

CONTINUITY AND CHANGE

AMONG CANADIAN, MENNONITE BRETHREN

CONTINUITY AND CHANGE

AMONG CANADIAN MENNONITE BRETHREN, 1925-1975:

A STUDY OF SACRALIZATION AND SECULARIZATION IN SECTARIANISM

By

PETER MARTIN HAMM, M.A.

A Thesis

Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies

in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements

for the Degree

Doctor of Philosophy

McMaster University

February, 1978

• PETER MARTIN HAMM 1978

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY (1978)
(Religious Sciences)

McMASTER UNIVERSITY
Hamilton, Ontario

TITLE: Continuity and Change among Canadian Mennonite Brethren,
1925-1975: A Study of Sacralization and Secularization
in Sectarianism

AUTHOR: Peter Martin Hamm, B.A. (University of British Columbia)
M.A. (Hartford Seminary Foundation)

SUPERVISOR: Professor Hans Mol

NUMBER OF PAGES: xxii, 609,

ABSTRACT


The dissertation serves the twofold purpose of contributing theoretically to the sociology of religion, by examining the utility of the identity theory of religion, and analysing the dynamics of a specific religious movement, a task sometimes distinguished as "religious sociology". To achieve both ends the study hypothesizes the viability of sectarianism and examines the components of continuity and change of the Canadian Mennonite Brethren from 1925 to 1975. Ernst Troeltsch's well-worn church-sect typology is found to be aptly applicable to Mennonite Brethren, and Hans Mol's integration/differentiation dialectic, religiously defined in terms of sacralization and secularization, is another heuristic device which suitably explains the dynamic interaction of these components. For its empirical findings, the thesis relies heavily upon a secondary analysis of the Mennonite Brethren data of a 1972 survey retrieved from the larger Church Member Profile of Mennonite and Brethren in Christ churches. To interpret the empirical evidence, the thesis further examines the denominational periodicals, official documents, and theological writings of Canadian Mennonite Brethren to discover how its own spokesmen think.

After exploring sectarian research, particularly the church-sect critique, and establishing the theoretical framework in which sacralization is explained as the stabilizing quality of religion and secularization as religious decline and/or conformity to the world, the thesis traces the emergence of the believers' church from the parish church setting, together with the subsequent struggle to retain a separatist stance, both in the

Anabaptist-Mennonite movement from 1525 to 1860, and more specifically of the Mennonite Brethren church from 1860 to 1925.

A major part of the thesis analyses the sacralizing components of Mennonite Brethren religiosity. Its system of beliefs and ethics are shown to provide its cognitive and normative boundaries. Its family solidarity and ethnic seclusion enhance the cohesion of the movement. Its emphasis upon conversion and its charismatic leadership consolidate its identities on a personal and group level, respectively. The weekly worship and nurture activities and the formal instruction through parochial schools facilitate integration. So also the structural networks and service agencies are religiously legitimated as they help to retain old members and recruit new ones. Despite the countervailing forces within each component, the overall impact is generally integrating and explains Mennonite Brethren continuity from 1925 to 1975.

Another major part examines the components of change which tend to fragment the movement and gradually bring about its accommodation to the host society. There is ample evidence that education produces relativizing effects, that urbanization has its own fragility hazards, that occupational change demands reorientation, that economic ascendancy results in vertical mobility, and that assimilation leads to identity crisis. Together these forces of change have a decidedly secularizing effect upon the movement, yet its continued viability can be explained in the dialectic of these countervailing forces of sacralization and secularization, the one guarding against excessive adaptability and the other against overly restrictive rigidity. Thus, some 450 years after the birth of Anabaptism, some 115 years after the renewal which spawned the Mennonite Brethren church, and



some fifty years after a major immigration of the core group in Canada today, Mennonite Brethren show signs of vitality despite outward conformity to society. The thesis supports the hypothesis that sectarianism is viable in today's society. The viability is explained in the dialectic between the synthetic forces of sacralization or integration and the adaptive forces of secularization or differentiation.

PREFACE

The casual observer cannot help but notice the flow of vehicles to a given Mennonite Brethren Church at the hour of worship on a Sunday morning. This external indicator of religious vitality measured in terms of church attendance is but indicative of other measures, less easily defined, which reflect the continuity of a religious phenomenon despite the changes which the passing of generations may encounter. From the mid-1920's, when large numbers of Mennonite Brethren immigrated to Canada from Russia, this sectarian immigrant people has been prospering in numbers as well as in socio-economic status. The more astute observer will be led to question the viability of such a religious movement which increasingly accommodates itself to its host society. More particularly, such an observer looks for factors which have enabled it to change without losing its vitality. He searches for the key variable to account for the dynamic of sectarianism in the so-called "post-Christian" era.

To examine the viability of such a sectarian group, the author hypothesizes that specific, empirically measurable factors contributed to the continuity of the movement. These synthesizing components of continuity are viewed as sacralizing the identity of the sectarian group. At the same time, specifically measurable factors bring about change and lead to secularization, viewed here as loss of religiosity and/or conformity to the world. The dissertation hypothesizes that for a sectarian movement to persist both integration, represented by the sacralization process, and differentiation, represented by the secularization process, must occur,

the dialectic of the two forces guarding against overly restrictive rigidity and excessive adaptability.

While the analysis of the Canadian Mennonite Brethren becomes a case study to test the utility of Professor Hans Mol's identity theory of religion, which hinges on the integration/differentiation dialectic, it is more than simply an experiment in the sociology of religion. It is, at the same time, a serious self-study in religious sociology, by which the author seeks to gain a better understanding of the processes of growth and decline, of continuity and change, and of the ongoing tension resulting from the religious movement's confrontation with society. To understand this task, the author engages the tools which assure as detached and analytical a study as possible. Not only are sociological categories of thought and its heuristic devices employed, but basically two types of source materials are utilized--empirical data derived largely from the 1972 Church Member Profile of five Mennonite and Brethren in Christ churches, and historical data retrieved from Conference yearbooks, periodicals, and theological writings. The study, thus, attempts the twofold task of analysing the religious movement from without, that is, testing a theory of religion by the application of empirical measures derived from the secondary analysis of data, and assessing its progress from within, whereby representative spokesmen of the religious group are given a serious hearing as they interpret their own sectarian struggle with the world. It is the combination of these external and internal measures of the viability of the movement which constitutes the explanation for the persistence of the Mennonite Brethren one-half century after their immigration to Canada.

The author gratefully acknowledges the help of several groups of

individuals for their assistance in technical matters, their counsel in theoretical issues, and their unstinting support in bringing the project to completion. Drs. Howard Kauffman and Leland Harder, Directors of the Church Member Profile, graciously made available some 6000 data cards on North American Mennonite Brethren, thus allowing a secondary analysis of this body of information. Dr. Roger Kingsley of the University of Winnipeg not only made accessible the university computer terminal but generously gave of his time to help retrieve the data on Canadian Mennonite Brethren. Mr. Herbert Giesbrecht, Librarian and Archivist of the Mennonite Brethren Bible College and College of Arts, rendered valuable assistance in locating relevant documents, however hidden they might seem.

Assistance in theoretical matters came from the Advisory Committee, members of which reflected the expertise of three separate disciplines in addition to their interest in religion. Dr. Hans Mol, Chairman of the Committee, introduced the author to the study of sociology of religion, and his own identity theory of religion served as a heuristic device to analyse the religious movement under study. His friendly counsel and constant encouragement enabled the completion of the research and writing over a period of two years while the author was also engaged in teaching and administrative duties at the above college. Dr. Richard Allen of the History Department provided insightful guidance so essential for the interpretation of historical data. His comments on matters of style were particularly appreciated. Dr. George Grant, whose analysis of contemporary society is widely known, provided the critical scrutiny that a philosopher brings to bear.

Finally, it is the author's own family that deserves special com-

mentation. His wife, Betty, assumed the major role in supporting the family during the years of graduate study, and his two children, Richard and Carolyn, allowed their high school studies to be interrupted by the residential mobility necessitated by their father's ambition to study. For permitting graduate studies to impinge upon their life-styles, the author remains profoundly grateful to these close associates who so unflinchingly gave of themselves.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Part One: Methodological and Theoretical Framework

I. Sectarianism as a Research Enterprise.	1
1. The persistence of sectarianism.	2
2. The growing prominence of this field of study.	4
3. The methodology adopted for such a study	6
4. A critique of church-sect typology	14
5. Definition of sectarianism and its applicability to Mennonite Brethren	27
II. Analysing Religious Continuity and Change.	36
1. The process of sacralization	37
Its definition	37
The sacred in sociological literature.	39
Mechanisms of sacralization.	48
2. The process of secularization.	52
Necessary definitions.	53
An analysis of the secularization process.	61
Isolating the variables.	68
3. Statement of hypothesis.	71

Part Two: Historical Backgrounds

III. The Anabaptist-Mennonite Movement within European Sectarian- ism.	73
---	----

1. Anabaptist-Mennonite beginnings within sectarian Protestantism: a study of the first generation (1515-c. 1550).	75
Origins in Switzerland, Germany, and Netherlands	75
Predominant themes of early Anabaptist-Mennonite sectarianism.	80
Some sociological observations about Anabaptist-Mennonite beginnings	86
2. The transition from a believers' church to a parish church: a study of the subsequent generations (c. 1550-c. 1850)	94
The spread to Northern Europe and Russia	95
Continuity and change in the subsequent generations.	100
IV. Mennonite Brethren Beginnings and the First Generations (1860-1924)	106
1. A new secession and its first generation (1860-1885).	107
Influences leading to the religious awakening.	107
Circumstances of the secession	110
Immediate opposition and eventual recognition.	112
Consolidation and early development of the Brethren.	114
2. The sectarian stance of the first generation	117
Its theological distinctives	117
Its sociological interpretation.	120
3. The development of the second generation and beyond (1885-1925).	123

Developments in North America.	123
Developments in Russia	126
4. An assessment of change and continuity after two generations.	128.

Part Three:

Factors Contributing to the Sacralization of Identity, 1925-1975

V. Delineating Boundaries through Cognitive and Normative Frameworks.	137
1. Analysing the system of meaning.	139
Empirical measures of belief	140
Explaining the continuity of belief.	145
2. Analysing the system of ethics	167
Empirical measures of ethics	168
On making and enforcing ethical decisions.	171
Summary of chapter five.	187
VI. Enhancing Cohesion through Family Solidarity and Ethnic Seclusion.	189
1. Mennonite Brethren family solidarity	190
The Biblical understanding of the family	191
A look at the data	192
The sociological function of the family.	195
The threat of erosion.	197
The nurture of family solidarity	201
2. Mennonite Brethren ethnicity	206

Interpreting ethnicity	206
Intimations of ethnicity	209
The pertinacity of ethnicity	214
Summary of chapter six	226
VII. Consolidating Identities through Conversion and Charisma . . .	229
1. Conversion and spiritual life.	230
Empirical evidence of identity change.	230
Non-theological dimensions of religious transformation .	236
2. Charisma and religious leadership.	251
Some facts of Canadian Mennonite Brethren leadership . .	252
Analysis of leadership patterns.	255
Summary of chapter seven.	271
VIII. Facilitating Socialization through Church Participation and	
Formal Education	273
1. Weekly church participation.	274
Measures of participation.	275
Meaning of such participation.	279
2. Formal instruction in educational institutions	297
The Church Member Profile data	297
A brief survey of Canadian Mennonite Brethren education-	
al institutions.	300
Summary of chapter eight	317
IX. Reinforcing Integration through Structural Networks and Service	
Agencies	320

1. The centripetal impact of conference organizations . . .	321
The emergence of the structural network.	322
Mennonite Brethren church polity	328
The functions and dysfunctions of conferences.	332
2. The centrifugal impact of conference organization. . . .	343
The empirical data	344
The integrating effect	358
Summary of chapter nine.	362

Part Four: Factors Contributing to Secularization, 1925-1975

X. Education and Relativization	365
1. Religious change and secularization.	366
2. Some empirical evidence of the impact of education . . .	370
Educational attainment of Canadian Mennonite Brethren. .	370
Educational attainment and measures of religiosity . . .	372
3. An analysis of the church's attitudes to change, secular-	
ization, and education	383
Attitudes to change.	383
Attitudes to secularization.	388
Attitudes to education	391
Summary of the relativizing impact of education.	399
XI. Urbanization and Fragility Hazards	402
1. The urbanization process	402
Its meaning.	403
Its relation to secularization	405

Its early development among Mennonite Brethren	407
2. Empirical findings on Canadian Mennonite Brethren	
Rural-Urban Residence.	412
The degree of rural-urban residence.	412
The effect of urbanization upon religion	418
3. The church's understanding of urbanization	424
Viewing the city as a peril.	424
Viewing the city as a frontier	432
Summary of the fragility hazards of urbanization	436
XII. Occupational Change and Reorientation.	439
1. Some background perspectives	440
Historical considerations.	441
Motivation for vocational change	446
2. Empirical observations on occupational distribution and variables of religiosity	450
Occupational variation among Canadian Mennonite Brethren	450
Occupational distribution and measures of religiosity. .	453
3. Reorientation and secularization	460
Secularizing effects of occupational change.	460
Arresting the secularization process	465
Summary of secularization impact of occupational change. . .	469
XIII. Economic Ascendancy and Vertical Mobility.	472
1. Background factors to a study of religion and economics. 473	
Precursors in the study of sectarian religiosity and economics.	473

Factors giving rise to economic ascendancy among Canadian Mennonite Brethren.	475
2. The findings of the empirical studies.	484
Associating levels of income with non-religious variables of social change	484
Associating levels of income with variables of religion.	487
3. Some further consequences of economic ascendancy	494
Effects of economic prosperity upon social class	494
Effects of economic prosperity upon sectarian stance	500
Effects of economic prosperity upon social reform.	505
Summary of the secularizing impact of economic ascendancy.	508
XIV. Assimilation and Identity Crisis	511
1. Assimilation and its evidence.	512
The process of cultural diffusion.	512
A brief overview of Canadian Mennonite Brethren assimilation	519
Testing the effects of assimilation.	529
2. Identity crisis and its consequences	535
The search for identity.	536
The consequences of the crisis	546
Summary of the consequences of assimilation.	551

Part Five: Conclusion

XV. The Viability of Sectarianism.	554
1. The summation of findings.	554

2. Ascertaining the support of the hypothesis	562
3. Responding to spokesmen on sectarianism.	566
4. Suggestions for further research	570
Epilogue	573
Bibliography	575

LIST OF FIGURES.

I-1	Summary of Church-Sect Typology as Portrayed by Ernst Troeltsch.	17
II-1	Functions and Dysfunctions of a Functionalist Theory of Religion.	44
VII-1	Histogram of Years of Office of Canadian Conference Moderators	259

LIST OF TABLES

V-1	Measures of Orthodoxy.	141
V-2	Measures of Fundamentalism	143
V-3	Measures of Anabaptism	144
V-4	Moral Issues	168
V-5	Measures of Social Ethics.	170
V-6	Comparing Number of Excommunications with Memberships and Baptisms	185
VI-1	Types of Marriage Unions	193
VI-2	Factors of Mennonite Brethren Ethnicity.	212
VII-1	Initial Conversion Experience.	232
VII-2	Measures of Sanctification	234
VII-3	Measures of Devotionalism.	235
VII-4	Measures of Personal Evangelism.	237
VII-5	Leadership Involvement in Local Churches	252
VII-6	Lay or Professional Church Ministry.	253

VII-7	Role of Women in the Church.	254
VIII-1	Measures of Associationalism	276
VIII-2	Church Attendance by Denomination.	277
VIII-3	Measures of Attitude to Church Participation	278
VIII-4	Five-yearly Growth of Churches, Sunday Schools, and Youth Programs	289
VIII-5	Analysis of Enrolment in Sunday Schools according to Classes.	290
VIII-6	Percentage Attendance at Mennonite Schools	298
VIII-7	Support of Church Colleges	299
IX-1	Vocations and Church Positions of Delegates at the Canadian Conference, 1963.	333
IX-2	Comparison of United States and Canadian Mennonite Breth- ren Membership and Contributions to Overseas Missions. . .	350
IX-3	Involvement of Mennonite Brethren Missionaries in Over- seas Mission Agencies in 1972.	352
IX-4	Baptized Mennonite Brethren Believers Around the World . .	353
X-1	Educational Attainment of Three Generational Groups. . . .	371
X-2	Educational Attainment and Devotionalism	373
X-3	Educational Attainment and Associationalism.	374
X-4	Educational Attainment and General Orthodoxy	375
X-5	Educational Attainment and Fundamentalist Orthodoxy. . . .	377
X-6	Educational Attainment and Anabaptism.	378
X-7	Educational Attainment and Moral Issues.	380
X-8	Educational Attainment and Social Ethics	381
X-9	Summary of the Scales of the Variables of Religiosity. . .	382

XI-1	Number and Membership of Canadian Mennonite Brethren City Churches, 1951 and 1971	410
XI-2	Comparative Rural-Urban Residence for Mennonite Denominations.	413
XI-3	Rural-Urban Residence and Levels of Educational Attainment	414
XI-4	Rural-Urban Residence and Occupational Variation	415
XI-5	Rural-Urban Residence and Levels of Income for 1971.	416
XI-6	Rural-Urban Residence and Devotionalism/Associationalism .	419
XI-7	Rural-Urban Residence and General Orthodoxy, Fundamen- talist Orthodoxy, and Anabaptism	420
XI-8	Rural-Urban Residence and Personal-Social Ethics	422
XI-9	A Summary of the Scales of the Effects of Rural-Urban Residence upon Religion.	425
XII-1	Distribution of Church Members by Sex and Occupation . . .	452
XII-2	Occupational Distribution and the Practice of Religion . .	454
XII-3	Occupational Distribution and Religious Beliefs.	456
XII-4	Occupational Distribution and Ethics	458
XII-5	Summary of Scales of Occupational Distribution and Measures of Religiosity.	459
XII-6	A Comparison of Transfers-in with Transfers-out for Canadian Mennonite Brethren from 1954 to 1975.	462
XIII-1	Distribution of Church Membership by Education and Income.	485
XIII-2	Distribution of Membership by Occupation and Income. . . .	486
XIII-3	Levels of Income and the Practice of Religion.	488
XIII-4	Levels of Income and Religious Beliefs	490
XIII-5	Levels of Income and Ethics.	492

XIII-6	A Summary of the Scales of Levels of Income and Measures of Religiosity	493
XIV-1	Generational Differences and the Practice of Religion. . .	530
XIV-2	Generational Differences and Religious Beliefs	532
XIV-3	Generational Differences and Ethics.	533
XIV-4	A Summary of Scales of Generational Differences and Measures of Religiosity.	535

ABBREVIATIONS

<u>AFCL</u>	<u>Anabaptists Four Centuries Later</u>
<u>CMECP</u>	<u>Consultation on Mennonite Educational and Cultural Problems</u>
<u>GCYB</u>	<u>Yearbook of the General Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches</u>
<u>HMBC</u>	<u>A History of the Mennonite Brethren Church</u>
<u>IMH</u>	<u>Introduction to Mennonite History</u>
<u>JSSR</u>	<u>Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion</u>
<u>K-J</u>	<u>Konferenz-Jugendblatt</u>
<u>MBBC</u>	<u>Mennonite Brethren Bible College</u>
<u>MBH</u>	<u>Mennonite Brethren Herald</u>
<u>MO</u>	<u>Mennonite Observer</u>
<u>MQR</u>	<u>Mennonite Quarterly Review</u>
<u>MR</u>	<u>Mennonitische Rundschau</u>
<u>RAV</u>	<u>The Recovery of the Anabaptist Vision</u>
<u>Voice</u>	<u>The Voice</u>
<u>YB</u>	<u>Yearbook of the Canadian Conference of the Mennonite Brethren Churches of North America</u>

SECTARIANISM AS A RESEARCH ENTERPRISE

There are those social analysts who view religion as outmoded for this "world come of age",¹ and there are those prophets of religion who not only welcome secularization as a liberating movement,² but who also predict religion's imminent demise.³ And yet, religion persists. It was observed by Max Weber that there is no known human society without something which modern social scientists would classify as religion,⁴ and Talcott Parsons maintains that modern anthropologists have completely confirmed that belief in the supernatural is universal.⁵ There are also those prophets, therefore, who either see a place for "honest religion" for "secular man"⁶ or who, in fact, maintain that man is quite

¹This expression was given currency by Dietrich Bonhoeffer. Notably among such social analysts are Karl Marx and Sigmund Freud. See Karl Marx, "Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right", in Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, On Religion (New York: Schocken Books, 1974), p. 42, and Sigmund Freud, The Future of an Illusion (Garden City: Anchor Books, 1964), p. 71.

²Harvey Cox, The Secular City (New York: Macmillan, 1971), pp. 17f.

³Rodney Stark and Charles Y. Glock, American Piety: The Nature of Religious Commitment (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968), p. 205.

⁴Max Weber, Sociology of Religion (Boston: Beacon Press, 1969), pp. 14-17.

⁵Talcott Parsons, "Introduction", in Max Weber, Sociology of Religion, xxviii.

⁶Lesslie Newbigin, Honest Religion for Secular Man (London: SCM Press, 1966).

"unsecular",⁷ and thus support Durkheim's notion that "there is something eternal in religion...".⁸ Perhaps the "new direction" of the traditional religious symbolism, which Robert Bellah foresees in the post-modern age,⁹ is not the "invisible religion" of Thomas Luckmann,¹⁰ but the persistence of earlier forms of religion. No doubt, one such expression of religion could be that of sectarianism.

1. The Persistence of Sectarianism

In the last sentence of the conclusion of his well-known work, Religion in Secular Society, Bryan R. Wilson predicts that in response to the growing institutionalism, impersonality, and bureaucracy of modern society, religion will find new functions to perform. However, that would not be the religion of ecumenism,¹¹ but the religion of the sects.¹² That this is not a popular conception is well stated by Hans

⁷ Andrew M. Greeley, Unsecular Man: The Persistence of Religion (New York: Dell Publishing, 1974).

⁸ Emile Durkheim, Elementary Forms of the Religious Life (New York: The Free Press, 1965), p. 474.

⁹ Robert N. Bellah, "Religious Evolution", American Sociological Review, XXIX (1964), pp. 358-74.

¹⁰ Thomas Luckmann, The Invisible Religion (New York: Macmillan, 1967).

¹¹ Despite my discussion of sectarian persistence, I am not engaging in polemics in regards to ecumenism. Its rightful place in a discussion of Christian religious bodies is not disputed, but this is not the place.

¹² Bryan R. Wilson, Religion in Secular Society (London: Watts, 1966). Bryan Wilson, no doubt, ranks foremost among sociologists in his research and writing on sectarianism. His other works and articles will be referred to in due course.

