL

And He said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely.

Revelation 21:6

The staff of the American Reformed School at Grand Rapids wishes all our brothers and sisters God's blessing in the coming new year.

Mr. W. Chase

Mrs. W. Chase

Mrs. J. Selden

Rev. P. Kingma

Mr. D. VanDijk

The Board of the William of Orange Christian School in Cloverdale, BC invites qualified teachers to apply for a teaching position in a small primary grade.

Teachers interested in a position in one of the intermediate classes are also encouraged to apply.

The teaching duties start in September 1990.

Inquiries: *Mr. A. Nap*, Principal

(604) 576-2144 (school)

(604) 576-1498 (home)

Applications to be sent to:

Mr. A. Luiten

13417-59B Avenue

Surrey, BC

V3W 9T4

GUIDO DE BRÈS HIGH SCHOOL

Requests applications for

FULL- AND PART-TIME TEACHERS

Speciality in French, Mathematics and Science is preferred.

For further information call the principal,

Mr. J.G. VanDooren

Home Phone - (416) 648-8851

School Phone - (416) 574-4011

Send applications to:

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

P.O. Box 6247

Station F

Hamilton, ON L9C 5S3

IMMANUEL CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

Winnipeg, Manitoba
requires an

ELEMENTARY GRADE TEACHER

as of September 1990

Our school has: • Kindergarten to Grade 12
• an enrollment of 100
• 8 full-time staff members

For more information, we invite you to contact the principal:
Mr. Arthur Kingma

Phone: (204) 661-8937 (school)
(204) 663-9069 (home)

Applications may be submitted to:

Education Committee
Immanuel Christian School
215 Rougeau Avenue
Winnipeg, MB R2C 3Z9

The John Calvin School of Smithville invites applications for

TEACHERS

for the PRIMARY and SENIOR grades.

Duties to begin September 1990.

For information phone:

Mr. P.H. Torenvliet, principal
(416) 957-2188

Send applications to:

Mr. C. Feenstra
Secretary of the Education Committee
c/o PO Box 280
Smithville, ON L0R 2A0

DUFFERIN CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

Carman, Manitoba

invites applications for the following positions

ELEMENTARY GRADE TEACHER

and

HIGH SCHOOL TEACHER

for the 1990/91 school year.

For further information we encourage you to contact the principal:

Mr. S.F. Nap
Phone (204) 745-2278 (school)
(204) 745-3688 (home)

Applications may be submitted to the secretary of the board.

Mr. Charles Termeer
Box 577
Carman, MB R0G 0J0
Phone (204) 745-6653

The Canadian Reformed School Society of ABBOTSFORD, B.C. operating the John Calvin School at Yarrow, B.C. is in need of a

PRINCIPAL/TEACHER

Duties to commence September 1, 1990.

For further information about this position please contact the principal

Mr. H. De Raad
Phone (604) 823-6814 (school)
(604) 854-8134 (res.)

Applications may be sent to the secretary:

Mr. P. Boot
1188 Powerhouse Road
Abbotsford, BC V2S 4N2

**TIRED OF HIGH MORTGAGES?
TRAFFIC JAMS AND HIGH STRESS LIFE?**

For a breath of fresh air, come to Watford's beautiful rural setting.

The Ambassador Christian School of Watford, ON has had to close its doors for the 1989-90 school year due to the fact that there was no staff. It is the wish and prayer of the school society members to have these doors reopened and therefore we invite applications for the position of

- 1) PRINCIPAL/TEACHER**
- 2) TEACHER FOR JUNIOR GRADES**

We are looking for a principal/teacher who wishes to dedicate him- or herself to giving leadership in Reformed education, and is committed to promote this for all God's covenant children, also those in a small school.

Send applications to or request more information from the Chairman of the Board

Mr. Rick Lenting
628 MacGregor Street
Watford, ON N0M 2S0

The Board of Credo Christian High School invites applications for the following two teaching positions (September 1990)

- * MATH/SCIENCE**
- * SPECIAL EDUCATION**

The responsibilities for the Special Education position will include . . .