Mol in his recent work, Identity and the Sacred. He notes, "There is nothing in Troeltsch's church/sect typology which could have led to the prediction of the growth of evangelical sectarianism in general or of sects in particular: Nor do any of the current theories of religious behaviour contain much predictive power, or for that matter, show much interest in the comparative viability of sects in modern societies."¹³ Increasingly studies have shown, however, that sects and the more evangelical and orthodox Protestant denominations have gained in both influence and numbers at the expense of the "liberal and adjustable churches".¹⁴ Peter Berger, while not speaking of growth, admits the continuing evidence of religion. "There is scattered evidence", he submits, "that secularization may not be as all-embracing as some have thought; that the supernatural, banished from cognitive respectability by the intellectual authorities, may survive in hidden nooks and crannies of the culture. Some, for that matter, are not all that hidden."¹⁵ As will be indicated shortly, the following dissertation hypothesizes such a viability for sectarianism, but, first, more needs to be said about sectarian studies as such.

¹³ Hans J. Mol, Identity and the Sacred (Agincourt, Ontario: Book Society of Canada Ltd., 1976), p. 179.

¹⁴ Mol, ibid., p. 24. For reference to such growth, Mol cites the following: W. E. Mann, R. C. Wolf, L. S. Feuer and M. W. Perrine, C. Y. Glock and R. Stark, T. O'Dea, W. G. McLoughlin, H. Fallding, and K. Davis. In addition, one could add Dean M. Kelley's recent work, Why Conservative Churches are Growing (New York: Harper and Row, 1972).

¹⁵ Peter L. Berger, A Rumour of Angels (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1971), p. 39.

2. The Growing Prominence of This Field of Study

Some twenty years ago, Peter Berger suggested that there were few areas in the sociology of religion that were of greater interest than that of sectarianism: This was so not because of his interest in delving into the more picturesque aspects of religious life, whether in some backward rural area or the religious underworld of modern metropolis, but that "in the deepening analysis of sectarianism, its structure and dynamics, the sociology of religion may make a formidable contribution to the general effort of the social sciences to understand the inner forces of our society".¹⁶ He then deplored that the study of sectarianism had been characterized by a mass of empirical data with little or no theoretical orientation. In conclusion, he expressed the need for carefully worked out monographs on a number of sectarian movements and a systematic investigation of the processes within these movements, such as: the relationship between religious motif and social structure, the development of ecclesiastical forms out of sectarian movements, the development and changes of sectarian leadership, the phenomena of sectarianism in the total religious scene in the United States.¹⁷ The proposed study of the Canadian Mennonite Brethren Church encompasses a number of these aspects, most prominently the processes of sacralization and secularization and the religious vitality which results from the interaction of these forces.

¹⁶ Berger, "Sociological Study of Sectarianism", Social Research XXI (1955), 467.

¹⁷ Berger, ibid., p. 485.

A number of studies of sectarianism on this continent had preceded Berger's concern of 1955. Notably among these were the monographs by Liston Pope, Richard Niebuhr, and Elmer Clark in the United States, and S. D. Clark and W. E. Mann in Canada.¹⁸ Subsequently, a whole spate of writings on sectarianism has appeared. Most prominent in Britain is Bryan Wilson. In America, the most thorough-going studies on the church-sect typology and sectarian religiosity were done by the following: N. J. Demerath III, A. W. Elster, E. Goode, L. P. Gerlach and V. H. Hine, P. Gustafson, B. Johnson, W. Muelder, T. F. O'Dea, J. Scanzoni, J. B. Snook, Werner Stark, and J. M. Yinger. Less known are such doctoral dissertations and an M. A. thesis as listed: P. L. Berger, E. D. C. Brewer, O. F. Dent, R. R. Dynes, L. Harder, H. W. Pfautz, C. Redekop, H. W. Reed, and J. B. Wilson.¹⁹ In addition, numerous works have been

¹⁸ Bibliographic details for the works of these authors and those referred to immediately below will be provided in footnotes as reference to them is made.

¹⁹ The dissertations and thesis are listed alphabetically: Peter L. Berger, "The Bahai Movement: A Sociological Interpretation", New School for Social Research, 1954; E. D. C. Brewer, "Methodism in Changing American Society", U. of No. Carolina, 1950; Owen F. Dent, "The Utility of the Church-Sect Typology", M. A. thesis, Australian National University, 1968; R. R. Dynes, "Church-Sect Typology: An Empirical Study", Ohio State U., 1954; Leland Harder, "The Quest for Equilibrium in an Established Sect: A Study of Social Change in the General Conference Mennonite Church", Garrett Institute, 1962; Harold W. Pfautz, "Christian Science: The Sociology of a Social Movement and Religious Group", U. of Chicago, 1954; Calvin Redekop, "The Sectarian Black and White World", U. of Chicago, 1959; Harold W. Reed, "The Growth of a Contemporary Sect-type Institution as Reflected in the Development of the Church of the Nazarene", U. of So. California, 1943; James B. Wilson, "Religious Leaders, Institutions, and Organizations among Certain Agricultural Workers in Central Valley of California", U.S.C., 1944.

written on new religious movements and the prospect of religion for the future. Literature relating to secularization will be introduced in chapter two. Such extensive research and writing, then, should not only allow empirical data to be accumulated but also advance the theoretical studies. And surely it has helped to sophisticate research methodology.

3. The Methodology Adopted for Such a Study

The following methodological note has been patterned after the outline of the dissertation itself, beginning with the tool devised by sociologists to analyse religious movements, proceeding to the historical setting required, noting further the component data of such an analysis, and then assessing the impact of the interaction of the major forces at work.

The Need for Types

That aspect of the scientific study of religion known as the discipline of the sociology of religion concerns itself, on the one hand, with the ways in which society, culture, and the individual influence religion—influence its origin, its doctrines, its practices, the types of groups that express it, and their kinds of leadership. On the other hand, it is also the study of the ways in which religion affects society, culture, and the individual.²⁰ To pursue such a

²⁰ J. Milton Yinger, The Scientific Study of Religion (New York: Macmillan, 1970), p. 22.

scientific study, the social scientist, as much as possible, must avoid the mixture of value-judgments and science.²¹ Only then can he fulfill the requirements of a social science, that is, the prediction of the hypothetical or actual recurrence of social phenomena.²² Otherwise, he becomes a social philosopher or pseudo-sociologist.²³ To be scientific he must devise tools which are as value-free as possible and can readily be employed in his study of religious phenomena. Moreover, contrary to the ideographic historian who seeks to describe the unique and the particular, the sociologist needs to generalize in order to advance a theory which interprets society. To make such generalizations, on the basis of which he will make predictions about social phenomena, he constructs a "pure" or "ideal" type²⁴ which becomes such a tool or heuristic device against which to project a more precisely, measurable reality.²⁵ His prediction can then be made within the framework provided by constructive typology. However, such construction of a type requires, first, the proposal of a highly provisional hypothesis; then, studying a number of instances to construct a set of typical circum-

²¹ Leopold von Wiese and Howard Becker, Systematic Sociology (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1932), p. 7.

²² J. Howard Becker, Through Values to Social Interpretation (New York: Greenwood Press, 1968), p. 97.

²³ Wiese and Becker, ibid.

²⁴ Becker, ibid., pp. 93-127.

²⁵ John C. McKinney, Constructive Typology and Social Theory (New York: Meredith Publishing Co., 1966), pp. 5-7.

stances; and, lastly, constructing a hypothetical "ideal" type. Furthermore, the data of social phenomena are not susceptible to experimental manipulation (except for limited "controlled" situations in a totalitarian setting), but the use of undated and non-localized types allows the social scientist to make predictions given certain circumstances. As a result, then, of the construction of such a type, which type is not itself an hypothesis, he can employ the type in testing the proximity of occurrences of social phenomena. It is not intended, however, that a given construct be exactly found in "external" nature. At best, it can only approximate the ideal.²⁶

The church-sect typology is such a tool for the sociologist. Where it has been abused, its critics have rightfully derogated this device. However, abuse does not rule out the legitimacy of proper use. When Max Weber and Ernst Troeltsch first used the church-sect typology, they appropriately thought in terms of "ideal types" or "constructs" against which to measure religious phenomena.²⁷ Although the polar ends of the hypothetical continuum were "pure" church and "pure" sect, Troeltsch did not rule out the simultaneous occurrence of these trends in the history of the church. And Peter Berger suggested that sectarianism was, indeed, a process that might also occur within the social structure of a church.²⁸ One might deduce that "churchness" is also a

²⁶ McKinney, ibid., pp. 9-19.

²⁷ Talcott Parsons, "Introduction", in Max Weber, Sociology of Religion, lxvi, observes that Weber's atomism of types resulted in a typological rigidity which needed correction.

²⁸ Peter L. Berger, "Sectarianism and Religious Sociation", American Journal of Sociology, LXIV (1958), 43.

process which characterizes a developing sect. Because of the massive critique that this typology has generated, and because of the utility of this typology for this research enterprise, a more intensive analysis of the church-sect typology will follow.²⁹

The Place of History in a Sociological Study

If the ideographic historian, with his concern for the particular detail in a given time and place, is not the model for the sociologist, one may well question the place for such an elaborate historical framework that this dissertation proposes for the religious movement under study. First, one must admit the need for some historical background, since a religious movement which can date its time and place of origin is also part of a cultural milieu within a particular time and place of history. To recognize the social, economic, political, and religious factors at work may elucidate the causes which gave rise to the movement and the unique shape the movement assumes. To do without the historical background may well limit one's understanding of the essence of the movement itself. Secondly, one must hasten to add that sociology of religion is not to be confused with social history nor the history of the social gospel.³⁰ Both of these may supply data for the sociology of religion, but they raise different questions. Sociology of religion will seek to support a proposed hypothesis or generalization for which

²⁹ Infra, pp. 14f.

³⁰ Yinger, Sociology Looks at Religion (New York: Macmillan, 1969), p. 135.

it needs a careful understanding of historical components.³¹ And for this, the historic background is essential. Thirdly, Anabaptists have repeatedly been cited as the classic example of sectarianism.³² To study the persistent, sectarian nature of this twentieth century Anabaptist movement, it will be helpful to recall the norms of beliefs and practice of its ideal as these were rediscovered to be the New Testament ideals both at the time of the beginning of the Anabaptist movement in the sixteenth century, as well as in the more recent appearance of the Mennonite Brethren Church in the nineteenth century. Tensions which gave rise to the schism between church and sect both in the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries are present in the movement today. The two chapters on Anabaptist and Mennonite Brethren beginnings, therefore, not only provide a historical setting for the contemporary movement, but lay the groundwork for an understanding of the processes of sacralization and secularization within the movement from 1925-1975.

Component Data for the Study

Two sections of the dissertation, with five chapters in each, form the body of the component data for analysing change and continuity. What kind of data, then, are required for such a study? Tracing change

³¹Hans Mol, The Breaking of Traditions (Berkeley: The Glendensary Press, 1968), "Preface". Professor Mol bases his study on primary historical documents, letters, journals, minutes, reports, and polemical writings.

³²See Wiese and Becker, ibid., p. 636. Also Max Weber, ibid., p. 134; and Ernst Troeltsch, The Social Teaching of the Christian Churches (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1960), II, 703-5.

or lack of change through time makes at least two demands upon the data. The information must in some manner be measurable, whether quantitatively or qualitatively, and must be comparable, that is, there must be similar kinds of data with which to make valid comparisons. Most accurate for purposes of measurement, of course, would be an extensive survey with a similar questionnaire administered at two or more points in time. In the absence of such a survey, which can be conducted for the present but cannot be administered retroactively in history, other supporting evidence will need to be discovered, evidence which is sufficiently specific and "measurable", as well as reoccurring in some form, in order to trace the change through time. A limited amount of "hard core" empirical data is, in fact, available in periodicals and yearbooks during the first years under study. For the recent past, much specific data is available, including extensive empirical testing of specific indices.³³ To supplement the "hard core" data of the early years under study, it will be necessary to rely on select documents of history, such as S. D. Clark used for Church and Sect in Canada and Hans Mol used for The Breaking of Traditions. Clark makes the following statement about the use of such historical materials:

³³ Many of the statistical data used for this study are taken from the Church Member Profile, a survey of five Mennonite and Brethren in Christ denominations conducted in 1972. Permission to do a secondary analysis was kindly granted by the directors, J. Howard Kauffman, Ph. D., of Goshen College, Goshen, Indiana, and Leland D. Harder, Ph. D., of Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Indiana. Their own findings are summarized in the work by Howard Kauffman and Leland Harder, Anabaptists Four Centuries Later (hereafter AFCL): A Profile of Five Mennonite and Brethren in Christ Denominations (Scottsdale: Herald Press, 1975).

The author's conviction is that sociology has much to gain from a greater use of historical material. Neglect of developments of the past has limited perspective and led to a narrowing of sociological theory. Sociology has suffered from the failure to bridge the gulf between grand works on the philosophy of history where there has been too little analysis of facts and highly detailed studies of local social groups or communities where there has been too little theoretical interpretation. Use of historical material does not involve abandonment of sociological methods; developments of the past can be examined with as much care as developments of the present. Only through an examination of such past developments can an adequate theory of social change be formulated. The present study, it is hoped, offers some demonstration of the fruitfulness of a sociological historical approach.³⁴

That such use of historical data is not without its problems is suggested by Professor Mol, who explains his use of historical materials in the following citation:

In the following pages it will be shown that the methodological problems which arise when social research techniques are consistently applied to primary historical materials are not insurmountable. It is true, however, that the most time-consuming and difficult problem of this study has been the researchability of the materials. Much research had to be done simply to find out whether the possible relevance of other variables could be investigated, whether it would be possible to control the primary historical materials in order to evaluate the effects of non-theological factors on Americanization and whether similar indices could be applied to both evangelical and orthodox groups. However, the vexations of a necessarily tight research design proved to be commensurate to the satisfactions of finding historical situations to which it could be applied. Sometimes it was necessary to be flexible in the more detailed and specific investigations although the more general research design was never abandoned.³⁵

In the following dissertation a research design involving a balance of select historical materials and empirical data will be used to marshal

³⁴ S. D. Clark, Church and Sect in Canada (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1971), vii.

³⁵ Hans Mol, ibid., "Preface".

sufficient evidence to test the stated hypotheses. This balance is intimated by J. Milton Yinger when he states that "atheoretical research is disjointed and inadequately cumulative; theory that is not continually tested and revised by research is speculative and of unknown validity".³⁶ Hence, both historical documentation and empirical measures will test the hypothesis of sectarian viability.

The Dialectic of Sacralization and Secularization

The dissertation will not merely be descriptive in supplying data to demonstrate continuity and change. It will be shown that both sacralization and secularization are on-going processes between which a dialectic occurs. While sacralization inhibits progress, impedes social change, and eternalizes norms; secularization erodes boundaries, unsettles stable structures, and destroys identity. Therefore, for a religious movement to remain viable, there will need to be a continued tension between sacralization and secularization. Harold Fallding has well stated that "secularization is the analytical process that has sacralization for the complementary synthesizing process. They make a dialectic. Secularization, through the operation of reason, breaks down; sacralization, through the operation of faith, builds up".³⁷ In a similar vein, Calvin Redekop maintains that sect development is not simply an unfolding of a predetermined course of events. Rather, it is

³⁶ Yinger, ibid., p. 134.

³⁷ Fallding, The Sociology of Religion (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1974), p. 210.

the "outcome of a continuing dialectic between sect and host society".³⁸ The fourth part of the dissertation comes to grips with the impact of this dialectic.

Finally, in keeping with the task of the social scientist, the final chapter will assess the implications for such a sectarian movement in Canada. This assessment will not be sheer guessing, further hypothesizing, or mere wishful thinking. On the basis of the evidence, it will affirm or negate the viability of sectarianism.

4. A Critique of the Church-Sect Typology

Studies of sectarianism are invariably confronted with the church-sect typology, first popularized by Max Weber and Ernst Troeltsch. Some scholars have indiscriminately used their dichotomous typology or conveniently expanded it. Others have totally rejected it, while still others have understood its utility and cautiously employed it. Since the initial stage of the religious movement under study so closely fits Troeltsch's portrayal of a sect, it is well to review his typology and the subsequent critique it has generated.

Weber and Troeltsch's Typology

Troeltsch's typology was based on Weber's distinction of institutions capable of exercising authority and of his theory of charisma.

³⁸ Calvin Redekop, "A New Look at Sect Development", Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion (hereafter JSSR), XIII (1974), 347. *Italics his.*

The church, Weber explained, emerged out of a hierocracy with a professional priesthood, with claims of universal domination, with rationalized dogmas and rites, and with a compulsory organization.³⁹ As a result, the church becomes the bearer of an office charisma to preserve the dignity of the organization, not a community of personally charismatic individuals like a sect. Weber's basic distinction between church and sect, then, rests on the compulsory-voluntary aspect. He notes, "...As a rule, it (the church) is not joined voluntarily, like an association, but its members are born into it".⁴⁰ Elsewhere, to illustrate such voluntary association, Weber refers to the introduction of adult baptism by the Anabaptists in Zurich.⁴¹ Important, also, is Weber's notion of the "routinization (Veraltaeglichung) of charisma" to explain sect development. When a social relationship based on personal allegiance to a charismatic figure becomes a permanent one, the charismatic power is traditionalized or rationalized (legalized).⁴² Thus, a sect tends to pass away with the generation that first constituted it, since the new generation enshrines the charisma in a traditional or legalistic

³⁹Max Weber, Economy and Society, (New York: Bedminster Press, 1968), III, 1164-66, 1207-10.

⁴⁰Ibid., p. 1164.

⁴¹Weber, "The Protestant Sects and the Spirit of Capitalism", in Gerth and Mills, From Max Weber (New York: Oxford U. Press, 1974), pp. 313-14.

⁴²Weber, Economy and Society, Vol. I, p. 3. See also Weber's The Theory of Social and Economic Organization (New York: Free Press, 1964), pp. 358-73; and The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism (New York: Charles Scribner's, 1958), pp. 145-54.

order. However limited Weber's church-sect typology may have been in its restriction to the principle of voluntariness, the strength of his distinction was in its sociological analysis of the structural differences, rather than in providing a theological explanation of the difference;⁴³ moreover, his dichotomy stimulated further investigation.

Troeltsch built upon Weber's distinction between church and sect, but separated both from mysticism. He undertook a more theological analysis in his amplified distinction. Troeltsch saw the Reformation as the culmination of the church-sect distinction, although both forms were present from the beginning of Christian history. The church type was based on the idea of grace administered to an organization of masses, while the sect was based on the idea of law governing a small "holy community" set aside from the world.⁴⁴ More specifically, in Troeltsch's own summary, the church is an "institution which has been endowed with grace and salvation as the result of the work of Redemption; it is able to receive the masses, and to adjust to the world", while the sect is "a voluntary society, composed of strict and definite Christian believers bound to each other by the fact that all have experienced 'the new birth'".⁴⁵ Figure 1 below illustrates in summary form the contrasts between church and sect as depicted by Troeltsch.

⁴³ Allan W. Eister. "H. Richard Niebuhr and the Paradox of Religious Organization: A Radical Critique", in C. Y. Glock and P. H. Hammond, Beyond the Classics? (New York: Harper and Row, 1973), pp. 280-01.

⁴⁴ This represents a summary of Troeltsch as given by Peter L. Berger in "The Sociological Study of Sectarianism", Social Research, XXI (1953), 467-85.

⁴⁵ Troeltsch, ibid., II, 993.

CRITERION OF JUDGMENT	CHURCH CHARACTERISTIC	SECT CHARACTERISTIC
Starting point	Sacerdotal office of apostolic church	Jesus and primitive church
Access to divine	Objective possession of grace	Individual effort and subjective holiness
Source of legitimation	Sacerdotal and sacramental office	Gospel and primitive church ideal
Membership	Ascriptive status, by birth	Achieved status, by voluntary adherence
Commitment	Differential, especially by monks and priests	Total commitment from all
Asceticism	Confined to monastic orders	Principle of separation for all
Class appeal	Dominant class (upper and ruling)	Lower and oppressed
Organizational response	Hierarchical and traditional	Egalitarian and radical
Attitude to world	Compromise	Separate from and in tension with
Attitude to state	Utilize state and social order	Oppose or avoid state

Figure 1. Summary of Church-Sect Typology as Portrayed by Ernst Troeltsch⁴⁶

Refinement of Dichotomy in Wach, Becker, and Yinger

Troeltsch's typology has received much attention by sociologists, historians, and theologians. Usually his two categories were too polar-

⁴⁶ This summary is based on Social Teaching, I, 328-49.

ized, so in-between positions on the continuum were devised. Joachim Wach, from a more theological perspective (with a reminder that religious bodies are first worshipping communities⁴⁷), has avoided the word "church" altogether and recognized three distinct bodies, sociologically: (i) the ecclesiastical bodies, appealing to the ideal of the true ecclesia (especially expanded by Calvin) as a middle position between Rome and the left wing of the Reformation; (ii) the independent bodies or denominations, especially the American church form; and (iii) the sect, rigidly exclusive (not even including the right wing of the Anabaptists).⁴⁸ Howard Becker expanded Troeltsch's typology to include four constructs: ecclesia, sect, denomination (sect at an advanced stage), and cult; and suggested a hypothetical cycle of cult, sect, denomination, and ecclesia.⁴⁹ Milton Yinger found these elaborations inadequate and refined the typology according to two criteria, the degree of universality and the degree of emphasis on social integration: (i) the universal church (combining both church and sect tendencies); (ii) the ecclesia (encompassing the boundaries of society as in established national churches); (iii) class church or denomination (limited by class, racial, and regional boundaries, yet not withdrawing from the social order); (iv) the established sect (an outgrowth of the sect, in its continued

⁴⁷ Joachim Wach, Types of Religious Experience Christian and Non-Christian (Chicago: U. of Chicago Press, 1972), p. 203.

⁴⁸ Ibid., pp. 191-98.

⁴⁹ Wiese and Becker, ibid., pp. 624-28.

protest resisting for many generations the disintegrating effects of improved economic status, mobility, persecution, and education); (v) the sect (as in Troeltsch's terms, responding to their host society by acceptance, aggression, or avoidance); and (vi) the cult (connoting mystical experience, lack of organization, and presence of charismatic leaders).⁵⁰ Yinger's classification is of special interest in its application to an Anabaptist sect, since Mennonites have frequently been referred to as an "established sect".⁵¹

Sect Development in Niebuhr, Pope, Muelder, and Brewer

More important than merely stimulating typological refinement, Troeltsch's church-sect distinction led to productive studies of sect development. Most prominent among these were H. Richard Niebuhr and Liston Pope. Niebuhr, writing as a theologian rather than sociologist, maintained that sects, defined rigorously, cannot last beyond the founding generation, since family life, increasing wealth and respectability, and routinization lead to accommodation and result in denominations.⁵² Niebuhr astutely observes, "Rarely does a second generation hold the convictions it has inherited with a fervor equal to that of its fathers,

⁵⁰ J. Milton Yinger, Religion, Society, and the Individual (Toronto: Collier-Macmillan, 1969), pp. 147-55.

⁵¹ Leland Harder, "The Quest for Equilibrium of an Established Sect", unpublished Ph. D. dissertation, Garrett Biblical Institute, 1962, pp. 12-15. See also, Thomas F. O'Dea, The Sociology of Religion (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, 1966), p. 69.

⁵² H. Richard Niebuhr, Social Sources of Denominationalism (New York: World Publishing, 1972), pp. 17-21, 25.

who fashioned these convictions in the heat of conflict and at the risk of martyrdom".⁵³ The aptness of this insight will be tested in the study of the Mennonite Brethren sect. Allan W. Eister contends that neither Troeltsch nor Niebuhr, as theologians, have supplied social scientists with the kinds of conceptualizations of religious organizations that social science requires, for denominations must then be viewed pejoratively as expressions of failure in Christian religious organizations. Instead, Max Weber's analysis of the nature and basis of religious organization is more appropriate for scientific investigation.⁵⁴ Liston Pope, in his study of Gaston County in North Carolina in 1939, formulated twenty-one indices to measure the movement from sect to church.⁵⁵ Reference will again be made to this study when comparing the degree of change which has occurred in the Canadian Mennonite Brethren sect.⁵⁶

Two further studies of the transition from sect to church, based on Troeltsch's dichotomy, were conducted by Walter Muelder and Earl D. Brewer. In his study of the Nazarenes and Pentecostals in California, Muelder examined the stereotype by which these holiness sects were confused and determined the degree of dissent and accommodation of each. The Pentecostals, who came as migrant workers, became sectarian through

⁵³ Ibid., p. 20.

⁵⁴ Eister, ibid., pp. 355-61.

⁵⁵ Liston Pope, Millhands and Preachers (New Haven: Yale U. Press, 1942), pp. 122-24.

⁵⁶ Infra, p. 495.

ecclesiastical disinheritance (not being accepted by Methodist ranchers), and the Nazarenes represented an advanced stage of urban accommodation.⁵⁷ Earl Brewer, in order to devise a better analytical tool for his study of sect development in the Methodist Episcopal Church, contrasted "extreme" types of both church and sect in four specific categories: conceptual and ideological, associational and organizational, ritual and behavioral, and rational and instrumental. Testing the Methodist Church at two different decades, 1780-1790 and 1930-1940, Brewer concludes that sectarian forces furnish the dynamic and sectarian forms the structure for the "remnant" element in a decaying religion and the "revival" element in a growing religion.⁵⁸ The following analysis will examine, as Muellder did, the degree of dissent and accommodation of the Canadian Mennonite Brethren, and will hypothesize, as Brewer did, that sectarian forces and sectarian forms furnish both the dynamic and structure for a changing religious organization.

Reformulation of Typology in O'Dea, Dynes, Johnson, and Gustafson

In a further analysis of sect development, Thomas F. O'Dea indicated that the church-sect dichotomy does not exhaust the possibilities for theologies, illustrating how Mormonism avoided "stagnant sectarian-

⁵⁷ Walter Muellder, "From Sect to Church", Christendom, X (1945), 450-62.

⁵⁸ E. D. C. Brewer, "Sect and Church in Methodism", Social Forces, XXX (1952), 400-08. Italics mine.

ism" while taking on the form of "incipient nationality".⁵⁹ Russell R. Dynes, incorporating the measures of Liston Pope, used the typology of Weber and Troeltsch to correlate greater acceptance of church-type organizations and higher socio-economic status.⁶⁰ Benton Johnson showed that holiness sects function as an agency of the socialization of the lower class in the dominant values of American society.⁶¹ Johnson's study will be useful when assessing the extent that the Canadian Mennonite Brethren can assume such dominant values and yet retain its sectarian stance. In a subsequent study, Johnson criticized Troeltsch's scheme (too European, too Christian, too ancient, and too many variables) and up-dated the usefulness of the typology by broadening its application and confining it to a single variable: acceptance of the social environment in which a sect exists.⁶² Johnson could then more readily apply the typology to the American scene. More recently, Paul Gustafson restated Troeltsch's church-sect typology in which he noted the fundamental dimensions: the means of grace, and the universalistic-particularistic concept of membership.⁶³ He saw in Troeltsch neither a timeless nor a universal-

⁵⁹Thomas F. O'Dea, "Mormonism and the Avoidance of Sectarian Stagnation: A Study of Church, Sect, and Incipient Nationality", American Journal of Sociology, LX (1954), 285-93.

⁶⁰Russell R. Dynes, "Church-Sect Typology and Socio-Economic Status", American Sociological Review, XX (1955), 555-60.

⁶¹Benton Johnson, "Do Holiness Sects Socialize in Dominant Values?" Social Forces, XXXIX (1961), 309-16.

⁶²Johnson, "On Church and Sect", American Sociological Review, XXVIII (1963), 539-49.

⁶³Paul Gustafson, "UO-US-PS-PO: Restatement of Troeltsch's Church-Sect Typology", JSSR, VI (1967), 64-68.

istic typology, and consequently Gustafson's restatement is a legitimate reformulation, although it results in four separate categories if one intersects the two continua. Yet, it is still based on Troeltsch.

Rigorous Critiques of Goode, Demerath, Eister, and Snook

Following these refinements and reformulations to up-date the use of Troeltsch's church-sect typology, social scientists have recently more rigorously critiqued the typology and rejected it altogether. Eric Goode raised three basic problems with the church-sect dimension: its definition (more enumerations are "notoriously useless"), empirical correlates (a construct and actual fact never coincide), and the association of its defining elements (e. g. social class position). He concluded that "unless it undergoes a radical revision which is universally accepted by researchers and theorists in the field, church-sect must be seen as a dead concept, obsolete, sterile, and archaic".⁶⁴ This harsh judgment is largely shared by Nicholas J. Demerath III in his reply to Goode, and he further faulted the typology with lack of logical elegance, irrelevant variables, lack of systematic cohesiveness, and arbitrariness. In addition, it is both culture-bound to the West and institution-bound. Demerath consequently called for the abandonment of this Weberian scheme.⁶⁵

⁶⁴Eric Goode, "Some Critical Observations in the Church-Sect Dimensions", JSSR, VI (1967), 69-77. In a further article, Good responds to Demerath's "Reply". See, "Further Reflections on the Church-Sect Dimension", JSSR, VI (1967), 270-77.

⁶⁵Nicholas J. Demerath III, "In a Sow's Ear: A Reply to Goode", JSSR, VI (1967), 77-84.

Allan W. Eister argued that even as a heuristic device, the church-sect conceptualization faltered, the initial clarity of Weber having been confused. The major weaknesses are (i) the unreliability of listing characteristics attributed to types, (ii) the failure to recognize the difference between Weber's and Troeltsch's conceptions of the intents of churches and sects vis-a-vis the "world", and (iii) the impetus in the construction and proper use of types, namely the tendency to dichotomous constructs.⁶⁶ Eister noted that not all, nor even a majority of, sects are lower class or "protest groups". Finally, John B. Snook suggested the alternative of a multi-dimensional model which would have cross-cultural applicability. This alternative assumed that religious institutions organize religious experience into structures of authority which can be analysed along four dimensions: symbolism, structure, intensity of participation, and pervasiveness of its influence upon its members.⁶⁷ Instead of gauging sectness in terms of the parent-church from which it separated or in terms of values of the "world", it is preferable, Snook proposed, to gauge it in terms of the degree of authority they carry.

Reconsideration by Moberg, Johnson, and Redekop

These more radical critiques, however, have not terminated the discussion on church-sect typology. Already in 1961, David O. Moberg

⁶⁶ Allan W. Eister, "Toward a Radical Critique of Church-Sect Typology", JSSR, VI (1967), 85-90.

⁶⁷ John B. Snook, "An Alternative to Church-Sect", JSSR, XIII (1974), 191-204.

summarized the major criticisms of the typology as follows: (i) no American religious bodies are pure churches; (ii) "church" and "sect" are value-laden terms; (iii) the typology is inconsistent with theological definitions of the church; (iv) evolution of religious bodies is not consistently from sect to church; (v) the types are not religiously defined, and details in distinctions between them are not accurate; (vi) applications of Troeltsch's typology omit his minor categories; (vii) internal roles within the religious bodies have been minimized; (viii) illustrating a theory is not testing it. He concluded that the criticisms are based upon incomplete understanding of typological analysis, misinterpreting sociological generalizations by assuming they must have universal applicability, and insufficient research which apply the concepts.⁶⁸ Church-sect typology is thus not invalidated, but with discernment can be applied to other than Christian religions. Moberg, in fact, encouraged cross-cultural and cross-religious research on the basis of this typology.⁶⁹ In 1971, Benton Johnson re-opened the discussion reminding the critics that Troeltsch did not mean the typology to be universally applicable, that it was not highly formalized (but merely that Troeltsch's reading of history suggested clusters in two different directions), and that Troeltsch built no theory around his typology, but simply helped bring conceptual order to such historical

⁶⁸ David O. Moberg, "Potential Uses of the Church-Sect Typology in Comparative Research", International Journal of Comparative Sociology, II. (1961), 47-58.

⁶⁹ Ibid., p. 57.

data. While Johnson noted a shortcoming in subsequent theory on sect development, namely, that sect growth always leads to the compromising of religious purity and distinctiveness, he proposed that the reverse may be true, that sects may have a strong impact on their environment. He encouraged research on how religious bodies actually adapt themselves to their environment.⁷⁰ Calvin Redekop similarly made a plea for a "new look at sect development". He argued that at the heart of sectarian protest is "perceived dissonance between the actual or real and what is considered ideal".⁷¹ Redekop purported the following: (i) the degree to which a sect's protest strikes at the central and sacred values of a society will have a strong bearing on its future prospects; (ii) societies differ in their ability to tolerate and integrate radical protests; and (iii) sects differ in their strategies for confronting the evils against which they are protesting.⁷² Important for this dissertation is Redekop's further statement that "sect development is not simply an unfolding of a predetermined course of events. Rather, it is the outcome of a continuing dialectic between sect and host society".⁷³ The following study concerns itself with this dialectic, so it is appropriate, next, to note the applicability of the church-sect typology to a study

⁷⁰ Benton Johnson, "Church and Sect Revisited", JSSR, X (1971), 124-37.

⁷¹ Calvin Redekop, "A New Look at Sect Development", JSSR, XIII (1974), 346-52. *Italics his.*

⁷² Ibid., pp. 345-46.

⁷³ Ibid., p. 347. *Italics his.*

of the Canadian Mennonite Brethren Church in the light of the foregoing critique of the typology. First, however, one needs to define sectarianism more closely.

5. Definition of Sectarianism and Its Applicability to Mennonite Brethren

Popular Usage of "Sectarianism"

In a non-sociological discussion, the word "sectarian" connotes pejorative overtones which adherents of such a religious group do not find complimentary. The word is sometimes used to denote a type of warfare among religious groups on account of their differences. It refers also to esoteric religious beliefs which the established religion would frown upon. Moreover, it implies a querulous attitude of intolerance resulting in secession from a larger religious body. The popular Webster's Seventh New Collegiate Dictionary refers to a sectarian as a "narrow or bigoted person". Little wonder that adherents of such smaller Christian denominations resent being called by this derisive term. Troeltsch may have been wiser from a theological standpoint to have avoided Weber's terminology and, instead, employ the distinction "institutional" versus "voluntary" church, which possibility he considered.⁷⁴ Theologically, such "sectarian" groups rightly argue that they are the church as well and ought not to be defined vis-a-vis the church. Little wonder that Leland Harder, a Mennonite sociologist of religion, received the following comment when he conducted his research on a "sister denomi-

⁷⁴ Troeltsch, Social Teaching, I, 340.

nation", the General Conference Mennonite Church:

I do not understand how our Ph. D. candidates never get away from the sociologist notion that one must refer to any religious group, church, etc., as a "sect." Is there no one among them who has the courage to break this tradition even if at the cost of not getting his Ph. D.? That would possibly be a testimony which we expect from all of us.⁷⁵

Unfortunately, the impatience of the author of this letter with sociological parlance did not result in a change in technical jargon, for scholars today are not expected to impose their own value-orientations to a subject of inquiry in order to change it, but rather to research a given phenomenon, formulate hypotheses which encompass their generalizations, and, as a result, make predictions about the phenomenon.

Sociological Meaning of Sectarianism

From a sociological standpoint, the term "sectarian" conveys the notion of dissent, which was at the root of Weber's and Troeltsch's distinction and continues to be for those who persist in its use today. It refers to a particular type of religious organization which stands in protest. At the base of Weber's distinction was the compulsory-voluntary aspect of religious sociation,⁷⁶ the voluntary as in protest to being born into the church. In Troeltsch's more theological distinction, the sectarian stance of separation from the world, among other variables, was a protest to the compromise with the world.⁷⁷ Johnson's single

⁷⁵ Harder, "Quest for Equilibrium", Preface, iii.

⁷⁶ Supra, p. 15.

⁷⁷ Supra, p. 16.

variable dealt with acceptance of the social environment in which a sect exists.⁷⁸ The non-acceptance of this environment is sectarian protest. Similarly, Bryan Wilson defines sects mainly in terms of their response to the world, thus, in the form of protest.⁷⁹ This protest is likewise the result, according to Redekop, of "perceived dissonance between the actual or real and what is considered ideal".⁸⁰ From this perspective, identifying with such a protest group is commendatory for the adherent of a sectarian group and the term in fact becomes a compliment, as Harder suggests.⁸¹ The stage is thus set for a workable definition.

Operational Definition

The definition of sectarianism for the purpose of this disserta-

⁷⁸ Supra, p. 26.

⁷⁹ Wilson, Religion in Secular Society, p. 179. One should note the type of protest Wilson has in mind. Repeatedly Wilson has argued that the protest is not simply against the church. In 1961, in Sects and Society (London: William Heinemann, 1961), p. 3, Wilson clearly states his preference for a more general use of the word than Troeltsch and Niebuhr ("whereby the sect is necessarily depicted as opposed to the state and the social order and as emerging necessarily from the religious poor") and simply wishes it to designate "the small religious group in which membership is voluntary and conditional upon some mark of merit". Yet the protest element remains present as is apparent in Magic and the Millenium (New York: Harper and Row, 1973), p. 12: "While the sect may be regarded as a self-distinguishing protest movement, its protest in the contemporary world is not (and formerly may not always have been) normally levelled specially against the church. It may be against the state, against the secular institutions of society, as in opposition to or separation from particular institutions or groups within the society."

⁸⁰ Supra, p. 26.

⁸¹ Harder, ibid., Preface, iv.

tion can be stated as follows: sectarianism is a movement of religious protest against the social order, be it state, institution or society, or established religious organization, which results in voluntary separation from such environment to demonstrate the dissonance between what the group perceives as normative in matters of faith and practice and what it experiences as dominant in the social order. The word may also be employed as a process within a social structure, such as a church, rather than as a structural movement.⁸² The above definition has developed as a result of the influence of Weber, Troeltsch, Johnson, Wilson, Berger, and Redekop, as the foregoing discussion indicates, but is not simply an eclectic product of the same. It does focus deliberately on protest, voluntary separation, perception of dissonance between real and ideal, and on process. Its utility for a study of the Canadian Mennonite Brethren Church will shortly be demonstrated, but first a more specific analysis of sectarianism would be in place.

Typology of Sectarianism

Several scholars have devised their own typology of sectarianism to enable a clearer analysis of individual sectarian movements. Elmer

⁸² Berger, "Sectarianism and Religious Sociation", American Journal of Sociology, LX (1964), 43. Also note E. D. C. Brewer's contention that sectarianism is always present in that sectarian forces furnish the dynamic and sectarian forms the structure for the remnant element in a decaying religion and the reverse element in a growing religion. See "Sect and Church in Methodism", Social Forces, XXX (1952), 400-08. O'Dea draws attention to the possibility of the sectarian process remaining within the body of the church as a reforming agency, besides seceding from the church (see Sociology of Religion, p. 68).

T. Clark first devised such a classification with reference to small American sects according to the "mental make-up of the persons who find their spiritual cravings satisfied by the teaching or worship practices of the various bodies".⁸³ This highly arbitrary scheme is based on alleged "psychological make-up and temperament" without clear-cut indices of measurement, resulting in the following seven groups: the pessimistic or Adventist, the perfectionist subjectivist, the charismatic or Pentecostal, the communistic, the legalistic or objectivist, the egocentric or New Thought, and esoteric or mystic sects. According to Clark, the Mennonites as a body belong to the legalistic or objectivist sects because of their separatist emphasis.⁸⁴ Clark's typology is not only to be questioned for its lack of clear indices constituting the "psychological make-up", but for his arbitrary classification of sects into this mould. More useful is Bryan Wilson's typology of sects, initially of four groups⁸⁵ and expanded to seven.⁸⁶ These seven "responses

⁸³ Elmer T. Clark, Small Sects in America (Nashville: Abingdon-Cokesbury, 1937), p. 22.

⁸⁴ Ibid., p. 185. Clark's caricature of the Mennonite Brethren Church is rather unfortunate. Regarding its origin, he simply states that it "resulted from an evangelistic revolt against the coldness and formality of the regular congregations. A controversy broke out and the enthusiasts seceded" (p. 192). This caricature is accented by devoting two full paragraphs (pp. 33, 191) to the excommunicated Claas Epp and identifying the Mennonite Brethren with his fanatical, millennial subject which eventually disintegrated after their migration to Central Asia (Turkestan). See also J. A. Toews, A History of the Mennonite Brethren Church (hereafter HMBC) (Fresno: Board of Christian Literature of M. B. Churches, 1975), p. 81.

⁸⁵ Wilson, "An Analysis of Sect Development", American Sociological Review, XXIV (1959). 3-15. See also Patterns of Sectarianism (London: Heinemann, 1967), pp. 22-45.

⁸⁶ Wilson, Magic and the Millennium, pp. 22-30.

to the world"⁸⁷ to indicate the degree of tension with the world, are the conversionist; revolutionist, introversionist, manipulationist, thaumaturgical (magical), reformist, and utopian. According to his typology, Mennonite Brethren today would be primarily conversionist in which "Salvation is seen not as available through objective agencies but only by a profoundly felt, supernaturally wrought transformation of the self".⁸⁸ To a degree they fit the introversionist type because of their tendency, especially in the early stages of sect development, to withdraw from the world. The intent of the following study, however, is not so much to classify Mennonite Brethren with a sectarian typology as it is to study them as a sect which is undergoing change. The more fundamental question is: Can the Mennonite Brethren generally be classified as a sect?

Applicability to Mennonite Brethren

The church-sect typology as a whole is, indeed, applicable to the Mennonite Brethren. The criticisms that the typology is not universally valid nor its variables relevant simply does not apply when using this heuristic device with Mennonites. From the outset of the use of this typology, the Anabaptist movement was generally illustrative of

⁸⁷ Ibid., pp. 18-22.

⁸⁸ Ibid., p. 22. Wilson, however, does not mention the Mennonite Brethren.

precisely Troeltsch's variables,⁸⁹ and Mennonite Brethren sought to recover this Anabaptist vision, as chapter four will show. Moreover, church historians who have specialized in Reformation history view the Anabaptists as sectarian in their "left-wing" or "radical" Reformation stance.⁹⁰ More important, perhaps, is that Mennonite and Mennonite Brethren scholars—including theologians, historians, and sociologists—view themselves as dissenters, and thus fit the protesting nature of the sect. Theologian John H. Yoder viewed the sixteenth century Anabaptists in terms of "prophetic dissent" from the Reformers.⁹¹ Victor Adrian viewed the nineteenth century beginning of the Mennonite Brethren church as born of two sectarian movements, Anabaptist and Pietist.⁹² To focus on the sectarian stance in his recent history of Mennonites in Canada, Mennonite historian Frank H. Epp, uses as the subtitle, "The History of a Separate People"⁹³ and historian Ted R. Regehr in his "Foreword" speaks

⁸⁹ See Max Weber, "The Protestant Sect and the Spirit of Capitalism", in From Max Weber, pp. 313-14; Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism, p. 145, fn. #173, pp. 254-55. See also Ernst Troeltsch, Social Teaching, II, 691-706, I, 339; and Wiese and Becker, Systematic Sociology, pp. 626, 636-8.

⁹⁰ See G. H. Williams, The Radical Reformation (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1962); Franklin H. Littell, The Origins of Sectarian Protestantism (New York: Macmillan, 1972); and Hans J. Hillerbrand, "Anabaptism and History", Mennonite Quarterly Review (hereafter MQR), XLV (1971), 113f.

⁹¹ John H. Yoder, "The Prophetic Dissent of the Anabaptist" in G. F. Hershberger, ed., The Recovery of the Anabaptist Vision (hereafter RAV) (Scottdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1962), pp. 93-104.

⁹² Victor Adrian, "Born Out of Anabaptism and Pietism", insert in Mennonite Brethren Herald (hereafter MBH), March 26, 1965.

⁹³ Frank H. Epp, Mennonites in Canada, 1786-1920 (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1974).

of these Canadian Mennonites as "descendants of a radical wing of the reformation, believing in the complete separation of church and state, and in the heinousness of all war, killing, and any other actions not based on an ethic of love and respect for human life".⁹⁴ And Mennonite Brethren historian, John A. Toews, in his most recent A History of the Mennonite Brethren Church, depicts the beginnings of the Mennonite Brethren in the nineteenth century as a return to the believers' church following a "decline" of Mennonitism to a "parish church".⁹⁵ Finally, sociologists Kauffman and Harder not only indicate that historically the Anabaptists were the best example of the sect-type,⁹⁶ but show that, in a measure of voluntarism, the contemporary Mennonite Brethren Church scored highest among the five Anabaptist groups measured.⁹⁷ They maintain,

While Mennonites have indeed become acculturated and have assimilated many of the values of the larger culture, they have not returned to the "churchly type" of morals and ethics. As long as they continue to challenge the social order by refusing to bear arms, swear oaths, pay war taxes, and discriminate against other minorities, their self-identity as a twentieth-century Anabaptist family of churches will be ideologically as well as historically continuous with their sixteenth-century forebears.⁹⁸

Perhaps the fitness of the Mennonite Brethren to the above summary by Kauffman and Harder would be questioned by some Mennonite Brethren.

⁹⁴ Ted D. Regehr, "Foreward", in F. H. Epp, Mennonites in Canada, p. 16.

⁹⁵ John A. Toews, HMBC, ch. 2, "From Believers' Church to Parish Church", pp. 13-25, and ch. 3, "Renewal and Reorientation", pp. 26-37.

⁹⁶ Kauffman and Harder, AFCL, p. 70.

⁹⁷ Ibid., p. 71.

⁹⁸ Ibid., p. 27.

ren, because of their greater compromise to the social order. Nonetheless, to view the Canadian Mennonite Brethren Church as a sectarian movement can be useful in order more rigorously to examine its dissenting stance within a protesting group of churches, not merely from a theological and historical perspective, but particularly from a sociological vantage point. Such an approach, then, does not concern itself with the exact location on the church-sect continuum, nor where in a sectarian typology they may find themselves. Neither does the sociological use of sectarianism deny their being a church from a theological standpoint. It simply serves as a convenient tool to enable an analysis of continuity and change and to understand better the dialectic which makes this movement viable.