- remedial assistance (small group instruction)
- development of staff support services to enable optimal integration of special needs students (with physical and mental handicaps)
- co-ordination of community support services
- establishment of an in-school assessment screening program
- implementation of a work-experience program

For further particulars please contact:

Mr. E. Vanderboom (principal)
school: (604) 530-5396
home: (604) 534-8837

or *Mr. H. Moes* (who will be in Ontario from January 24-27 and can be reached at (416) 385-0634).

Send applications to:

Credo Christian High School
P.O. Box 3457
Langley, BC V3A 4R8

THE BOARD OF
COALDALE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

invites applications to fill

TWO VACANCIES

on its teaching staff as of September 1990.

THE SCHOOL:

We are thankful for significant enrollment increases in the past few years, and for anticipated further increases in the future. The school is expected to have an enrollment of over 100 students September 1990.

The school is a modern, pleasant facility complete with auditorium. Further expansion of the facility is planned to accommodate both program and students for the new school year.

THE STAFF:

The staff would consist of 5 full-time teachers, 1 part-time, and two teacher assistants. You would be joining a staff of experienced and dedicated teachers.

VACANCIES:

The vacancies are at the junior high level in the areas of language arts, French, and industrial arts, and at the elementary level in grades 3 and 4. Qualifications in the above subjects, and music and/or physical education would be preferred. Some rotation of subjects is a possibility. Preference will be given to those applicants who meet Alberta requirements. Yet, all applications will be seriously considered.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Mr. L. Hoogerdijk, principal

PHONE: School - (403) 345-4055 Home: 345-2863

ADDRESS APPLICATIONS TO

Education Committee
Coaldale Christian School
Box 1479
Coaldale, AB T0K 0L0

The **Ebenezer Canadian Reformed School** in Smithers will have an opening for one full-time position in the primary division (grades 2 and 3) and, because of planned expansion, a possible opening for a combination of elementary (primary) and high school teacher.

Teachers interested in a full-time high school position only are also encouraged to respond.

The successful applicants for the elementary positions are interested in working with special-needs children.

The successful applicant for the high school position is preferably qualified to teach English and/or Business, but otherwise qualified applicants will be seriously considered as well.

We ask:

- a strong commitment to Reformed Education
- a high level of professional dedication

We offer:

- a competitive wage package
- excellent facilities
- a favourable teacher/student ratio
- a team approach
- a relaxed atmosphere

About Smithers? Let it suffice to pass on that Smithers has been called one of the most livable places in Canada!

For more information call the principal, *Henk Van Beelen*, at (604) 847-3492 (school), or (604) 847-5924 (home).

Applications should be directed to *John VanVeen*, secretary of the board of the Canadian Reformed School Association of Smithers, Box 3700, Smithers, B.C. V0J 2N0.

Having taken the initial steps to establish a house congregation in the THORNBURY area we would like to invite you to join us in making this a reality in the very near future.

If you are looking for a change in your lifestyle and would like to join a relatively young, energetic group of Canadian Reformed families committed to serving the Lord in our area, please contact us immediately!

From a practical viewpoint, consider the following:

- a more relaxed, non-urban environment;
- year-round recreational opportunities;
- in general, a lower cost of living;
- a strong economy with good employment opportunities.

		Phone no's.
Families	— H. Endeman	705-444-2745
	— G. Nordeman	519-599-3469
	— H. Pieffers	519-599-5387
	— H. Sandink	519-538-4949
	— W. Scheper	519-599-6369
	— C. Sikkema	519-599-5421

Contact persons:

<i>H. Pieffers</i>	<i>W. Scheper</i>
RR 2	RR 1
Clarksburg, Ont.	Thornbury, Ont.
N0H 1J0.	N0H 2P0

THE BOARD OF
THE CANADIAN REFORMED TEACHERS' COLLEGE
INVITES APPLICATIONS FROM

STUDENTS

for the 1990-'91 academic year.

Academic Admission requirements:

For the 1-year Diploma of Education programme:

- a suitable B.A. degree

For the 3-year Diploma of Teaching programme:

- a Grade XII diploma with university entrance equivalence.