II

ANALYSING RELIGIOUS CONTINUITY AND CHANGE

Sects do not suddenly emerge on the spectrum of religious movements merely to flourish momentarily and fade away nor to occupy a stable niche in a predictable environment without being subject to change. Contrary to the hypothesis of Niebuhr,¹ many sectarian groups continue beyond the second generation. The danger for such "established" sects is rigidification.² One need not look far to find examples of such petrification in sectarianism.³ More frequently, however, one observes development within sects, change towards the church-type from which they originally seceded. The intriguing question which follows is this: how much change can a given sect tolerate before it has accommodated itself so completely to the host society that it has, for all intents and purposes, lost its sectness? The following chapter, in preparation for later chapters which analyse the degree of continuity and change, looks more closely at these two processes, designated as sacralization and secularization, as they are treated in sociological literature. Not only are sacralization

¹Niebuhr, Social Sources of Denominationalism, p. 19.

²Yinger, The Scientific Study of Religion, pp. 266-79. It is the "avoidance sects", according to Yinger, which are most known for their withdrawal from the world. Bryan Wilson would call these introversionist sects. See Wilson, Magic and the Millenium, p. 23.

³Here the reference is to Hutterite colonies (of which there are numerous on the Canadian Prairies) and Amish Mennonites (prominent in the Kitchener-Waterloo area of Ontario), both of which are Anabaptist descendants.

and secularization examined as religious phenomena as such, but the unique interaction of these forces is noted as resulting in a dialectic which, in fact, makes such sectarian movements viable. At this point, then, the hypothesis of the dissertation will be stated.

1. The Process of Sacralization

The term "sacralization", used to designate the continuity of a religious movement, occurs only rarely in sociological literature. The occurrence of the phenomenon, however, is common in both classical and recent literature. To look more closely at the meaning of the term and the mechanisms of sacralization will facilitate isolating those primary components which characterize continuity in the recent history of the Canadian Mennonite Brethren Church.

Its Definition

In his recent book, Identity and the Sacred, Hans Mol uses the term "sacralization" to encompass his broad definition of religion: the sacralization of identity.⁴ However, his use does not mark the first occurrence of the term in sociological literature. Thomas O'Dea speaks of religion as sacralizing traditions,⁵ and in stating his functionalist theory of religion, he explains that "religion sacralizes the norms and values of established society, maintaining the dominance of group goals

⁴Mol, Identity and the Sacred, p. 1.

⁵O'Dea, Sociology of Religion, p. 12.

over individual wishes, and of group disciplines over individual impulses".⁶ Sacralization was used, then, to denote that which preserves, perpetuates, and promotes the group's ideals and norms. Andrew Greeley speaks of a "sacralizing tendency" in the human condition by which "the symbols even of a secular faith are so set apart from the profane, and eventually so cloaked with ritual and tradition, that they become in fact 'functionally sacred'".⁷ Again, the "sacralizing tendency" includes the ideas of setting apart and preserving. In a more recent work, Greeley refers to Peter Berger's word "resacralization".⁸ Harold Fallding contrasts the synthesizing process of sacralization with the analysing process of secularization, thus forming a dialectic. He adds, "Secularization, through the operation of reason, breaks down; sacralization, through the operation of faith, builds up".⁹

Hans Mol incorporates these ideas in his explanation of the term. First, Mol defines sacralization as "the process by means of which on the level of symbol systems certain patterns acquire the same taken-for-granted, stable, eternal quality which on the level of instinctive behaviour was acquired by the consolidation and stabilization of new genetic materials".¹⁰ In a summary statement, Mol subsequently explains,

⁶ Ibid., p. 14.

⁷ Andrew M. Greeley, Religion in the Year 2000 (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1969), p. 11.

⁸ Greeley, Unsecular Man, p. 166. Greeley does not document his reference.

⁹ Fallding, The Sociology of Religion, p. 210.

¹⁰ Mol, Identity and the Sacred, p. 5.

"Sacralization is the process by means of which man has pre-eminently safeguarded and reinforced this complex of orderly interpretations of reality, rules and legitimations".¹¹ In his further explanation of the concept, Mol refers to sacralization as "a sort of brake applied to unchecked infinite adaptations in symbolic systems ... which become increasingly more dysfunctional for the emotional security of personality and the integration of tribe or community".¹² It is also close to the concept of "untouchability and awe, qualities which reinforce the rock (or better, which cement the sand) on which the house of identity is constructed".¹³ It safeguards identity, a system of meaning, or a definition of reality; and it modifies, obstructs, or legitimates change.¹⁴ Moreover, it is a process rather than a mere state of sacredness.¹⁵ The utility of this term in analysing change becomes apparent, for it not only includes the consolidating and stabilizing quality of setting apart, but also more readily allows the dialectic in its emphasis upon process, as will be explained below.¹⁶

The Sacred in Sociological Literature

While this is not the place for a full discussion of the sacred

¹¹ Ibid., p. 15.

¹² Ibid., p. 5.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 6.

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 7.

¹⁶ Infra, pp. 48-50.

in sociological literature, it may be appropriate to mention briefly the occurrence of this notion both in classical and more recent literature in order to relate it to the phenomenon of religion in general and to the concept of sacralization in particular. Robert Nisbet maintains that no concept is as suggestive of the underlying premises about the nature of man and society in the nineteenth century as the concept of the sacred. He shows that religion is necessary to society as an indispensable mechanism of integration of human beings and that it is a key element in understanding history and social change.¹⁷ In addition to faith, doctrine, and precept, it is also rite and ceremony, community and authority, hierarchy and organization; and, for conservatives, it was the origin of all fundamental ideas in human thought and belief.¹⁸ This is surely the case for Durkheim, Weber, and Simmel.

It was indeed radical for a positivist non-believer, such as Durkheim was, to attribute so much to the sacred, given the age in which he lived.¹⁹ Concerning the division of the world into two domains, Durkheim categorically announces it to be absolute. "In all the history of human thought there exists no other example of two categories of things so profoundly differentiated or so radically opposed to one another."²⁰ The result is two worlds between which there is nothing in common.

¹⁷ Robert A. Nisbet, The Sociological Tradition (New York: Basic Books, 1966), p. 221.

¹⁸ Ibid., pp. 229-31.

¹⁹ This is a paraphrase of Nisbet's estimate of Durkheim.

²⁰ Emile Durkheim, Elementary Forms, p. 53.

Despite the rejection of this duality by contemporary Mennonite Brethren theologians,²¹ it cannot be gainsaid that the doctrine of the two kingdoms of the early Anabaptists resembled Durkheim's distinction in no uncertain manner.²² However, to study the contemporary Canadian Mennonite Brethren Church and the interaction of the forces of change and continuity, Durkheim's distinction is too absolute, and Mol's notion of sacralization as a process seems more appropriate.²³ Nonetheless, Durkheim's purely social explanation of the nature and function of religion, the emphasis on rites and collective acts rather than beliefs, and his demonstration that religion functioned by binding man closer to society by communicating with other men on a basis of shared concepts and specifying regulating ideas and social relations so that men perceived them as absolute and obligatory²⁴—all these should be useful in understanding religious movements today.

For Max Weber the concept of the sacred was expressed in terms of charisma. Weber's understanding of the origin of charisma as a "certain quality of an individual personality by virtue of which he is set apart from ordinary men and treated as endowed with supernatural, superhuman

²¹See John E. Toews, "Secularized Times and Places", MBH, IV (June 11, 1965), p. 19; Vernon Ratzlaff, "The Sacred and the Secular Debate", Voice XVI:6 (1967), 14-18.

²²Infra, p. 89.

²³Mol, ibid., pp. 5f.

²⁴Susan Budd, Sociologists and Religion (London: Collier-Macmillan, 1973), p. 39.

42

... qualities ... not accessible to the ordinary person"²⁵ does not seem fully to apply to the Anabaptist emphasis upon the priesthood of all believers, especially in their rejection of the Roman ecclesiastical hierarchy. However, his further elaboration of the pristine shape of charismatic authority, "based on an emotional form of communal relationship",²⁶ where there are no officials, no administrative hierarchy, but only disciples, believers, and followers, fits the Anabaptist pattern well. Even more so does Weber's notion of routinization of charisma²⁷ apply to the sectarian movement after its first generation with the process of "traditionalization" that follows with transference of charisma from generation to generation. George Simmel's understanding of the sacred is defined as piety, "an emotion of the soul which turns into religion whenever it projects itself into specific forms".²⁸ Without religious faith that piety evokes, society, for Simmel, is impossible. "I am sure that without it society as we know could not exist."²⁹ The Mennonite Brethren Church has frequently been interpreted as part of the Pietistic tradition.³⁰ Thus, Simmel's view of the sacred as piety should have an immediate appeal. However, Simmel's broader understanding of

²⁵ Max Weber, The Theory of Social and Economic Organization, p. 358f.

²⁶ Ibid., p. 360.

²⁷ Ibid., pp. 363-66.

²⁸ George Simmel, Sociology of Religion (New York: Philosophical Library, 1959), p. 24.

²⁹ Ibid., p. 33f.

³⁰ Adrian, "Born of Anabaptism and Pietism".

piety in which "religious behavior does not exclusively depend on religious contents, but . . . is a generally human form of behavior which is realized under the stimulus not only of transcendental objects but also of other motivations"³¹ would be less readily accepted. However, for this sociological analysis of continuity in the church, it is a useful interpretation to keep in mind, for it is these "other motivations" with which this study is particularly concerned.

In more recent times the views of O'Dea, Yinger, Bellah, Geertz, Luckmann, and Berger have enlarged one's understanding of the sacred, as they fluctuate from functionalist to substantive definitions of religion. The functionalist theory sees religion concerned with those experiences which transcend the mundane events of everyday existence involving belief in and response to some kind of beyond which derive from "contingency, powerlessness, and scarcity" to use Thomas O'Dea's three "breaking points" of human experience.³² O'Dea distinguishes six functions of religion which integrate with six corresponding dysfunctions, which are "disintegrative" if there is too much sacralization of religion. These are presented below. O'Dea's scheme of functions and dysfunctions can readily be applied to sectarianism. It shows especially how excessive dysfunctions produce rigidification.

J. Milton Yinger, critical of functionalism's teleological approach (by not referring to causes which "bring about" the event in

³¹ Nisbet, ibid., 262.

³² O'Dea, Sociology of Religion, pp. 4-6, 13-14.

FUNCTIONS	DYSFUNCTIONS
Invoking the beyond provides support, consolation, and reconciliation	Inhibits protest, postpones reforms, and impedes social change
Transcendental relation offers new security and firmer identity	Inhibits progress by sacralizing finite ideas and provincialism
Sacralizes norms and values and offers social control	Rigidification in which norms have eternal significance
Prophetic function of examining institutionalized norms	Unrealistic prophecy beclouding genuine issues
Identity functions: self-understanding and self-definition	Impede new identity appropriate to new situations
Maturation function or learning process through various ages	Also institutionalizes immature acts

Figure 2. Functions and Dysfunctions of a Functionalist Theory of Religion³³

question, but by referring to ends which determine its course)³⁴ examines the conflict theory as an alternative. Yinger refuses to accept, without considerable qualification, that religion is an integrator of society. Indeed, Yinger contends, the integrative function is at a very minimum in a society where more than one religion is practiced, when "established expectancies" of the members of a society are frustrated, when social change reduces the appeal of the ritual and belief systems, when mobility from society to society is greatest, when society is sharply divided into

³³ Ibid., pp. 14-16, 100-10.

³⁴ Yinger, The Scientific Study of Religion, pp. 100-101.

classes, and when outside pressures split a society.³⁵ Themes running through literature on conflict and competition emphasize conflict as a major source of change, a source of integration rather than its disturber, its destructive and disruptive qualities, and suggest the complexity of allegiances—splitting some groups and integrating others.³⁶ The protesting stance of sectarian movements certainly represents conflict, and they surely pose as competition to prevailing religious views.

Yinger, hence, poses an integration-coercion model of society as it relates to religion. He states, "An adequate view of society, and of its parts, will see function and conflict together. They are not opposites."³⁷ And this combination may be a useful approach to examine the complex behaviour of change and continuity in a sectarian movement.

In one of his more recent writings, Peter Berger goes on record for preferring a substantive to a functionalist definition of religion.³⁸ Functionalism defines religion in terms of what it does, that is, in terms of its place in the social and/or psychological system, while a substantive definition defines religion in terms of what it is. Following the tradition of Emile Durkheim, Bronislaw Malinowski, Sigmund Freud and Talcott Parsons of earlier days, recent American scholarship of this type is represented especially in Robert Bellah, Clifford Geertz, and

³⁵ Ibid., 110-12.

³⁶ Ibid., 116-17.

³⁷ Ibid., p. 91.

³⁸ Berger, "Some Second Thoughts on Substantive versus Functional Definitions of Religion", JSSR, XIII (1974), 125-33.

Thomas Luckmann. Berger does not include Thomas O'Dea and J. Milton Yinger in his critique. For Bellah, religion is "a set of symbolic forms and acts which relate man to the ultimate condition of his existence".³⁹ Geertz defines religion as "a system of symbols which acts to establish powerful, pervasive, and long-lasting moods and motivations in men by formulating conceptions of a general order of existence and clothing these conceptions with such an aura of factuality that the moods and motivations seem uniquely realistic".⁴⁰ Luckmann simply speaks of religion as "the transcendence of biological nature".⁴¹ Berger opposes these functional definitions because of their ideological "interest in quasi-scientific legitimations of the avoidance of transcendence",⁴² that is, legitimations of a secularized world view. Berger adds, "Religion is absorbed into a night in which all cats are grey."⁴³ Berger recommends, instead, the viewing of religion "from within", that is, from the standpoint of Verstehen, to use Max Weber's term. This requires seeing religious experience as breaching the realm of "paramount reality", the

³⁹ Bellah, "Religious Evolution", p. 358.

⁴⁰ Quoted from Berger, ibid., p. 127, who quotes Clifford Geertz, "Religion as a cultural system", in Michael Banton, ed., Anthropological Approaches to the Study of Religion (New York: Praeger). In his own critique of these theorists of religion, Andrew Greeley places Clifford Geertz more in the Weberian tradition in which the focus is on the meaning function of religion, "formulating conceptions of a general order of existence" (Greeley, Religion in the Year 2000).

⁴¹ Luckmann, Invisible Religion, p. 49.

⁴² Berger, ibid., p. 128.

⁴³ Ibid., p. 129.

taken-for-granted world of common sense, and discovering the "finite provinces of meaning", namely, other realities than the ordinary, some of which will be "potential mediators of religious experience".⁴⁴ The result is that the reality of everyday life is but an "outer court" of another reality, and "all mundane activity in everyday life is radically relativized, trivialized--the words of Ecclesiastes, reduced to 'vanity'".⁴⁵

Almost a decade earlier Berger explained religion in terms of a human enterprise by which a sacred cosmos is established.⁴⁶ As Berger explains in Appendix II of the Sacred Canopy, he deliberately speaks of religion as a human projection, in keeping with his approach of "methodological atheism"⁴⁷ and brackets all claims of ultimate truth. Yet two years later, in A Rumour of Angels, Berger elaborates these as "signals of transcendence", even though they may be reduced to a "rumour". These signals are man's propensity for order, the argument from play, from hope, from damnation, and from humour.⁴⁸ These "theological possibilities: starting with man" suggest, according to Berger's more recent admission, people continue to have religious experiences, and that "secularization appears to be less far-reaching and less inexorable than many

⁴⁴ Ibid., pp. 129-31.

⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 131.

⁴⁶ Berger, The Sacred Canopy: Elements of a Sociological Theory of Religion (New York: Anchor Books, 1969), p. 25.

⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 180.

⁴⁸ Berger, A Rumour of Angels, pp. 70-92.

theories of modern man had assumed".⁴⁹ Indeed, he concludes, "the reports of God's demise have been somewhat exaggerated".⁵⁰ The study of sacralization among Canadian Mennonite Brethren will confirm Berger's conclusion.

Mechanisms of Sacralization

Most sociologists do not find it difficult somehow to define the role of the sacred; fewer attempt to become specific with regards to how it operates and how it can be measured. To operationalize a study of religiosity, one needs to become precise in isolating variables which are in fact measurable. To do so, it is well to discover the mechanisms or dimensions of sacralization, following which one can devise scales of these dimensions which are based on specific measures.

Hans Mol isolates four mechanisms which sacralize identity both on the personal and social level—objectification, commitment, ritual, and myth.⁵¹ In effect, he has five or even six, since early in his book he deals with charisma and conversion.⁵² He states, "Both charisma and conversion are means by which religions continue to integrate in spite of their work being constantly undone by the forces of adaptation and change."⁵³ For Mol, charisma is the "stripping" and "welding" function of a group or social level whereby an old identity is loosened and a new identity created

⁴⁹Berger, "Second Thought on Substantive versus Functional Definitions", p. 132.

⁵⁰Ibid. This is the thrust of Andrew Greeley's two recent works, Religion in the Year 2000 and Unsecular Man, whose argumentation of the exaggeration of secularization I am not reviewing here.

⁵¹Mol, Identity and the Sacred, pp. 11-13, 202-61.

⁵²Ibid., pp. 44-54.

⁵³Ibid., p. 54.

and in which the charismatic leaders are mere catalysts from within the group. Conversion is to the person what charisma is to the social group, and it operates by first detaching from former patterns, by going through a stage of anomie, by attaching to a new focus of identity, and finally by being supported by a sympathetic group.⁵⁴ For the continuing process of sacralization, Mol isolates the four mechanisms mentioned above. The objectification dimension is defined as "the tendency to sum up the variegated elements of mundane existence in a transcendental point of reference where they can appear more orderly, more consistent and more timeless".⁵⁵ It is thus a projection of order in a beyond and hence closely linked with man's ability for abstract thinking and ability to use symbols. It is a theodicy in which the contradictions, exceptions, and contingencies of this life can be understood as less arbitrary than the exigencies of life might suggest. Mol's second mechanism is commitment or emotional attachment to a specific focus of identity which "develops into awe which wraps the system in 'don't touch' sentiments".⁵⁶ Sacrifice is a form of commitment, according to Mol, which indicates priorities in a hierarchy of competing meanings. A third mechanism is ritual, which articulates and reiterates a system of meaning and thus restores, reinforces, and redirects identity.⁵⁷ Rites of passage are but one example of such ritual in which the rites

⁵⁴ Ibid., pp. 50-54.

⁵⁵ Ibid., pp. 11, 206-14.

⁵⁶ Ibid., pp. 12-13, 216-32.

⁵⁷ Ibid., pp. 13, 233-45.

desacralize the old and sacralize the new identities. The fourth mechanism is myths, theology and dreams, which interpret reality and sacralize through narration.⁵⁸ Mol sees the sin/salvation theme of sectarian evangelical theology to be an instance of such sacralization. These mechanisms provide clues for an analysis of the process of sacralization which also characterizes the Canadian Mennonite Brethren Church.

Orrin Klapp's six criteria for the cultic, in which he includes "sacred sects", are somewhat similar. Without elaborating, one can summarize these as follows: enthusiasm for a central value, the element of the mystique (mysteries, esoteric knowledge), the celebration of the ritual, the role of the devotee, emphasis on identity change or redemption (satori, nirvana, enlightenment, salvation, rebirth, conversion), and solidarity of a fellowship or brotherhood.⁵⁹ Most of these criteria apply to the Mennonite Brethren. Rosabeth Kanter, in her study of communes and utopias, isolated six major commitment mechanisms, each of which was further subdivided for providing more specific indices of measurement.⁶⁰ Her major categories were sacrifice, investment, renunciation, communion, mortification, and transcendence. Again, these will offer clues to isolating components of sacralization among Mennonite Brethren. Perhaps most useful for general categories of analysis are

⁵⁸ Ibid., pp. 14, 246-61.

⁵⁹ Orrin E. Klapp, Collective Search for Identity (Toronto: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, Inc., 1969), pp. 146-80.

⁶⁰ Rosabeth Moss Kanter, Commitment and Community: Communes and Utopias in Sociological Perspective (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard U. Press, 1973), pp. 75-125.

Charles Glock's dimensions of religiosity.⁶¹ These are the experiential (religious emotion), the ideological (beliefs), ritualistic (religious practices), intellectual (information on faith tenets and sacred scriptures), and consequential dimension (effects as seen in action or "works"). Finally, the most useful specific indices will be Howard Kauffman and Leland Harder's scales for comparing five Anabaptist denominations, of which the Mennonite Brethren is one.⁶² They divide their major categories into faith and life and the work of the church. Within the first are church participation (associationalism, voluntarism, and communalism),⁶³ religious experience and practice (conversion, sanctification, and devotionism), belief and doctrine (general orthodoxy, fundamentalist orthodoxy, Anabaptism), moral issues (attitudes and behaviour), social ethics (pacifism, race relations, social welfare, anti-Communism, anti-labor union, and social concerns), political participation (separation of church and state, political participation, and political action), and marriage and family. Within the second category of the work of the church there are leadership in congregation (shared ministry, and role of women), Christian education in the local church (Sunday School participation, Bible knowledge, evangelism), denominational schools (support

⁶¹ Charles Y. Glock, "The Dimensions of Religious Commitment", in his Religion in Sociological Perspective (Belmont, Calif.: Wadsworth Publishing Co., 1973), pp. 9-11. See also Rodney Stark and Charles Y. Glock, American Piety: The Nature of Religious Commitment (Berkeley: U. of Calif. Press, 1968), pp. 14-15.

⁶² Kauffman and Harder, AFCL, pp. 4-10, 11-15, 64-182, 183-260.

⁶³ The specific scales and subscales are listed in the brackets.

church colleges), stewardship of church members (attitudes and performance), and parochial and ecumenical attitudes (ecumenism, anti-Semitism, anti-Catholic, MCC support). In addition, they have a scale on socioeconomic status.

How then will the analysis of sacralization of Canadian Mennonite Brethren be operationalized? Since the intent of this research enterprise is not simply to measure degrees of religiosity, whether these be Stark and Glock's categories, or Kauffman and Harder's, but more generally to theorize on continuity and change or sacralization and secularization of a sectarian group, five areas have been chosen in order to include both historical material and empirical measurements as component data. These categories, which are separately treated in chapters five to nine, not only include Mol's and Glock's dimensions, but extend these to include organizational structures.

2. The Process of Secularization

If the term "sacralization" is only rarely found in sociological literature, it is quite the contrary with "secularization". In fact, Susan Budd maintains that it is the most important issue, theoretically and practically, in the sociology of religion.⁶⁴ Peter Berger suggests the term has had a somewhat adventurous history.⁶⁵ So rich is the word in its range of meanings and so full of internal contradictions that it

⁶⁴ Budd, Sociologists and Religion, p. 119.

⁶⁵ Berger, Sacred Canopy, p. 106.

led David Martin to propose to abandon the concept, and Larry Shiner to look for an alternative.⁶⁶ It is necessary, therefore, before endeavoring an analysis of the process of secularization, in order to isolate variables, to look more closely at the meaning, for definition helps delimit the area of investigation.

Necessary Definitions

The meaning of secularization will depend, however, on one's definition of religion. If "secularization" presents difficulties, then "religion" defies all definition.⁶⁷ And yet, one must clarify these concepts, if one intends to use them. In Appendix I of the Sacred Canopy, Peter Berger concludes his treatment of a substantive definition of religion by conceding that in the long run definitions are a matter of taste and fall under the maxim of de gustibus.⁶⁸ Subsequently, Berger has taken a much stronger position on the importance of a substantive definition of religion,⁶⁹ that is, in terms of what religion is: the human enterprise by which the sacred cosmos is established. The consequences of opting for this definition of religion allows Berger, then, to speak

⁶⁶ David Martin, The Religious and the Secular: Studies in Secularization (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1969), pp. 9-22. See also Larry Shiner, "The Concept of Secularization in Empirical Research", JSSR, VI (1967), 207-20.

⁶⁷ Max Weber refused to define religion. See Weber, Sociology of Religion, p. 1, "Definition can be attempted, if at all, only at the conclusion of the study."

⁶⁸ Berger, ibid., pp. 177, 9-22.

⁶⁹ Supra, p. 46.

of secularization in terms of a "shrinkage in the rôle of religion, both in social life and in individual consciousness" or "a progressive loss of plausibility to religious views of reality", to put it in sociology-of-knowledge terms.⁷⁰ Dobbelaere and Lauwers quote Norbeck, Kluegl, Pin, et al, to suggest that a substantive definition of religion in our Western societies of today would be: "a system of beliefs and rituals relative to supernatural things which unite into a moral collectivity those who adhere to them".⁷¹ Admittedly, such a substantive definition has an ideological character,⁷² for it has restricted itself to things supernatural, but herein lies its relevance for a study of Mennonite Brethren.

Earlier in this chapter O'Dea and Yinger's explanations of the sacred were presented as functionalist.⁷³ In an earlier work than the one cited, Yinger defines religion as "a system of beliefs and practices by means of which a group of people struggle with ... the ultimate problems of human life".⁷⁴ With such a definition, Yinger argues there is no

⁷⁰Berger, "Second Thoughts", p. 132. See also J. Milton Yinger, Sociology Looks at Religion, pp. 69-72, who criticizes Berger for a double meaning of secularization in Noise of Solemn Assemblies (Garden City: Doubleday, 1961), "the inevitable adjustment of the church (beliefs and practices) to dramatic changes in the world within which it works" and the "many fields of life's decisions carried out without reference to religion", thus, change (which Dobbelaere and Lauwers call "desacralization") and the usual dictionary meaning of secularization. Dobbelaere and Lauwers, ibid., p. 538.

⁷¹Dobbelaere, Karel, and Lauwers, Jan, "Definition of Religion—A Sociological Critique", Social Compass, XX (1973/4), 545.

⁷²Ibid., pp. 548-49.

⁷³Supra. pp. 43-45.

⁷⁴Yinger, Religion, Society and the Individual, p. 9.

secularization in the U.S.A.⁷⁵ What changes one can witness are but the development of new religious forms. As a result, Yinger maintains, "the increase in religious activity and interest in the very context of supposed 'secularization' is paradoxical only to the sectarian not to the analyst".⁷⁶ Again, one concludes with Dobbelaere and Lauwers that such a functionalist position has an ideological bias, and it was because of this bias that David Martin wanted the term eliminated.⁷⁷ Apparently, to keep aloof from the ideological bias, one must avoid defining religion. And yet, the definition of religion is needed to delimit one's investigation. The only solution, according to Dobbelaere and Lauwers, is to determine the social context of the definition.⁷⁸

Before determining this social context, it may be helpful to propose a combination of a substantive and functionalist definition, deliberately chosen to serve the purpose of analysing both change and continuity among Mennonite Brethren. The closest model for such a definition is that of Durkheim: "A religion is a unified system of beliefs and practices

⁷⁵Yinger, Sociology Looks at Religion, p. 72.

⁷⁶Yinger, ibid., p. 75.

⁷⁷Dobbelaere and Lauwers, ibid., pp. 547-49. They advance three reasons why the ideology of the "secularizers" is apparent in the functional definitions. First, religion is defined as a form which may have all possible contents, since all behaviour and organizations have an integrating function in certain circumstances. Second, religion, accordingly, is a necessity, because of the integrating function, or else all is anomie (hence "secularizers" criticize the church in order to save religion); and third, the same thing need not always be called religious, if it is not integrating society.

⁷⁸Ibid., pp. 550-51.

relative to sacred things, that is to say, things set apart and forbidden—beliefs and practices which unite into one single moral community called a Church, all those who adhere to them."⁷⁹ As Dobbelaere and Lauwers point out, the substantive part has to do with the essence of religion—"a unified system of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things", and the functional part shows what religion does—"unite into a single moral community ... all those who adhere to them".⁸⁰ The function of religion is to integrate into a cohesive collectivity. Similarly, the Mennonite Brethren emphasize strongly the transcendent in religion, which, for them, is its essence, and perceive themselves as a people of God set apart from those who are not "Christian", and both their beliefs and practices accentuate this voluntary and deliberate separateness. At the same time, they are a brotherhood, a collectivity, integrated into a viable organized body which persists and grows generations after its beginnings. This is the social context in which a substantive-functional definition of religion is chosen, stated in those terms in which the group under study perceives itself as religious, and allowing thereby a more precise and thorough study of both change and secularization from its own perspective.

With such a definition of religion, although it straddles both substantive and functionalist elements, it is easier to define secularization. The title and subtitle of this dissertation contain the words

⁷⁹ Durkheim, Elementary Forms, p. 62.

⁸⁰ Dobbelaere and Lauwers, ibid., p. 537.

"change" and "secularization". However, they are not meant to be equated. The first is a more neutral concept which has to do with differentiation, and therefore need not be evaluative; the second intends to convey such change which results in religious decline or conformity to the world, or, as Peter Berger expresses it, "shrinkage of the role of religion".⁸¹ In the latter there is a distinction between the religious and the secular, and change in religious beliefs and practices are not merely an adjustment or re-integration of a group in society, as the functionalist view implies, but is normative change, for the good or detriment of the religious movement. Bryan Wilson's definition of secularization conveys this narrower, substantive definition of religion: "the process whereby religious thinking, practice, and institutions lose social significance".⁸²

The need to distinguish between different kinds of secularization has been emphasized by both theologians and sociologists. Harvey Cox has clarified the difference between secularism and secularization. Both derive from the Latin saeculum, meaning "this present age",⁸³ something vaguely inferior as opposed to the eternal "religious world" which is timeless. Initially, secularization referred to the process by which a "religious" priest was transferred to parish responsibility. Later, the separation of pope and emperor institutionalized such secularization, and

⁸¹ Supra, p. 54.

⁸² Wilson, Religion in Secular Society, xiv. This is also the definition preferred by Ernest Krausz, "Religion and Secularization: A Matter of Definitions", Social Compass, XVIII (1971/2), 203-11.

⁸³ Cox, The Secular City, p. 16.

passing responsibilities from ecclesiastical to political authorities was designated "secularization". Most recently, secularization describes a process on the cultural level which is parallel to the political one, that is, the disappearance of religious symbols in the cultural sphere, such as freeing public schools from church control. Cox explains such secularization as a liberating development, "a historical process, almost certainly irreversible, in which society and culture are delivered from tutelage to religious control and closed metaphysical world views".⁸⁴ On the other hand, secularism is the ideology, "a new closed world view which functions very much like a new religion.... It menaces the openness and freedom secularization has produced".⁸⁵ Cox has made a helpful distinction, but still has not adequately explained secularization.

Hans Mol distinguished between cultural and institutional secularization. The former treats religion as an independent variable and represents the forces whereby the influence of religion and religious institutions generally decrease in modern society; in the latter religion is the dependent variable and represents the forces whereby specific religious institutions and orientations themselves become part of and like the world.⁸⁶ Milton Yinger, somewhat like Cox, distinguishes between secularism which is the antithesis of religion and secularization which refers to a process in which belief and practice of a specific religious tradition

⁸⁴ Ibid., p. 18.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Mol, "Secularization and Cohesion", Review of Religious Research, II (1970), 183.

decline in strength.⁸⁷ In the same article, Yinger cautions one to distinguish between change in religious faith and decline of such faith.⁸⁸

Richard Fenn draws attention to two conceptual frameworks: the structural-functional theory in which cultural and social structures develop, exchange, and lose functions through internal and external differentiation; and the action theory in which normative orientations toward ultimate and more proximate values are analysed.⁸⁹ Harold Fallding cautions against equating secular with profane.⁹⁰ Secular is viewed in terms of Howard Becker's distinction between sacred and secular societies, in which sacred resists change while secular welcomes change and is accessible, the antithesis of isolation.⁹¹ Profane, to Fallding, is not neutral, but "religious without being religion".⁹² He explains, "Between the sacred and profane the war is therefore total."⁹³ While secularization and profanity are not the same, the former shows a special vulnerability to the latter.⁹⁴

19. ⁸⁷Yinger, "Pluralism, Religion, and Secularism", JSSR, VI (1967),

⁸⁸Ibid., p. 23.

⁸⁹Richard K. Fenn, "Secularization of Values: An Analytical Framework for the Study of Secularization", JSSR, III (1969), 113.

⁹⁰Fallding, "Secularization and the Sacred and Profane", The Sociological Quarterly, (1967), 349-64.

⁹¹Becker, Through Values to Social Interpretation, pp. 67-69, 275-80.

⁹²Fallding, ibid., p. 355.

⁹³Ibid.

⁹⁴Ibid., p. 359.

Most serviceable in understanding the full range of meanings is Larry Shiner's study of the "Concept of Secularization in Empirical Research".⁹⁵ Six types are differentiated and assessed, a summary of which follows:

- (1) Decline of religion: the previously accepted symbols, doctrines and institutions lose their prestige and influence; this culminates in a religionless society.
- (2) Conformity with "this world": the religious group turns its attention from the supernatural and becomes more and more interested in "this world"; the culmination is total absorption in pragmatic tasks in which the religious group is indistinguishable from society.
- (3) Disengagement of society from religion: society separates itself from religion to constitute an autonomous reality and limits religion to the sphere of private life; it culminates in purely inward religion.
- (4) Transposition of religious beliefs and institutions: beliefs and institutions once viewed as grounded in divine power are transformed to purely human creation and responsibility; it culminates in a totally anthropologized religion.
- (5) Desacralization of the world: the world is deprived of its sacred character through causal explanation and manipulation; it culminates in completely "rational" world with no supernatural phenomena.
- (6) Movement from "sacred" to "secular" society: a general concept of social change culminating in a society based on rational and utilitarian considerations.

Shiner concludes that either the concept be dropped entirely or the term "differentiation" or "transposition" be used to incorporate the notions expressed in (3), (4), and (5) above. However, as indicated above, this study of secularization, using Wilson's definition, incor-

⁹⁵ Shiner, "Concept of Secularization in Empirical Research", JSSR, VI (1967), 207-20.

porates (1) and (2) above. At the same time, it recognizes the quite separate, yet closely allied phenomenon of social change as suggested in (6). This does not rule out the use of the notion of differentiation, but, in keeping with the popular understanding of secularization among Mennonite Brethren spokesmen, secularization will mean decline of religion and/or conformity to the world. This is also in keeping with Mennonite sociologists Kauffman and Harder who refer to secularization as "the exchange of sacred for profane values--the church's assimilation of the 'world,' defined theologically as a profane social reality fallen from the creative purposes of God".⁹⁶

An Analysis of the Secularization Process

With a workable definition of religion and a fairly precise understanding of secularization as a concept, one can proceed to analyse more closely the process itself. What are the causal factors? What transpires in the process? What is the response of institutional religion? These and more questions might be asked in such an analysis.

Most prominent among causal factors attributed to secularization is the process of change implicit to religion itself. It is not hard to trace such indications in ancient Judaism. Max Weber argued that the "disenchantment of the world" (Entzauberung) began in the Old Testament.⁹⁷ Harvey Cox sees Creation as "the disenchantment of nature", the Exodus as

⁹⁶ Kauffman and Harder, AFCL, p. 300.

⁹⁷ Max Weber, Sociology of Religion, pp. 246-58.

"the desacralization of politics", and the Sinai Covenant as "the deconsecration of values".⁹⁸ Peter Berger likewise traces the roots of the "disenchantment of the world", commonly attributed to the Reformation, to ancient Judaism.⁹⁹ Similarly, he contends, Christianity carried the seeds of the revolutionary impetus within itself, especially in its social formation. Here Marx and Engels would certainly find their roots.¹⁰⁰ Berger observes that Catholic Christianity may be seen as an "arresting and retrogressive step ... although it preserved within it the secularizing potential".¹⁰¹ In the Protestant Reformation he sees "a powerful re-emergence of precisely those secularizing forces that had been 'contained' by Catholicism, not only replicating the Old Testament in this, but going decisively beyond it".¹⁰² Similarly, Werner Stark sees the seeds of decay in the virtuous qualities of sectarianism. With religious discipline and frugality come economic ascent and social respectability, all of which lead to compromise, especially with a change of generations.¹⁰³ O'Dea lists five kinds of human activity which influence secularization:

⁹⁸ Cox, Secular City, pp. 19-32.

⁹⁹ Berger, Sacred Canopy, p. 115-20.

¹⁰⁰ Friederich Engels, "On the History of Early Christianity" and "The Peasant War in Germany" in Marx and Engels, On Religion, pp. 97-118, 316-47.

¹⁰¹ Berger, ibid., p. 124.

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ Werner Stark, The Sociology of Religion: A Study of Christendom: Vol. II, Sectarian Religion (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1967), pp. 271-87.

work, war, exchange, government, learning and science.¹⁰⁴ These appear to relate more to Shiner's differentiation and transformation, than to his decline and conformity to the world. Nonetheless, as Fallding observes, "Although secularization and profanity are not the same, the former shows a special vulnerability to the latter".¹⁰⁵ So institutional secularization, to use Mol's term, is vulnerable to the cultural. Another major source, to use Berger's terminology, is the pluralization of the social world (to which O'Dea's five activities would have contributed) with the result that it is difficult to maintain any monopoly of reality.¹⁰⁶

One way of explaining what transpires in the secularization process is to think in terms of shift on the sect-church continuum. Pfautz sees a movement of change from cult, to sect, to institutional sect, or church, or denomination (the sect shifting to one of the last three listed), with cult representing minimum secularization and either of the last three as maximum.¹⁰⁷ It appears, however, that Pfautz confuses different forms of religious expression with degrees of secularization. Fallding rightly cautions against including the cult in a continuum with sect and church.¹⁰⁸ More appropriate is Pfautz's perspective of religious

¹⁰⁴ O'Dea, Sociology of Religion, pp. 80-86.

¹⁰⁵ Fallding, ibid., p. 359.

¹⁰⁶ Berger, "A Sociological View of the Secularization of Theology", JSSR, VI (1967), 8, 9.

¹⁰⁷ Harold W. Pfautz, "The Sociology of Secularization: Religious Groups", American Journal of Sociology, LXI (1955), 121.

¹⁰⁸ Fallding, ibid., p. 364.

organizations in which he employs Heberle's social-psychological concept adapted to Weber's types of orientation to social action. The scheme fits better into the sect-church continuum. The four types are in order of increasing secularization: the fellowship, in which affectual motives are primary; the following, in which there are combined affectual and value-rational motives; the community, in which there is a balance of four motives; and the association, in which traditional and purposeful-rational orientations predominate.¹⁰⁹ The Mennonite Brethren church, especially in its early stages, stressed greatly the "fellowship" orientation. It will be interesting to observe how secular it is today in terms of "association" orientation. Karl Baehr has suggested a five-fold stage^d of re-entry or re-assimilation of Mennonites into the mainstream of society, representing the full shift from sect to church. These stages are summarized by Kauffman and Harder as follows:

Stage one is the conflict which first drives the sect into isolation, to escape persecution. Farming becomes the chief occupation of members because it provides a maximum of self-sufficiency and a minimum of contact with the hostile world. The sect becomes a closed community, characterized by distinctive dress, in-group marriage, and other devices.

Stage two is the cessation of overt conflict and the granting of formal religious freedom. Contact with the out-group is cautious, and comes primarily through the purchase and sale of commercial products.

Stage three, contact between the sect and society becomes more frequent. Through hard work and frugality and the peace that toleration brings, members become prosperous and begin to adapt their style to the ways of those around them.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., p. 123. See also Rudolf Heberle, Social Movements (New York: Appelson-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1951), pp. 13-14, 128-40.

Stage four is marked by differentiation within the sect between the conservatives, who fear the loss of the community's sacred values and want to enforce the old ways, and the liberals, who advocate change. There is also a new division between the "haves" and the "have-nots", and the former begin to deal with the latter according to the economic principles (rent, interest, mortgage, wages, foreclosures) of the larger society.

The fifth stage is a splintering of the sect, so that its variant groups, all claiming the same original label, contain all shadings along a continuum from withdrawal to accommodation. The most liberal group cannot be distinguished from the larger society except by name. The moderate group retains some distinctives from the world but finds the doctrine of nonconformity increasingly difficult to preserve. The conservative group maintains the old ways through strict discipline and the practice of excommunication.¹¹⁰

It is anticipated that the secularization among the Canadian Mennonite Brethren will closely follow the pattern taken by other Mennonite denominations.

Another way of viewing the process of secularization is to see it in terms of tension resulting from the secularization of culture, earlier expressed in O'Dea's five activities of work, war, exchange, government, and learning and science. The increased rationality results in a diminution of the sacred. The dialectic of this tension between religion and secularization is expressed admirably by O'Dea as five paradoxes of institutionalization of religion. These are summarized as follows:

- (1) The dilemma of mixed motivation. This applies especially to single-mindedness given to charismatic leadership in the early stages of the movement and the subsequent shift to a stable set of statuses and roles with institutionalization (involving a stratified set of rewards in terms of prestige, life opportunities, and material compensations) and resulting lukewarmness.

¹¹⁰ Kaufman and Harder, *ibid.*, pp. 298-99. See also Karl Baeher, "The Secularization Process Among Mennonites", *Conference on Mennonite Cultural Problems* (Newton, Kansas: Bethel College Press, 1942), pp. 35-40.

(2) The symbolic dilemma: objectification versus alienation. Repetition of symbols devised to preserve the original experiences of the religious group results in ritual which routinizes and eventually alienates (the embodiment of the ultimate in empirical symbols causing diminution of the sense of ultimacy itself).

(3) The dilemma of administrative order: elaboration and alienation. With routinization of charisma, the accompanying formal organization and bureaucratic structure in time becomes dysfunctional and alienates.

(4) The dilemma of delimitation: concrete definition versus substitution of the letter for the spirit. Dangers of distortion of faith require definitions of dogma and morals, which concretization itself distorts for the symbol becomes "mechanistic and crude" (Mircea Eliade's "process of infantilization") of discursive symbolism¹¹¹), seen especially in biblical fundamentalism.

(5) The dilemma of power: conversion versus coercion. Voluntarism and faith commitment through institutionalization are supplemented by public opinion, current ideas of respectability, consensual validation, and approval by accepted authority, so that eventually religion and secular power are coalesced and apparent religiosity conceals cynicism and unbelief.¹¹²

These five dilemmas not only provide clues to isolate variables which can further be tested empirically to trace the degree of secularization, but also draw attention to the dialectic implicit to the tension of a sect in its host environment.

To express the process of secularization in sociology-of-knowledge terminology, there is a disintegration of the traditional plausibility structures ("collection of people, procedures, and mental processes geared to the task of keeping a specific definition of reality going") in which

¹¹¹ Mircea Eliade, Patterns in Comparative Religion (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1958), pp. 444, 456.

¹¹² O'Dea, The Sociology of Religion, pp. 90-97.

"the status of objective reality begins to totter".¹¹³ This status is lost if the common social activity that served as its infrastructure disintegrates. Strongly integrated plausibility structures produce firm objectifications, but erosions of the structures results in de-objectification. And the sectarian strength of a movement will be determined by the degree of this erosion. The resulting problem posed by the process of de-objectification is simply: how to perpetuate an institution whose reality presuppositions are no longer taken for granted. This leads one to the question of sectarian response. However, stated in more theological terms, one can summarize the process of secularization by noting that decreased transcendence results in increased immanence in the symbol system.

In response to such secularization, sectarian groups have one of two choices basically, either to take a defensive or an accommodating stance. To follow the former means dissent from, and protest against, the world around. To proclaim old objectivities in a social environment that refuses to accept them results in retaining or constructing a sub-society which affirms the traditional values. To protect such a sub-society within a pluralistic milieu, one must maintain a separate identity. The extreme position of such withdrawal is what Bryan Wilson calls the introversionist sects¹¹⁴ and Peter Berger, a ghetto.¹¹⁵ To follow

¹¹³ Berger, "The Secularization of Theology", pp. 10-11. See also The Sacred Canopy, pp. 127-53.

¹¹⁴ Wilson, Magic and the Millenium, pp. 43-48. Wilson mentions Doukhabors, Mennonites, and Hutterites as such examples, since all three left Russia for America to forego state oppression and retain their separatism.

¹¹⁵ Berger, ibid. He illustrates this with Amish settlements, Hasidic communities, and Catholic aggiornamento now in process.

the latter, accommodation, is the more popular stance, but the question is: how far can one go? The practical answer is well stated by Peter Berger, "One then goes as far as one has to for the pastoral or evangelistic purpose at hand".¹¹⁶ The key difficulty is the tendency to escalate to the point where the traditional plausibility structure collapses. For the secular theologians (Harvey Cox, Paul van Buren, et al) such accommodation has become total. Perhaps Harold Fallding has proffered too simple a solution when he suggests, "What modern man would need, if he chose to hold on to religion, is not to turn away from secularization but to baptize its fruits, grafting each innovation back onto the tree of his life and consecrating them all to the service of the whole."¹¹⁷ Such accommodation is subject to the same escalation, unless very deliberate efforts are made to retain essential plausibility structures. The answer, it appears, is to avoid either extreme of defence or accommodation and to live with a tension between sectarian separateness and cultural compromise.

Isolating Variables

What, then, are the specific variables which require investigation to study secularization among Mennonite Brethren? On the one hand, one can simply analyse the countervailing forces of conflict which resist the sacralizing mechanisms. However, this approach could lead one to overlook additional spheres wherein secularization forces are at work.

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

¹¹⁷ Fallding, ibid., p. 359.

One must look for other indications, therefore, than simply decline in number of radical conversions, or lower commitment to systems of meaning. Harold Pfautz, in his study of Christian Science and secularization, employs five "fairly distinct" sociological frames of reference to construct types of religious social organization at varying degrees of secularization.¹¹⁸ These perspectives are the demographic (with dimensions of size, composition, and rate of growth), ecological (regarding relative location: diffusion and segregation), associational (internal differentiation, symbolic and non-symbolic interaction, degree of isolation, or assimilation, basis of recruitment: voluntary or traditional), structural (social differentiation, leadership, normative system) and social-psychological (fellowship, following, community or organization). This scheme suggests a whole range of measurable variables, a number of which are included in the mechanisms of sacralization. The demographic and ecological perspectives provide additional areas which need investigation.

Richard Fenn, with elements borrowed from Robin Williams and Talcott Parsons, provides a classification with four clusters of value systems to indicate an orientation of ultimate or proximate ends.¹¹⁹ The first cluster of ultimate values are universal (equality, freedom, jus-

¹¹⁸ Pfautz, "Sociology of Secularization: Religious Groups". Incidentally, Pfautz concludes that a sect is not a highly viable social organization, since threats of persecution require spatial isolation to survive. Pfautz seemingly does not realize that precisely such isolation will enable them to survive, viably.