Please contact the principal for further information.

T.M.P. VanderVen

29 Lorraine Drive

Hamilton, ON L8T 3R8

Phone: (416) 383-4526 (Home)

(416) 385-0634 (College)

Closing date for enrolment: March 31, 1990

NEEDED

COMMITTED CHRISTIANS (FAMILIES)

Covenant Canadian Reformed Church in Lr. Sackville needs more members. Move to beautiful Nova Scotia. Enjoy the relaxed Maritime way of life. Affordable housing. Numerous business and employment opportunities. For further information call:

Ferenc Stefani or Bob Oderkirk
(902) 835-5096 (902) 865-8868

or write: Ferenc Stefani, 16 Locke Street
Bedford, Nova Scotia B4A 1N1

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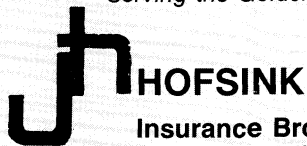
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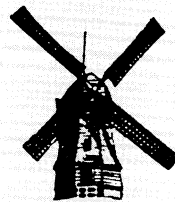
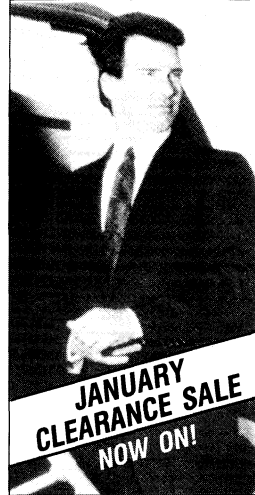
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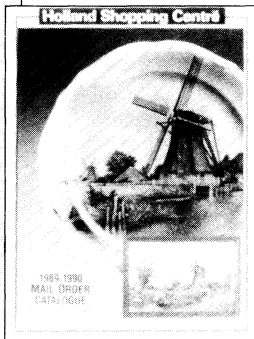
Jack Vanderlaan (pres.)



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CAREER OPPORTUNITY

Bethesda Christian Association, BC, provides services to mentally handicapped people and is seeking staff to fill vacancies in existing programs, as well as, in new developments. Interested applicants should send their resume to:

#201-31667 South Fraser Way
Clearbrook, BC V2T 1T9

HELP WANTED

We need one fulltime person (40 hrs.). Hours include one evening (Fri.), and every other Saturday. Work includes serving customers, some typing, and all other aspects of Christian bookselling.

Requirements include a pleasing personality, willingness to work hard, eagerness to learn and a love for good books.

Apply to store managers Mrs. I. Klaassens or to owner Gerry Denbok:

(416) 637-9151 store
639-1075 home

The Family Christian Bookstore
750 Guelph Line, Burlington, ON L7R 3N5

Established in 1960, TWO EE'S FARM began as a small roadside stand specializing in Okanagan honey and mom's homebaked goods. As the demand increased and nine children came along, dad cultivated the back five acres into gardens, growing and selling organic vegetables to an increasingly demanding public. Currently, 29 years later, TWO EE'S FARM LTD, employs 12 full-time and various part-time employees, including greenhouse, garden and store help. Up till now, dad has been managing the entire operation single-handedly. We are looking for a responsible person to share some of the work with him. Experience with produce would obviously be an asset, but not an essential.

For more information please contact:

Henk Schoen
16411 Fraser Highway
Surrey, BC V3S 2X3
Phone: 574-4972

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Phone (416) 632-6192

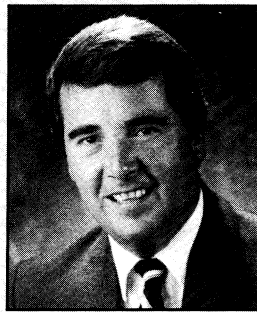
Hamilton Line 544-9615



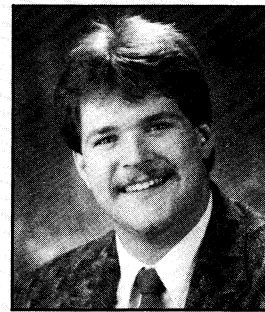
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