¹¹⁹ Fenn, "Secularization of Values", pp. 120-21.

tice, reason), the second cluster, also ultimate, are particularistic (loyalty, regional, ethnic, and national solidarity), the third cluster are proximate values (efficiency, rationality, and achievement), and the fourth are consummatory (wealth, status, power, biogenic need gratification). The difficulty with this scheme is to sort out religious from the secular criteria, unless all four cluster values are used to measure aspects of the religious sphere, vis-a-vis, family, work, society, etc. Nonetheless, this scheme suggests an entirely different approach to isolating measurable variables.

David Martin simply uses four spheres of concern in determining secularization, dividing, first, into the area of religious institutions and customs, and, second, into thought and attitude.¹²⁰ The first sphere measures decline in the power, wealth, influence or range of control and prestige of the ecclesiastical institutions. The second measures diminution of frequency, number and intensity of customs, practices, and rituals. The third dimension measures epistemological position (rationalism) or scientific methodology (degree of empiricism). The fourth measures attitudes (whether world attraction or "reverential" to the awe). Again, basic though these divisions are, they do not adequately supplement those areas of secularization not already covered by the mechanisms of sacralization to be covered in chapters five to nine.

The variables which are being isolated as contributing factors to secularization in chapters ten to fourteen are clearly not simply the

¹²⁰ Martin, *ibid.*, pp. 48-57.

negative counterparts of the factors isolated to analyse sacralization in chapters five to nine. The countervailing negatives forces are also factors of secularization, but these will be dealt with as part of the dialectic within sacralization. Chapters ten to fourteen look for a new cluster of independent variables. These are education, urbanization, occupational change, economic ascendancy, immigration and assimilation. It is anticipated that the primary thrust of these five factors will be secularizing, while the primary thrust of the factors isolated for sacralizing the identity will contribute towards continuity of the sectarian movement. The total effect of the interaction of these forces will be separately assessed in the final chapter of the dissertation. The stage is thus set for the statement of the hypothesis.

3. Statement of Hypothesis

Sectarian religiosity is a viable alternative among contemporary religious expressions, since it provides both the dynamic force and the structural form for a movement of religious dissent in its protest against "the world" or society at large, including the state, institutions of society, and the religious establishment.

More specifically, the dissertation postulates the following:

- (1) The synthetic process of sacralization accounts for the continuity of sectarianism in that it establishes boundaries, reinforces cohesion, safeguards identity, strengthens systems of meaning, and facilitates socialization.
- (2) The analytic process of secularization accounts for change within sectarianism in that it is open to the disruptive influence of marginality,

the relativizing impact of education, and the gradual accommodation to the host culture as a result of economic ascendancy and upward social mobility, themselves the product of industrial urbanization and the Protestant ethic.

(3) The interaction of these processes is necessary to avoid rigidification in an excessively defensive stance and to avoid total accommodation to its environment, such dialectic furnishing the on-going balance which is the outcome of tension between sect and society.

(4) The Canadian Mennonite Brethren Church is an example of such a viable sectarian movement, and it may well be the pattern for other evangelical denominations or movements of religious dissent.

The hypothesis is not a foregone conclusion. It needs to stand the test of closer analysis and application to a single religious movement. The following chapters will undertake this task.

III

THE ANABAPTIST-MENNONITE MOVEMENT WITHIN EUROPEAN SECTARIANISM

In their current identity crisis, Mennonite Brethren look for objectifications or reference points in history to legitimate their separate existence as a denomination. Not only do they look back to 1860--the time of their origin as a separate sect within the larger Mennonite body--and the circumstances which brought this about, but, in addition, they look back to the sixteenth century and the beginnings of Anabaptism. They ask similar questions about their origins as their founding fathers did, who deplored the decline of Mennonitism from a believers' church to a parish church and who re-aligned themselves anew to the "vision"¹ of the sixteenth century prototype. For an adequate historical framework, one needs to begin, therefore, with the sixteenth century Protestant Reformation in Europe.

Before doing so, however, a note about nomenclature is in place. For some time, parliamentary parlance has been employed in designating the

¹The word "vision" brings to mind Harold S. Bender's "The Anabaptist Vision", his presidential address to the American Society of Church History, December, 1943, published subsequently in Church History, XIII (1944), 3-24, and MOR, XVIII (1944), 67-88. See also Guy F. Herschberger, ed., RAV, pp. 29-54. There is some disagreement as to the extent that the 1860 beginnings were merely a rediscovery of the sixteenth century vision. V. Adrian sees Pietism as a major factor in the emergence of the Mennonite Brethren Church ("Born of Anabaptism and Pietism", p. 4). J. A. Toews has reservations about this interpretation and prefers to view the beginnings as a return to Mennonitism (see HMBC, pp. 3, 4, 32, 36).

Anabaptist movement as the "left-wing of the Reformation".² More indicative is George H. Williams' use of "radical" to delineate the Anabaptist stance over against magisterial or classical Protestantism.³ Among the dissidents of the Radical Reformation, Williams distinguishes the Anabaptists proper, the Spiritualists (such as Carlstadt, Muentzer, Schwenkfeld, and Franck) and the Evangelical Rationalists (such as Servetus and Erasmus). As subtypes of Anabaptism proper, he further distinguishes the revolutionary (also called "chiliastic" or "Maccabean", because of the Muenster debacle), the contemplative (such as John Denck, and Adam Pastor), and evangelical Anabaptists (including Swiss Brethren, Moravian Hutterites, and Dutch and Low German Mennonites).⁴ It is the Swiss Brethren and Dutch Mennonites which constitute the founding fathers of the present-day Mennonite denominations. Among these, designated here as "Anabaptist-Mennonite", one must trace the origins of the Mennonite Brethren.⁵

²See Roland H. Bainton, The Age of the Reformation (New York: D. Van Nostrand Co., 1956), p. 43. See also John T. McNeill's subdivision, "Left-Wing Religious Movements" in A Short History of Christianity, ed. by Archibald G. Baker (Chicago, 1940), p. 127.

³George H. Williams, The Radical Reformation, xxiv-xxxi.

⁴Williams, Spiritual and Anabaptist Writers (London: SCM Press, 1957), pp. 19-31.

⁵The author well recognizes that Mennonite Brethren generally insist upon going back to the New Testament. However, sociologically, our concern is with sectarianism and its origin as a movement of dissent from a larger religious body.

1. Anabaptist-Mennonite Beginnings Within Sectarian Protestantism: A
Study of the First Generation (1525-c. 1550)

The following sociological interpretation of the historical setting is based on several genres of literature. For a brief survey of the events, secondary sources of history are used. To analyse the predominant themes of protest, both secondary sources and primarily original documents are examined. To interpret these events sociologically, theological, historical, and sociological sources are employed. It is also to be noted that whereas the Mennonite Brethren originated in Russia from the descendants of the Dutch Mennonites and whereas an independent origin for Swiss Brethren and Dutch Mennonites can persuasively be argued,⁶ it is deemed advisable to examine the origins of the Dutch Mennonites together with those of the Swiss and South German brethren, because of their common themes and subsequent associations.⁷

Origins in Switzerland, Germany, and Netherlands

The radical reformers agreed with Luther in Germany and Zwingli

⁶See James M. Stayer, Werner O. Packull, and Klaus Deppermann, "From Monogenesis to Polygenesis: The Historical Discussion of Anabaptist Origins", in MQR, XLIX (1975), pp. 84ff., who trace six independent origins—Swiss Brethren, followers of Hut in South Germany and Austria, Central German Anabaptists, "Staebler" sects of Moravia, the Marpeck circle, and the Melchorite tradition (which gave rise to Dutch and Low German Mennonites).

⁷George H. Williams ("Introduction" to Spiritual and Anabaptist Writings, pp. 30-31) finds these common themes in the evangelical Anabaptists: the New Testament was normative, the ban replaced the sword, distrust of Spirit possession and the vagaries of prophecy, the itinerant ministry of Jesus as the norm, progressive sanctification in every aspect of life (i. e. love ethic), and discipleship.

in Switzerland on such cardinal doctrines of salvation as justification by faith through grace, but contended that the magisterial reformers did not complete their break with Roman Catholicism and establish a true believers' church signified by voluntary baptism upon confession of faith. Not only were they partly indebted to the classical reformers for their radical notions, but also to the humanism of Erasmus and possibly the asceticism of Groote's Devotio Moderna.⁸ Whatever the varied influences upon them, the radical reformers' primary court of appeal was the Bible itself, not any civil or ecclesiastical authority.

Anabaptism or the free church movement, as it is also called, had its official beginning in the house of Felix Manz in Zurich, Switzerland, on January 21, 1525, when Conrad Grebel "re-baptized" Georg Blaurock, who, in turn, "re-baptized" the others present.⁹ William Estep interprets this act as "the most revolutionary act of the Reformation",¹⁰ because no act so completely symbolized the break with Rome. As a result of the expository preaching of Zwingli, such university

⁸ Gerhard Groote founded the Brothers and Sisters of the Common Life in 1384, representing the laicization of monasticism, begun by Francis of Assisi. The indebtedness to asceticism is still an open question. See K. R. Davis, Anabaptism and Asceticism (Scottsdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1974).

⁹ The term "Anabaptist" (Wiedertaeufer) is derived from such "re-baptism", which, of course, was not a "re-baptism" to the radical reformers, since they did not recognize infant baptism as valid. See Fritz Blanke, Brothers in Christ (Scottsdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1961) for a detailed account of the first congregation which was subsequently formed at Zollikon, near Zurich.

¹⁰ Estep, Anabaptist Story (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1963), p. 10.

trained theologians as Conrad Grebel¹¹ (son of a Zurich councilman), Felix Manz (son of the canon of the Grossmuenster Cathedral), and Balthasar Hubmaier (former university rector); and such ecclesiastics as Simon Stumpf (pastor and spokesman for the group), Wilhelm Reublin (first Zurich priest to take a wife), and Georg Blaurock (a monk), rejected infant baptism and disagreed with Zwingli, when, on account of resistance from the city council, he hesitated to abolish the mass.¹² Overtly, the issue over the break was baptism and the mass; more basic was the question of authority and the true nature of the church. This open defiance of such ecclesiastics and civil authorities resulted in persecution of the leaders, so that by January 5, 1527, Felix Manz was forcibly drowned in the Limmat River near his own Grossmuenster Church and became the first martyr for the Anabaptist cause. Blaurock was executed two years later, and Hubmaier burned at the stake in Vienna. Had Grebel not died of the plague, he would have likely met the same fate. Still others fled or were banished. While histories differ on the extent that the movement spread, the banishment of its leaders from Zurich resulted in the missionizing of St. Gall to the northeast, Basel to the northwest, and Bern to the southwest. Hubmaier, who wrote the most complete statement in early Anabaptism on the question of baptism,

¹¹For a detailed study of Conrad Grebel, see H. S. Bender, Conrad Grebel, c. 1498-1526: The Founder of the Swiss Brethren Sometimes Called Anabaptists (Goshen, Ind.: The Mennonite Historical Society, 1950).

¹²John Howard Yoder notes that "here arose the first Protestant church", since Zwingli and Luther were still celebrating mass at this time. See C. J. Dyck, ed. Introduction to Mennonite History (hereafter IMH) (Scottsdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1967), p. 34.

spread the movement to Waldshut, an Austrian possession some twenty miles from Zurich. Because of the loss of leaders and the danger of fragmentation, a group of Anabaptists met at Schleithelm in February of 1527, under the leadership of Michael Sattler (learned evangelist and former prior of a Benedictine monastery), to draft the first confession of faith. Sattler and his wife were executed shortly after.

In South Germany, it was Hans Denk (university trained writer and educator influenced by Lutheran mystics Carlstadt and Muentzer) who spread the faith to Augsburg and Strassburg, and in Central Germany Hans Hut (bookbinder who was also influenced by mystics) preached and baptized in Franconia, Bavaria, Austria, and Moravia. It was in Moravia that Jacob Wiedemann organized communal living for Anabaptists.¹³ Strassburg, strategically located in South Germany, served as a more tolerant meeting place for dissenters. Here such leaders as Hubmaier, Sattler, Reublin, and especially Pilgram Marpeck (wealthy civil engineer) exercised their influence.. Reformer Martin Bucer, differing from the more tolerant pastor, Matthew Zell, proposed severe treatment of the Anabaptists; yet Anabaptist conferences were conducted here repeatedly between 1554 and 1607.¹⁴ Marpeck opposed Bucer's interpretation of Scripture, arguing

¹³For a detailed account of the Hutterite history and culture, see: John Horsch, The Hutterian Brethren (Goshen, Ind.: Mennonite Historical Society, 1931); Peter Rideman, Account of our Religion, Doctrine and Faith (Rifton, N. Y.: Plough Publishing Co., 1951); Victor Peters, All Things Common: The Hutterian Way of Life (Minneapolis: U. of Minnesota Press, 1965); Robert Friedmann, Hutterite Studies (Goshen, Ind.: Mennonite Historical Society, 1961), and John A. Hostetler, Hutterian Life (Scottsdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1965).

¹⁴C. J. Dyck, IMH, p. 65.

for the finality of the New Testament. He continued his ministry in other South German, Swiss and Moravian cities, writing extensively.¹⁵

In the Netherlands in 1530, Melchior Hoffman, uneducated but gifted Anabaptist, who not only had abandoned his Catholic and Lutheran affiliation, but had imbibed the influence of Zwingli and Carlstadt, preached a millennialism, the Great Tribulation presumably having begun in 1526 with the New Jerusalem to be centred in Strassburg. While Hoffman was imprisoned in Strassburg, his follower, Jan Matthijs, changed the location of the "New Jerusalem" to Muenster where he resorted to violence and polygamy in his aberration of the Anabaptist faith.¹⁶ Obbe and Dirk Philips repudiated the revolutionary Muensterites, and especially Menno Simons¹⁷ gave leadership to the new movement of peaceful Anabaptism. Born at Witmarsum, Friesland, Menno became a Roman Catholic priest at Pingjum, and because of questions about transubstantiation and infant baptism, he searched the New Testament for answers.

¹⁵ See William Klassen, Covenant and Community: The Life, Writings, and Hermeneutics of Pilgram Marpeck (Grand Rapids: W. B. Eerdmans, 1968).

¹⁶ For an interpretation of the Muensterite tragedy, the comment of John H. Yoder is appropriate: "...The revolution of Muenster, with which uninformed historians blacken the Anabaptist name, was not consistent Anabaptism; it was a reversion to the same heresy accepted by Lutherans and Catholics alike--the belief that political means can be used against God's enemies to oblige an entire society to do God's will." See Peace Without Eschatology? (Scottsdale, Pa.: Mennonite Publishing House, 1954), p. 15.

¹⁷ Mennonites were initially called "Mennists" after Menno Simons' name. For more detailed studies on Menno Simons, see Cornelius Krahn, Menno Simons (1496-1561) (Karlsruhe: Heinrich Schneider, 1936), and H. S. Bender, Menno Simons' Life and Writings: A Quadricentennial Tribute (Scottsdale, Pa.: Mennonite Publishing House, 1936).

Dissatisfied with Catholicism and especially opposed to fanatical Anabaptism, he finally sided with the peaceful Anabaptists in 1536 after his own brother had been killed in self-defense in the Muenster tragedy. For twenty-five years Menno provided leadership for the Dutch Anabaptists, preaching the gospel, instructing new converts, organizing believers' churches, and defending the faith through such writings as The Foundation of Christian Doctrine and True Christian Faith. Menno-nite Brethren historian, J. A. Toews, assesses his role as follows:

Judged by the personal sacrifice he made and by the principles which he practiced in establishing churches according to the apostolic pattern, Menno must be regarded as one of the noblest and most heroic Christians of his age--and perhaps any age. He and his associate ministers were trailblazers and pioneers in insisting on freedom of conscience, separation of church and state, and the renunciation of war and violence.¹⁸

Toews, moreover, views it as "extremely unfortunate" that the Swiss Brethren and the Dutch Mennonites did not enter into closer association during the sixteenth century, for the Dutch Mennonites with their "sober biblicism and a tendency to legalism" would have profited from the "broader sympathies and warmer evangelical piety" of the Swiss Brethren.¹⁹

Predominant Themes of Early Anabaptist-Mennonite Sectarianism

The Anabaptist vision has been variously depicted; yet, the Biblical nature of the church lies at the heart of these portrayals. Ernst Troeltsch described its main characteristics as follows:

¹⁸ Toews, ibid., p. 10.

¹⁹ Ibid.

... emphasis on Believers' Baptism, a voluntary church, the precepts of the Sermon on the Mount, the rejection of the oath, of war, law, and authority, and, finally, the most far-reaching mutual material help, and the equality of all Church members, the election of elders and preachers by the local congregations, and, to a large extent, the unpaid character of the pastoral office....²⁰

This portrayal closely fits Troeltsch's earlier characterization of a sect.²¹ A classic statement of the vision was given by Harold S. Bender to the American Society of Church History in December, 1943.²² To Bender, this vision consisted of (i) a new conception of the essence of Christianity as discipleship, (ii) a new conception of the church as a brotherhood, and (iii) a new ethic of love and non-resistance.²³ Bender fully realized that there were other contributions of the vision, such as, the development of religious liberty;²⁴ but he failed to note the missionizing dimension as a primary emphasis, unless it was implied in discipleship. Yet, Franklin H. Littell devotes a full chapter of his five-chapter dissertation, later published as The Anabaptist View of the Church, to the Great Commission. He notes that the Anabaptists were among the first to make the Commission binding upon all church members.²⁵ This is an important aspect of their sectarian stance, for, as Littell

²⁰ Troeltsch, The Social Teaching of the Christian Churches, II, 703.

²¹ Supra, p. 17. See also Social Teaching, I, 328-49.

²² Supra, p. 73.

²³ Bender, "Anabaptist Vision", in RAV, pp. 42-54.

²⁴ Ibid., p. 31.

²⁵ Littell, Anabaptist View of the Church, p. 11. More recently, this book is published as Origins of Sectarian Protestantism.

suggests, "In Biblical living, the tension between the 'church' and the 'world' is progressively overcome by the missionary outreach of the Christian community."²⁶ As Littell's first title of the above work indicates, he sees the Anabaptist distinction in terms of their understanding of the church. He understood the marks of the true church, as the Anabaptists reread these from the New Testament, as follows: (i) believers' baptism, administered to those who had repented; (ii) spiritual government, in which the ban, by common consent, disciplines the believer, each believer having a definite role and responsibility in reaching a community decision;²⁷ (iii) community, mutual aid being demonstrated in an open economy, as among the Swiss Brethren and Dutch Mennonites, or as a closed economy, as among the Hutterian brethren;²⁸ (iv) Lord's Supper, symbolically interpreted as a memorial celebration and administered to the true community of believers; (v) separation of church and state, in which the believer refused participation in government, particularly in bearing arms.²⁹ These above interpretations, helpful though they be, do not present the vision as forthrightly as do the original sources.

The earliest document from the Swiss Brethren, written by Conrad

²⁶ Ibid., p. 136.

²⁷ Littell adds, "The social scientist may be justified in considering this one of the first manifestations of government by consensus." Ibid., p. 94.

²⁸ For a thorough discussion of mutual aid, see Peter J. Klassen, Economics of Anabaptists (The Hague: Mouton, 1964).

²⁹ Littell, ibid., pp. 82-108.

Grebel some four months prior to the actual birth of Anabaptism, is sometimes referred to as the charter of the free church.³⁰ Among Grebel's concerns are those of believers' baptism, the separation of church and state, and the renunciation of war, as the following three fragmentary quotations from Grebel's letters indicate:

Concerning baptism,

... It signifies that a man is dead and ought to be dead to sin and walks in newness of life and spirit, and that he shall certainly be saved if, according to this meaning, by inner baptism he lives his faith, as the scholars at Wittenberg say Also baptism does not save infant baptism is a senseless, blasphemous abomination, contrary to all Scripture.³¹

Concerning separation of church and state (as seen in his attack on Luther),

Be strong. Thou hast the Bible for defense against the idolatrous caution of Luther.... Do not act, teach, or establish anything according to human opinion, your own or that of others, and abolish again what has been so established; but establish and teach only the clear word and practice of God....³²

Concerning renunciation of war,

Moreover, the gospel and its adherents are not to be protected by the sword, nor are they to protect themselves.... Neither do they use worldly sword or war, since all killing has ceased with them--unless, indeed, we would still be of the old law.³³

³⁰ See Walter Klaassen, Anabaptism: Neither Catholic nor Protestant (Waterloo: Conrad Press, 1973), p. 11. Klaassen also calls this "the charter for a renewal of prophetic religion" (p. 11), for Grebel's treatment on the Lord's Supper suggests that sacredness or holiness is not to be attached to special words, objects, places, and people.

³¹ George H. Williams, SAW, pp. 80-81.

³² Ibid., pp. 84-85, in a post-script or second letter to Thomas Muentzer.

³³ Ibid., p. 80.

This document demonstrates the rigorous separatism of Anabaptism from its earliest days.

The Schleithelm Confession of Faith very precisely states the distinctive concerns which the Anabaptists held over against the magisterial reformers and antinomian excesses to which the heterogeneous movement was vulnerable. Its seven statements are summarized as follows:

- (i) baptism is to be given to those who have repented, thus excluding infants;
- (ii) the ban (excommunication) is intended to purify the brotherhood, the true church being visible;
- (iii) the breaking of bread is for those united by baptism, excluding those who "follow the devil and the world";
- (iv) the separation of the visible body "from the evil and from the wickedness which the devil planted in the world.... we shall not have fellowship with them, the wicked...";
- (v) the pastor shall have good report, shall read, admonish, teach, warn, lead in prayer, and shall be supported by his church (thus, not an itinerant evangelist as were the leaders in the first year of the movement);
- (vi) the sword is ordained of God "outside the perfection of Christ", the Christian using only the ban "inside the perfection of Christ"; it is not appropriate for a Christian to serve as magistrate;³⁴
- (vii) the oath is forbade by Jesus in the New Testament, thus superseding the Old Testament practice.³⁵

The Dutch Mennonites placed similar emphasis upon the establish-

³⁴ For an interpretation of the "sword" in early Anabaptism; see J. M. Stayer, The Doctrine of the Sword in the First Decade of Anabaptism (Ann Arbor: University Microfilm, 1964).

³⁵ Hans J. Hillerbrand, The Protestant Reformation (New York: Harper and Row, 1969), pp. 129-136. See also Williams, Radical Reformation, pp. 182-85.

ment of a visible church with a voluntary membership based upon conversion and involving commitment to discipleship and holy living. In his "Reply to Gellius Faber", Menno characterizes the true church as follows:

- (i) an unadulterated, pure doctrine, including the responsibility of sharing the good news as demanded by the Great Commission;
- (ii) a scriptural use of the sacramental signs, baptism for those who by faith are born of God, and the Lord's Supper for those who have already experienced forgiveness, and who walk in love and unity;
- (iii) obedience to the Word, living a life of holiness and conformity to the life of Christ;³⁶
- (iv) unfeigned, brotherly love;
- (v) a bold confession of God and Christ, despite persecution and difficulty;
- (vi) oppression and tribulation for the sake of the Lord's Word.³⁷

John H. Yoder summarizes the Anabaptist vision as it emerged in the mid-1520's and survived as the church's involvement in society. The vision singles out those aspects in which the Anabaptists differed from other Protestants.

- (i) Scripture alone takes precedence even over the authority of government.
- (ii) Unity in knowing God's will was worked by the Holy Spirit as believers gathered to study the Scriptures.
- (iii) Christ must be followed in life, not in childish mimicry, but in necessary obedience, as, for instance, the refusal to bear the sword.

³⁶ Elsewhere Menno argues persuasively for a nonresistance stance. See, Complete Writings of Menno Simons, J. C. Wenger, ed. (Scottsdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1956), pp. 671, 32-50.

³⁷ Condensed from a summary by J. A. Toews, HMBC, pp. 11-12. See also, "Opera Omnia" in Complete Writings, pp. 739-44.

- (iv) Love is demonstrated not only in pacifism, but in suffering servanthood or self-surrender (Gelassenheit).³⁸
- (v) Baptism follows conversion and a determination to lead a new kind of life, and a commitment to brotherhood.
- (vi) Believers assume a moral responsibility for one another, the extreme instance of discipline being exclusion from the fellowship (ban).
- (vii) Community of goods was not interpreted in an absolute sense, with the exception of the Hutterian brothers, but with a sense of stewardship to God and his brethren (in this sense, no Christian can call his property his own).³⁹

It is to this vision of the Anabaptists, the restitution of the primitive church, to which the Mennonite Brethren attempted to return in 1860.

Some Sociological Observations about Anabaptist-Mennonite Beginnings

In order to assess the degree of dissent or accommodation in subsequent generations, one must examine sociologically the first generation. Having defined sectarianism as a protest movement resulting in a voluntary separation from a dissonant environment,⁴⁰ one can now better analyse Anabaptist-Mennonite beginnings in terms of a movement of dissent which attempts to restore what it perceives as normative. At the same time, other sociological concerns, such as the structure of the movement,

³⁸Yoder sees a contemporary application of this principle in "a rejection of national, racial, and class selfishness and an active promotion of international and interracial reconciliation", TMH, by C. J. Dyck, p. 106.

³⁹Yoder, "A Summary of the Anabaptist Vision", in IMH, by C. J. Dyck, ed., pp. 103-110. See also N. Van der Zijpp, "The Early Dutch Anabaptists" in RAV, by G. Hershberger, pp. 69-82.

⁴⁰Supra, p. 30.

its leadership, and the applicability of deprivation theories warrant examination.

The basis for dissent. Typical of a sociological interpretation, Bryan Wilson suggests that whereas schisms ostensibly occur for doctrinal reasons, there are deeper causes.⁴¹ In fact, he suggests that sects thrive on separating from evil. On the contrary, historian J. A. Toews contends that "church renewal and new life movements cannot be explained simply in terms of an historical framework of cause and effect",⁴² and theologian John H. Yoder laments the "most glaring injustices of modern historiography" in the failure to see "the movements of dissent within Protestantism as consistent, self-conscious, serious phenomena in their own right".⁴³ Yoder then shows that the Anabaptist dissent, recorded in some forty "disputations" (exchanges of written arguments) in the sixteenth century, had as its norm the Scriptures, its end in view the church, its operational reality a visible body of believers, its ethical relevance in discipleship, and as its eschatological realization the church within the world, "a structural reality taking concrete form in the demonic dimensions of economic and political life".⁴⁴ Anabaptist scholar, Walter Klaassen, has holistically viewed the movement

⁴¹Wilson, Religion in Secular Society, p. 193.

⁴²Toews, ibid., p. 3. Toews demands the dimension of faith--"a faith that acknowledges the gracious sovereignty of God...." At the same time, in his history Toews repeatedly reflects the social, economic, and cultural conditions which are crucial in shaping a movement.

⁴³Yoder, "The Prophetic Dissent of the Anabaptists" in RAV, p. 93.

⁴⁴Ibid., pp. 93-104.

as predominantly religious, yet with revolutionary political and social potential.⁴⁵ One may conclude that, notwithstanding the political and socio-economic dimensions influencing it and generating from it, the Anabaptist movement was one of religious dissent sui generis.

The ideal perceived. Most present-day Reformation scholars agree that the Anabaptists held a "primitivist" view of the church. Yet Lutheran scholar, Hans Hillerbrand, maintains that all Reformers, including the Anabaptists, were in continuity with the old Catholic Church, there being no difference between reformatio and restitutio.⁴⁶ Franklin Littell has, however, convincingly demonstrated in his examination of the sources that the Anabaptists treated the New Testament and the apostolic church as normative.⁴⁷ This radical departure, a third type as distinct from Catholicism and magisterial Protestantism, led Walter Klaassen to the intriguing title for his booklet, Anabaptism: Neither Catholic nor Protestant, in which he states,

The word radical has been used adjectivally of Anabaptism because in its reform of the church it went consciously and deliberately to primitive models for guidance. Its cry was Back to the Sources; that is, back to the roots of Christianity in the New Testament. The assumption was that what had happened between 325 and 1525 was mostly in error.⁴⁸

⁴⁵ Klaassen, "The Nature of the Anabaptist Protest", MQR, XLV (1971), 291-311.

⁴⁶ Hillerbrand, "Anabaptism and History", MQR, XLV (1971), 107-122.

⁴⁷ Littell, The Origins of Sectarian Protestantism, pp. 46-108. See also Littell, "In Response to Hans Hillerbrand", in MQR, XLV (1971), pp. 375-380. See also, Roland H. Bainton, The Reformation of the Sixteenth Century (Boston: The Beacon Press, 1957), p. 95.

⁴⁸ Klaassen, Anabaptism: Neither Catholic nor Protestant, p. 9.

The repeated attempt of the Mennonite Brethren to restore this ideal of the New Testament is, therefore, a typically sixteenth century Anabaptist concern.

The separation necessitated. Such restitution required radical separation from the world, including the corpus Christianum, in which the church was coextensive with society. In the account of the first "re-baptism" by Grebel, in what may well be the oldest existing Anabaptist document, the author concludes, "Thereby began separation from the world and from its evil works."⁴⁹ And Menno Simons similarly drew attention to such separation. "The entire evangelical Scriptures teach us that the church of Christ was and is, in doctrine, life, and worship, a people separated from the world."⁵⁰ Frank Epp's title for his first chapter of Mennonites in Canada is "The Most Separated Brethren", and at the outset he quotes from Walter Klaassen to set the theme: "It was a Christian movement of the most radical sort in that it questions virtually all the assumptions upon which sixteenth century society, culture, and church rested."⁵¹ This separatist tendency led also to its subsequent fragmentations, called by some Taeuferkrankheit (Anabaptist sickness).⁵² As Betty Scharf notes, sects were not known for fusion, but

⁴⁹ John H. Yoder, "Anabaptist Origins in Switzerland", in IMH, p. 34.

⁵⁰ Menno Simons, Complete Writings, p. 679.

⁵¹ Epp, Mennonites in Canada, 1786-1920, pp. 23-45. Klaassen's statement is taken from "Nature of Anabaptist Protest", p. 311.

⁵² Epp, ibid., p. 38.

fission.⁵³

The voluntary aspect. Characteristic of Troeltsch's sect type, such separation was never compulsory, but entered into voluntarily. However, there was a merit requirement: conversion and baptism upon confession of faith, usually referred to as "believers' baptism". As Max Weber rightly interpreted, "This means that the religious community, the visible Church ... was ... solely a community of personal believers of the reborn, and only these. In other words, not as a Church but as a sect."⁵⁴ In a lengthy footnote, Weber notes that the sectarian aspect of the Baptists (meaning Anabaptists) lay not only in their lack of relation to the state, but "it was because such a religious community could only be voluntarily organized as a sect, not compulsorily as a Church, if it did not wish to include the unregenerate and thus depart from the Early Christian ideal".⁵⁵

The role of charisma. The Anabaptist movement had its charismatic leaders, as the foregoing account has indicated, even if Weber's description of such charisma--"endowed with supernatural, superhuman ... qualities ... not accessible to the ordinary person"--does not fully apply.⁵⁶ Indeed, they were, almost without exception, highly educated

⁵³Scharf, The Sociological Study of Religion (New York: Harper Torchbook, 1970), p. 109.

⁵⁴Weber, The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism, pp. 144-145.

⁵⁵Ibid., pp. 254-55.

⁵⁶Supra, p. 42.

and gifted leaders, and the movement suffered greatly through their systematic decimation by Roman Catholic ecclesiastics and magisterial reformers. It may have been a decided setback that the Anabaptists and especially the Swiss brethren who had such a promising start had no single leader over a longer period of time, the kind of role that might have been fulfilled by Grebel. It was the longer, almost single-handed leadership of Menno among the Dutch Mennonites which helped this faltering movement to survive.

Its democratic structure. With its emphasis upon the priesthood of all believers, the movement was egalitarian, not anarchic, as some of the less sympathetic critics caricatured the Anabaptists.⁵⁷ As Fritz Blanke observes, the Anabaptists recognized civil order, even though they refused to participate in government. "This is not anarchy; it is apolitism, withdrawal from responsibility for the life of the state."⁵⁸ As the Schleithelm Confession indicates and Menno's practice demonstrates, they also believed in organizing congregations and ordaining leaders. This democratic structure of the sect was the antithesis of the hierarchical structure of the church type.

Socio-economic status and relative deprivation. One need not interpret Anabaptism as part of the class struggle, as does Friedrich Engels,⁵⁹ to support a relative deprivation view of sectarianism. To

⁵⁷ See John Oyer, Lutheran Reformers Against Anabaptists (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1964), pp. 114-139.

⁵⁸ Blanke, "Anabaptism and the Reformation", in RAV, pp. 67-68.

⁵⁹ See Blanke, ibid., pp. 66-67. See also Engels', "The Peasant War in Germany", in Marx and Engels, On Religion, pp. 97-120, where Engels attempts to prove that Anabaptists sided with the plebians and

Richard Niebuhr, the Anabaptists were simply part of the socially and economically deprived in society.

The Anabaptists ... were too broken by the Protestant Inquisition to become a strong church, affiliated with wealth and prestige. Isolated by persecution, as the Jews had been isolated, they formed a narrow sect, cut off from other churches not only by the caste-consciousness of early Lutherans and Calvinists but by their own social loyalties to their outcast group.⁶⁰

Littell similarly remarks that "the Anabaptist craftsmen transformed social misfortune into a religious vehicle, and 'glorified in living loose from the world'".⁶¹ These are popular interpretations, but not universally held. Fritz Blanke argues that it is impossible that Anabaptists were responsible for the Peasants' War, as schoolbook accounts commonly suggest, for it was predominantly an urban movement, with the sole exception of Zollikon.⁶² Robert Kreider would agree with Blanke. Examining the residences and occupations of 332 members recorded in court trials from 1525 to 1558, Kreider found the following occupational breakdown: clergy (41), nobility (11), merchants (16), schoolmasters (18), artisans (161), labourers (19), farmers and peasants (18), and others (48). On the basis of these data, Kreider concluded the following:

peasants led by Muentzer against Luther and the nobility. "This sect, which had no definite dogmas, held together only by its common opposition to all ruling classes and by the common symbol of the second baptism, ascetic in their mode of living, untiring, fanatical and intrepid in carrying on propaganda, had grouped itself more and more closely around Muentzer" (p. 116). Engels had obviously not read Grebel's letter to Muentzer. See supra, p. 83.

⁶⁰ Niebuhr, The Social Sources of Denominationalism, p. 39.

⁶¹ Littell, ibid., p. 124.

⁶² Blanke, ibid., p. 67.

(i) initially Anabaptism was an urban movement; (ii) the rate of physical mobility was comparatively high; (iii) transfer of occupations among them was quite common; (iv) social and economic appeals to the disinherited were practically nonexistent in their writings; and (v) the common denominator was not a proletarian status. Kreider concludes:

The data on hand does not support the generalization ... that the Anabaptists emerged essentially from the disinherited classes. Anabaptism in its early stages was heterogeneous in character with adherents from all vocations and classes.... It was only after 1550 that Anabaptism became predominantly a rural movement.⁶³

In a more intensive and recent study, Paul Peachey expanded this list to 762 persons, from 1525 to 1540. He supports Kreider's findings, but dates the shift from urban to rural as of 1527. Peachey concludes,

Out of the academic and theological milieu in which the Anabaptist concept arose, the movement passes first through the bourgeois classes, then quickly to the peasantry, and with the rise of persecution, in the course of a few years becomes purely a rural phenomenon.⁶⁴

The origin of the movement cannot, therefore, be explained in terms of economic and social deprivation. Roland Bainton apparently was right

⁶³ Robert Kreider, "Vocations of Swiss and South German Anabaptists", Memmonite Life, VIII (1953), 43. See also pp. 38-42.

⁶⁴ Peachey, "Social Background and Social Philosophy of the Swiss Anabaptists, 1525-1540", MQR, XXVIII (1954), p. 105. The article is based on Peachey's dissertation research, entitled Die Soziale Herkunft der Schweizer Täufer, 1525-1540 (Ph. D. dissertation, University of Zurich, 1954, published at Karlsruhe, Germany). See also Claus-Peter Clasen, "The Anabaptist Leaders: Switzerland, Austria, South and Central Germany, 1525-1618", MQR, XLIX (1975), 122-64. Clasen's study is focused on leaders only and concludes that from the outset there were both intellectual (professionals, clergy, and scholars) and non-intellectuals (craftsmen and peasants), the proportion of intellectuals decreasing with time. See also Clasen, Anabaptist: A Social History, 1525-1618 (Ithaca: New York: Cornell University Press, 1972).

when he stated that they were Anabaptists not because they were disinherited, but they were disinherited because they were Anabaptists.⁶⁵

2. The Transition from Believers' Church to Parish Church: A Study of the Subsequent Generations (c. 1550-c. 1850)

How then was the Anabaptist vision perpetuated and revitalized in subsequent generations? Did the movement decay internally from "the dry rot of cultural egotism", as some purport?⁶⁶ Or is it more accurate to suggest that "though the fires burned low a breakthrough here and there, on the part of individuals or small groups, bore evidence to the depth of life beneath the surface"?⁶⁷ It appears that the Anabaptist-Mennonite movement encountered the same "routinization of charisma"⁶⁸ which characterizes most religious movements beyond the first generation in their shift towards the church end of the sect-church continuum. And yet, the movement persisted. The following, very brief survey of the three hundred years of its history is not intended to be comprehensive, but simply to indicate the directions of its spread and the major forces of continuity and change which characterized it.

⁶⁵ Bainton, Age of the Reformation, p. 43.

⁶⁶ Robert Kreider, "The Anabaptist Conception of the Church in the Russian Mennonite Environment, 1789-1870", MQR, XXV (1951), 17-33.

⁶⁷ Gerhard Lohrenz, "The Mennonites of Russia and the Great Commission", in C. J. Dyck, A Legacy of Faith (Newton, Kansas: Faith and Life Press, 1962).

⁶⁸ Supra, pp. 15, 42.

The Spread to Northern Europe and Russia

The persecution of the Swiss Brethren persisted until the Congress of Vienna in 1815. With the exception of the rural canton of Berne, the Brethren had either conformed to the militaristic demands of the state or emigrated to the Palatinate in South Germany or to Prussia. In Alsace, which was given to France in the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648, Jacob Ammann gave leadership to the Amish in the late seventeenth century, preceding from the Swiss and South German Mennonites because of his emphasis upon strict enforcement of the ban and simple clothing.⁶⁹ The Palatinate, with its more tolerant attitude to religious dissenters, served as the crossroads for Mennonite refugees in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and here Mennonites developed the reputation for being good farmers.

To the north in Belgium, where the missionary Leonard Bouwens had baptized 592 of his over 10,000 baptisms (recording exact date and place of each), with the exception of a brief period of relative freedom from 1576 to 1586, intense persecution by Roman Catholics forced most Anabaptists to flee by 1640.⁷⁰ While Anabaptists, especially those coming from Belgium in 1567-73, were repeatedly persecuted in England, even as early as 1535, it is difficult to distinguish them from other Protestant martyrs, and a permanent church group did not result, despite their influence.⁷¹ In the Netherlands, where Menno had

⁶⁹ C. J. Dyck, IMH, pp. 112-116.

⁷⁰ Ibid., pp. 89-91.

⁷¹ Ibid., pp. 91-92.

consolidated the movement of peaceful Anabaptists, Galenus had reaffirmed its separatist stance,⁷² the movement suffered from internal division and economic prosperity, and membership declined from 160,000 in 1700 to some 27,000 in 1808, with one hundred congregations becoming extinct. By 1964, a partial recovery was indicated in the baptized membership of 40,000.⁷³ For the growth and further spread of the movement, one must, therefore, look west and east. As for the west, large numbers of Mennonites and Amish emigrated to America in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

To trace the origin of the Mennonite Brethren Church, one must follow the move of the Anabaptist-Mennonites to the east, especially to its 250-year sojourn in the Vistula delta and approximately 100-year sojourn in Russia. The province of East Friesland in North Germany became the haven of persecuted Mennonites from the very beginning, Menno Simons spending much of his time there from 1536 to 1544. It was here at Emden in 1568 that the more moderate Waterlander Mennonites met to agree on a basis for working together, calling themselves Doopsgezinde, still used by Dutch Mennonites today. Eastward, in Schleswig-Holstein, Mennonite refugees settled on estates of noblemen. As Dutchmen, they knew about dikes and how to recover marshy lands, and congregations were founded near Hamburg. Because of greater religious toleration and the

⁷²In 1699, Galenus Abrahamsz de Haan listed the difference between Mennonites and other doctrines as consisting of (i) supremacy of the New Testament over the Old, (ii) believers' baptism, (iii) non-swearing of oaths, and (iv) nonresistance. Ibid., p. 116.

⁷³Ibid., p. 118.

need for farming and irrigation skills, many Mennonites settled in the Vistula delta, near Danzig, from 1530's onwards, where, with the exception of those who went to Russia, large numbers remained until World War II.⁷⁴ Also, smaller numbers came from Switzerland, Moravia, Bohemia, and Austria. Initially under Polish jurisdiction, the Vistula delta came under Prussian rule in 1772, and Frederick the Great's militarism created difficulty for the non-resistant Mennonites, who also refused to pay taxes to support the Lutheran state church. In addition, his successor in 1789 issued an edict denying land acquisition to Mennonites. The invitation from Catherine II of Russia in 1788 was, therefore, interpreted by Mennonites as a "special manifestation of divine providence".⁷⁵ Reflecting on the Mennonites in Europe from 1648 to 1815, Dr. Ernst Crous, of Krefeld, Germany, sees the following phenomena:

- (i) dispersion continues, but toleration is gradually achieved in most places;
- (ii) general economic prosperity which makes them attractive to governments, but stirs envy in the hearts of their neighbours;
- (iii) in the major cities some Mennonites achieve civic prominence and are honored as leading citizens;
- (iv) there is a general numerical decline among them which, if it had continued, would have made them extinct in Europe today;
- (v) numerous outside influences help to shape their religious life ... notably Pietism, Quakerism, and rationalism;
- (vi) prominent leaders arise from time to time who ... give new vision to their people;

⁷⁴For a recent history of the Mennonites in this area, see Erich Ratzlaff, Im Weichselbogen (Winnipeg: The Christian Press, 1971).

⁷⁵Toews, ibid., p. 14.

- (vii) some of these leaders ... brought divisions into the life of the congregations, but ... most of the Mennonites (had) overcome their earlier schisms;
- (viii) some of this new unity must also be attributed to the influence of Pietism among them, which had led to a recovery of Bible study, prayer, and a sense of mission among them.⁷⁶

In keeping with its colonial policy of granting a "charter of privileges" to entice immigrants, the Russian Tsars (Paul I reaffirmed it in 1800) offered the Mennonites of Prussia an additional clause granting complete religious freedom⁷⁷ and exemption from military service for all time, such special consideration justified in the 1800 charter as follows:

Condescending to the petition of the Mennonists settled in the New Russian government, whose excellent industry and morality may, according to the testimony of the authorities, be held up as a model to the other foreigners settled there and thereby deserve special consideration, now therefore with this Imperial Charter we most graciously wish not only to confirm all their rights and advantages specified in the preliminary agreement concluded with them, but in order to stimulate their industry and concern in agriculture even more, to grant them also other advantages ... (the list following).⁷⁸

After sending two men, Jacob Hoeppner and Johann Bartsch, to visit Russia

⁷⁶ Crous, "Mennonites in Europe, 1648-1815", in IMH, p. 125.

⁷⁷ The religious freedom clause, however, did prohibit proselytization from Russian Christians, allowing such proselytization among Muslims. The charter which Catherine II prepared in 1863 reads as follows: "Jedoch wird hierbey jedermann gewarnt keinen in Ruhsland wohnhaften christlichen Glaubensgenossen, unter gar keinem Vorwande zur Annehmung oder Beypflichtung seines Glaubens und seiner Gemeinde zu bereden oder zu verleiten, falls er sich nicht der Furcht der Strafe nach aller Strenge Unserer Gesetze auszusetzen gesonnen ist." See David G. Rempel, The Mennonite Colonies in New Russia: A Study of their Settlement and Economic Development from 1789 to 1914 (unpublished Ph. D. dissertation, Stanford University, 1933), Appendix I, p. 321.

⁷⁸ Ibid., Appendix II, p. 325.

and finalize agreements with the government, eight families set out by wagon train on March 22, 1788. Other families joined shortly after, and a total of 228 families arrived a year later at the Chortitza River, a tributary of the Dnieper, in the Ukraine.⁷⁹ This group of largely landless settlers, without any ministers or teachers among them, and increased to 400 families by 1800, established fifteen villages, farming some 89,100 acres of land. Governing themselves, with a Schulze (mayor) for each village and an Oberschulze for the entire colony, they endured great hardships in the initial years. In 1804 the Molotschna Colony, some one hundred miles to the southeast of Chortitza, near the Sea of Azov, was founded with some 365 families by 1806.⁸⁰ This group increased to 1200 families by 1835, settling in fifty-eight villages with an acreage of 324,000, despite the fact that the Prussian government feared the loss of its competent farmers and imposed a ten percent tax on all immigrants. The second colony, having attracted the landed farmers, including teachers, ministers, and community leaders, was generally more prosperous. Johann Cornies was an outstanding leader among these in agricultural and educational reform. It was in these two colonies that the Mennonite Brethren Church originated almost simultaneously in the early 1860's. Two more colonies were later founded on the Volga, Am Trakt, in 1855,

⁷⁹ For an early account of this settlement, see David H. Epp, Die Chortitza Mennoniten (Odessa: A. Schultze, 1889). Copy in Mennonite Brethren Bible College (hereafter MBBC) Library.

⁸⁰ For monographs on this settlement see: Franz Isaac, Die Molotschnaer Mennoniten (Halbstadt, Taurien: H. J. Braun, 1908), and H. Goerz, Die Molotschnaer Ansiedlung (Steinbach, Man.: Echo-Verlag, 1949).

and Old Samara, in 1859.

Continuity and Change in the Subsequent Generations

Two questions guide the following sociological analysis of continuity and change in subsequent generations and thereby focus more specifically on the background to the origin of the Mennonite Brethren Church. First, to what did the Mennonites of Prussia and Russia hold fast or in what did they persist in their dissent? Each of the terse answers could be greatly extended and documented.

Their industry and expertise as farmers. Whether restoring war-devastated lands in the Palatinate or applying themselves to their farms or linen weaving in East Friesland, Mennonites soon gained a reputation for industry, frugality, honesty, and success.⁸¹ As a result, Prussia invited them for their land reclamation and irrigation skills, and later Russia invited them as model farmers.⁸² Their special success in the total economic development in South Russia in the first half of the nineteenth century, including the industrial development, has been ably researched by David G. Rempel at Stanford University in 1933.⁸³

Their mother tongue. Until after 1750, the Mennonites in Prussia continued to speak Dutch and thereby resisted total assimilation into Prussian culture. Throughout their stay in Russia, they retained their

⁸¹Dyck, IMH, pp. 115, 121.

⁸²Ibid., pp. 124, 126-128. See also, D. G. Rempel, ibid., pp. 45-47, 57, 325.

⁸³Rempel, ibid., pp. 123-178.

newly-assumed German "mother tongue" and identified themselves with Germans rather than Russian culture.⁸⁴ Thus, they succeeded through 300 years of history to isolate themselves from their host environment.

Their fissiparous tendencies. Not only did new schisms over doctrinal and ethical issues arise in the Netherlands, such as Waterlanders vs. followers of Menno in mid-sixteenth century, or the Sun vs. the Lamb church in late eighteenth century, but such cultural schisms as Frisian vs. Flemish, occurring just five years after Menno's death, continued into the mid-nineteenth century in Russia. By then new sectarian groups, such as Kleine Gemeinde (1814) and Mennonite Brethren (1860), emerged in an attempt to recapture the Anabaptist vision. As William Keeney notes, "It was the heritage of an age in which religious convictions ran deep, and tolerance was not a virtue."⁸⁵

The principle of nonresistance. Contrary to the Netherlands, where nonresistance was compromised in their complete assimilation, Mennonites in both Prussia and Russia by and large observed this principle. In Russia, for example, the post of village constable was often turned over to a non-Mennonite.⁸⁶ In Prussia the Mennonites had refused to pay taxes in support of the state church and the military establish-

⁸⁴ See Frank H. Epp, Mennonite Exodus (Altona, Man.: D. W. Friesen, 1962), pp. 24, 25. Epp notes, "After one century, less than one per cent (486) of all Mennonites in Russia considered themselves primarily as Russian speaking."

⁸⁵ Keeney, "Anabaptist-Mennonites in Northern Europe, 1550-1650", in IMH, p. 96.

⁸⁶ Kreider, "The Anabaptist Conception of the Church in the Russian Environment, 1789-1870", MQR, XXV (1951), 24.

ment (both based on land ownership).⁸⁷ Promised military exemption, whether by Prussia, Russia, and later Canada, was always an enticing factor in deciding to emigrate.

Their formal church participation. Although church discipline became increasingly lax, the ban was still enforced for grave public, moral offences, such as adultery or physical assault. Church attendance remained compulsory, penalties being imposed for absentees. As Kreider observes, "The Mennonites brought to Russia ... a faith which had acquired certain cultural accretions, which in turn had been absolutized and sanctified."⁸⁸ Apparently, the cultural accretions had been sacralized.

The genuinely religious core. Despite decline in religious fervour and accommodation to the church-type, there remained throughout a remnant, the ecclesiola in ecclesia, such as evangelist-preacher, Bernhard Harder, who, remaining in the "old" church and diligently working for reform from within, lamented, "... All that we have left is a dry formalism, a shell without a kernel, a church without living members."⁸⁹ It was such a religious core, however, that made renewal on a much larger scale possible.

The second question has to do with change. What did the Prussian and Russian Mennonites abandon or to what extent did they accommodate to

⁸⁷ Toews, ibid., p. 14.

⁸⁸ Kreider, ibid., p. 21.

⁸⁹ Toews, ibid., p. 20.

the host environment? Again, the answers are grossly over-simplified.

From persecuted to "die Stille im Lande". The bold witness of the sixteenth-century newly-found vision, resulting in rigorous persecution, was transformed to a conventicle-type, Stille-im-Lande (the quiet in the land) reputation during the Prussian sojourn. The conversionist sect, to use Bryan Wilson's model, had become introversionist.⁹⁰ And in Russia it was a "quietistic, non-missionary Mennonitism which sought to preserve an historic faith by formalistic, tradition-honored means".⁹¹ Contrary to the case in the sixteenth-century, government prohibitions to proselytize were either taken seriously or conveniently found to legitimize their quietistic stance.

From dispossessed to elite in socio-economic status. Scattered from their homes and occupations, sixteenth-century Anabaptists were largely landless refugees, and as such became serfs to the noblemen of Prussia. Eventually, a land-owning, wealthy elitist class emerged, and with the move to Russia many of the Prussian landless became property owners. Among these, by the turn of the nineteenth century, a capitalist class had emerged with three per cent of the Mennonite population owning thirty per cent of the lands and employing twenty-two per cent of the Mennonite people.⁹² While but a few serfs in fact became noblemen, the socio-economic status of most Mennonites in Russian villages had surpassed

⁹⁰ Supra, p. 32.

⁹¹ Kreider, ibid., p. 21.

⁹² Krahn, "Some Social Attitudes of the Mennonites in Russia", MQR, IX (1935), p. 170.

that of the neighbouring Russian villages.⁹³

From egalitarian to hierarchical in organization. With rapid population growth and limited available land for expansion, about two-thirds of the inhabitants in Molotschna by 1860 were once again landless.⁹⁴ Kreider observes, "No problem in the Mennonite colonies created such misunderstanding and class hatred as the land problem."⁹⁵ J. A. Toews refers to this social stratification as "approaching a caste system".⁹⁶ Ecclesiastically, a hierarchy developed with elders and a convent of elders making decisions together with the Schulze (mayor) for the entire community, including such matters as education and civil affairs. To speak against an elder was considered a grave misdemeanor.

From separatism to coextension of church and society. In keeping with their colonial policy, the Russian government granted the colonies a large measure of self-government, so that a "Mennonite Commonwealth"⁹⁷ or "state within a state"⁹⁸ developed, approaching O'Dea's description

⁹³ E. K. Francis, In Search of Utopia: The Mennonites of Manitoba (Altona, Man.: D. W. Friesen & Sons, 1955). Francis notes that when Cornies died in 1848, the Mennonites were on the way to becoming the most prosperous and economically best balanced rural communities in all of Russia, the "prize exhibit of the colonization authorities" (p. 23).

⁹⁴ Rempel, ibid., p. 184.

⁹⁵ Kreider, ibid., p. 25.

⁹⁶ Toews, ibid., p. 18.

⁹⁷ Francis, ibid., p. 20.

⁹⁸ Toews, ibid., p. 15.

of the Mormons as an "incipient nation".⁹⁹ The village assembly could dismiss citizens from the community for immoral conduct.¹⁰⁰ Church concerns could thus be implemented by legal enforcement, and church and civil officials collaborated in such decision-making.

From aggressive leadership to failure in leadership. Despite the large-scale decimation of first generation leaders, there were those Anabaptists who gave active leadership in evangelism and church-building. In 1789 a colony of 228 families was established at Chortitza without ministers or teachers. Johann Cornies, the agricultural entrepreneur and reformer, was an exception. The spiritual decline was blamed upon failure in religious leadership.¹⁰¹ Few were the scholars and writers prior to the 1850's.

From spiritual vitality to decline and moral decay. Sixteenth-century religious vigour, church discipline, and evangelistic fervour were transmuted in the mid-nineteenth century to spiritual lethargy, moral decay, and complacency with the status quo. German missionary David Schlatter, who visited the colonies in 1825, reported on this state

⁹⁹ Supra, p. 22.

¹⁰⁰ Rempel, ibid., p. 117.

¹⁰¹ Bernhard Harder, continuing with the "old" church, severely criticized its leaders. "...There is something wrong with us--the witnesses and watchmen. A large number among us lack the very first and all-important capital "A" of Christianity: 'Wake up, o man, from your sleep of sin'... What can be expected from complacent and self-satisfied preachers who are reluctant to do anything but read an occasional sermon which for a half century has been a part of the family heritage, without consideration whether it is relevant to the times or not...." See J. A. Toews, ibid., p. 20.

of degeneracy in the church.¹⁰² Robert Kreider explains, "Appraised from the perspective of the Anabaptist conception of the church, the Mennonites in Russia forfeited at the outset the possibility of being a brotherhood-type of church ... they accepted a state of privileges which were bound to qualifications, not of faith, but of blood."¹⁰³ The Anabaptist understanding of a believers' church—a voluntary fellowship of regenerated believers—had become a parish (Volkskirche) or territorial (Landeskirche) church, in which church membership and citizenship were coextensive. The Mennonite church in Russia was rife for a "return to Menno" and another "restitution" of the New Testament model.

¹⁰² Heinrich Goerz, Die Molotschnaer Ansiedlung, pp. 69-70.

¹⁰³ Kreider, ibid., p. 22. Kreider equates "brotherhood" with our use of "sect".

IV

MENNONITE BRETHREN BEGINNINGS AND THE FIRST GENERATIONS (1860-1925)

An analysis of a religious movement must take seriously its beginnings. Especially a study of continuity and change must clearly isolate those factors which reflect the pristine stance of the movement. The previous chapter portrayed the Anabaptist background, within which the Mennonite Brethren have their roots, and the Russian Mennonite setting, from which the new sect was spawned. Particularly trenchant is the observation that the central belief of the Anabaptists--the notion of the believers' church--had gradually been transmuted, so that a parish church had developed in which the sectarian stance of the sixteenth century was virtually nullified. The situation was rife for reform or restitution. Which route would the new movement take?

The present chapter answers this question. It notes the principal influences of renewal and the circumstances leading to the secession. It examines the sectarian stance of the first generation of Mennonite Brethren. It further surveys the developments of the new religious movement beyond the first generation and assesses the degree of dissent and accommodation in the mid-1920's, the point of time from which subsequent chapters more intensively analyse the forces of change and continuity. The chapter serves, therefore, to highlight the norms of belief and practice characterizing the first generation and also to indicate the beginnings of significant change by the end of the second generation. It sets

the stage, thus, for the following chapters which will assess sectarian viability on the basis of the dialectic of forces of sacralization and secularization from 1925 to 1975.

1. A New Secession and Its First Generation (1860-1885)

The renewal or awakening within Russian Mennonitism which resulted in the Mennonite Brethren church represents the path of restitutio (discontinuity with the past) rather than reformatio (continuity with the past). The secession marked a radical break from a church which had "fallen" into "institutionalized disobedience".¹ Not surprising then, as in the case of the sixteenth-century Anabaptists, there was rigorous opposition by both church and state. It took some time until the movement was officially recognized from without and effectively consolidated from within.

Influences Leading to the Religious Awakening

Antecedent to the Mennonite Brethren secession was that of the Kleine Gemeinde,² a group meeting for prayer and Bible study in private homes under the leadership of an ordained minister, Claas Reimer. Critical of the laxity in church discipline and formality of worship, they organized in 1814 as a separate group in the Molotschna colony in an attempt to restore Anabaptist Christianity. Because of their conservatism

¹Abram Dueck, "Retrospect and Prospect: Reformatio or Restitutio", Direction, I (April, 1972), 42-43.

²The term means "small church". Today descendants of this group in Canada are called the Evangelical Mennonite Church.

and strict discipline--avoiding luxuries, using simple dress, and condemning use of tobacco--Jacob Bekker, one of the founders of the Mennonite Brethren church, suggests, "This church organized itself according to certain forms and dogmas yet without possessing the essence of spiritual life. Conversion was not mentioned among them."³ Yet contemporary Mennonite Brethren historian, J. A. Toews, views their emphasis on personal experience and piety more in keeping with early Mennonite Brethren.⁴

Somewhat later, in 1822, Tobias Voth, pietist teacher from Prussia, was invited by Johann Cornies to head the new Vereinsschule⁵ in Ohrloff village, from which a large body of ultra-conservatives had withdrawn. Here Voth organized spontaneous prayer groups, sponsored mission meetings, and distributed Christian literature. P. M. Friesen credits Voth for having "given expression for the first time to something which we call 'brotherhood' (Brudertum) or intimate Christian fellowship".⁶ If Ohrloff was the locale for an "Intellectual Renaissance",⁷ then Gnaden-

³ Bekker, Origin of the Mennonite Brethren Church, transl. by D. E. Pauls, and A. E. Janzen (Hillsboro, Kansas: Mennonite Brethren Historical Society of the Midwest, 1973), p. 18.

⁴ Toews, HMBC, p. 27. First major Mennonite Brethren historian, P. M. Friesen (1849-1914), recognized both the piety and conservatism. "Die religioese Gesinnung des Klaas Reimer und seiner Genossen war eine herzlich fromme, aber ohne freudige Gnadenerkenntnis und beschreiblich enge in konfessioneller Hinsicht, sowie in bezug auf Bildung und Kultur." See Friesen, Die Alt-Evangelische Mennonitische Bruderschaft in Russland (1789-1910) (Halbstadt, Taurien: Raduga Verlagsgesellschaft, 1911), p. 72.

⁵ An association school, usually for higher secondary and teacher training.

⁶ Toews, ibid., p. 28. See also P. M. Friesen, ibid., p. 79.

⁷ Toews, ibid., p. 27.

field village was the locale for a spiritual renewal, for P. M. Friesen designates it the Empfaengnisstaette⁸ (place of inception). A number of Lutheran pietists, led by Wilhelm Lange, had been especially influential in maintaining two Sunday services, a midweek meeting, mission festivals, Bible studies and prayer meetings, and the cause of temperance. The core of leaders of the Mennonite Brethren came from this prosperous and pious village (established only in 1835, and hence having a smaller landless class).

Perhaps no other single individual was as influential in bringing renewal as was Lutheran pietist Eduard Hugo Otto Wuest, graduate of Tuebingen, Germany, whom P. M. Friesen calls a "second reformer".⁹ Being dismissed from Neuenkirchen, Germany, for his pietistic zeal, Wuest accepted a pastorate of the Separatist Lutheran (Pietist) Church in Neuhoffnung, near Berdjansk, South Russia. From here he conducted evangelistic and missionary meetings in surrounding Lutheran and Mennonite churches. His evangelistic preaching of the free grace of God, however, was not followed up with a believers' church emphasis of the Anabaptists.¹⁰ Yet, all early

⁸ Friesen, ibid., p. 81.

⁹ Friesen, ibid., p. 174. Menno was the first reformer. Friesen compares the two reformers as follows: "Wie wir Menno Simonis 'Ausgang aus dem Papsttum', das Herzblatt seiner Werke, an den Anfang unserer Geschichte also Mennoniten gestellt, so stellen wir Wuest's 'Antrittspredigt' an den Anfang der besondern M.-B.-G. Menno und Wuest haben naechst Gottes Wort und Geist wesentlich die M.-B.-G. zu dem gemacht, was sie in der Kirche Christi ist, resp. sein wird.... Der evangelische Pietismus im gesunden Kern seines Wesens ist, wie die Neubelebung, so die harmonische Auswirkung des Mennonitentums, wie das Mennonitentum die Kritik und Ergaenzung des Luthertums ist."

¹⁰ J. A. Toews assesses his role as follows: "And yet it was perhaps providential that the man to whom so many Brethren were emotionally

Mennonite Brethren agree in their appreciation for the new life he brought in his call for personal commitment. His inaugural sermon contains the following example of the cutting-edge of his message.

This I want to make clear to you in my first sermon. Either believing - or unbelieving, either converted - or unconverted, either a natural man - or a regenerate man.... This choice I present to you. I will not leave believers and unbelievers side by side; but you shall be separated according to Paul's teaching in II Corinthians 6:14ff.¹¹

The spiritual decline and the religious dearth, rather than socioeconomic deprivation, provided the opportune setting for such spiritual influences of renewal to find a ready response among the landowning, educated upper middle-classes, as well as the landless, lower classes.¹²

Circumstances of the Secession

Following Wuest's death in 1859 conventicle groups in which they addressed each other as brothers, and hence called "Brethren", met for Bible study and prayer. The estrangement from the existing Mennonite

attached had to leave the scene at that particular time. Wuest was a "Moses" who led many people out of the bondage of a lifeless tradition and dead orthodoxy to a joyous assurance of a personal faith. But by training and experience he was not equipped to be the "Joshua" to lead these redeemed people into the promised land of a believers' church. In his own congregation believers and unbelievers remained "side by side" (cf. his inaugural sermon). He did not introduce "believers' baptism" and remained a pedo-baptist to the end of his ministry. Like Luther, he found it impossible to bring his original vision into actual realization (p. 31).

¹¹Friesen, *ibid.*, p. 181. Transl. by J. A. Toews, *ibid.*, p. 30.

¹²See J. A. Toews, *ibid.*, pp. 51-52, for arguments and evidence against such deprivation accounts. See also, Jacob J. Toews, "Cultural Background of the Mennonite Brethren Church" (unpublished M. A. thesis, University of Toronto, 1951).

church with its mixture of believers and unbelievers led the group to request Elder Lenzmann to conduct a separate observance of the Lord's Supper for them. Seeing such observance of private communion as without precedence and creating disunity, Lenzmann declined. Hereupon in late November, 1859, Abraham Cornelson, school teacher and member of Rudnerweide church, conducted a communion service at the home of Kornelius Wiens of Elizabethtal. Besides several from the Flemish church, six members from Gnadenfeld participated. At two church meetings of the Gnadenfeld church, the whole movement came under attack, especially Johann Claassen and Jacob Reimer, prominent and wealthy Gnadenfeld community leaders, both of whom were not present at the communion service. When Claassen and those who agreed with him were asked to leave, about ten left. As a result, Cornelson wrote a letter of secession and Claassen called a Brotherhood meeting for Epiphany, January 6, 1860, at Elizabethtal. Here, at the home of Isaac Koop, the letter of secession was presented for voluntary signatures. Eighteen family heads signed that day and nine others on January 18. The document briefly depicted "the corruption of the whole Mennonite Bruderschaft (brotherhood)" and expressed their fear that "the loss of the rights and privileges which our favorable government has granted us because of violations of the law and disobedience against the government are constantly increasing".¹³ Their dissident stance is apparent: "For these reasons we herewith are completely severing ourselves from the corrupt church, but pray for our brethren that they

¹³ Bekker, ibid., p. 43.

might be saved."¹⁴ Their confessional stance included: "According to our convictions from the Holy Scriptures, we are in full accord with our beloved Menno Simons regarding the articles of the Confession of Faith."¹⁵ There then follows a statement concerning baptism, Lord's Supper, washing of feet, election of ministers, and use of the ban. In his evaluation of the "Document of Secession", historian J. A. Toews observes that it is not to be regarded as a Confession of Faith that the main charges against the church were not publicly refuted, that these charges, at the same time, were far "too sweeping and too severe in character", and that the brethren expressed the desire to remain true to the historic Anabaptist-Mennonite confession.¹⁶

A similar movement, almost simultaneously, yet independently, occurred in the Chortiza Colony as a result of a spiritual awakening begun through reading of Ludwig Hofacker's (German pietist) sermons and J. G. Oncken's (German Baptist) advice. On March 4, 1862, three brethren from the Einlage church of Chortiza were baptized in Molotschna, and another eighteen received baptism near Einlage one week later, March 11, 1862, the latter date considered their date of secession.

Immediate Opposition and Eventual Recognition

From the outset, opposition, both from the church members, repre-

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 44.

¹⁶ Toews, ibid., p. 36.

sented through their spokesmen, the elders (more like bishops), and from the district and colonial government officials was intense. Church and state collaborated in what Adolf Ehrt describes "preacher-landowner-colony administrator-complex".¹⁷ Five of the six elders at Molotschna insisted that the seceding members be turned over to the District Court for prosecution. The Colony Administrative Officer (Gebietsamt), David Friesen, applied the Russian Penal Code dealing with secret societies, thereby prohibiting meetings with threats of imprisonment and banishment to Siberia. Representatives of the Brethren--Claassen, Cornelson, and Koop--appeared before the Colonial Inspector Andrea and were tricked into promising not to organize before receiving permission from the government. They kept their promise, and so the remaining brethren continued to struggle for survival without the official guidance of its most capable leaders. Claassen, however, made several trips to Petersburg to consult with higher officials--culminating with a petition to the Tsar--eventually to secure government promise of freedom of worship without persecution and full exercise of civil rights and legal protection, which local officials had denied them. Only by May 30, 1866, was this granted. Claassen also secured permission for Mennonite Brethren to settle in a new colony, Kuban. In the meantime, however, many brethren had been molested, some forced to leave the colony, and especially school teachers lost their jobs.¹⁸ Recognition by Ohrloff church through its sympathetic elder,

¹⁷ Adolf Ehrt, Das Mennonitentum in Russland von seiner Einwanderung bis zur Gegenwart (Berlin: Verlag von Julius Beltz, 1932), p. 38.

¹⁸ For more detail, see J. H. Lohrenz, Mennonite Brethren Church, pp. 31-34. See also, Jacob Bekker, ibid., pp. 48-65.

Johann Harder, had come by November, 1862, when the Brethren promised to abide by the Confession of Faith of the Mennonite Church.¹⁹

Consolidation and Early Development of the Brethren

The next twenty years following the official recognition by the Russian government were times of organization and consolidation, as well as fragmentation and spread of the movement. Organizationally, the movement in Molotschna lacked strong leadership, since its most capable candidates abided by their promise not to organize a church without official permission. However, two ministers were elected on May 30, 1860, and ordained on June 2, 1860, this ordination of Heinrich Huebert and Jacob Bekker (author of Origins of the Mennonite Brethren Church) constituting the official organization of the church, according to P. M. Friesen.

(Usually the secession date of January 6 is used.) In Chortitza, the movement was under the leadership of Abraham Unger, who required the help of Baptist preachers J. G. Oncken and August Liebig to regulate matters. The question of baptism only later became a controversy. Initially in Molotschna the mode of baptism was no issue, since the Document of Secession simply stressed believers' baptism. However, by September, 1860, Bekker and Bartel baptized each other by immersion, after re-studying the mode.²⁰ Not until September, 1863, did immersion become obligatory.²¹

¹⁹This confession was entitled "Confession of Faith of the So-Called United Flemish, Frisian, and High German Anabaptist Mennonite Church", published by the Rudnerweide, South Russia, congregation. See P. M. Friesen, ibid., p. 213, and F. C. Peters, ibid., in IMH, p. 213.

²⁰Jacob Reimer, early leader, in 1837 already questioned the

In Chortitza, with the strong Baptist influence, it was observed from the beginning. The first conference organization took place on May 14-16, 1872, when delegates from three congregations (Kuban; Molotschna, and Chortitza) representing over 600 members met for inspirational and business sessions. The major item of business was the establishment of an itinerant ministry for evangelism and church extension, with an annual budget of one thousand rubles, "no mean achievement for a young church".²²

Most problematic for the young movement was the divisive impact of a "charismatic" movement, already active prior to 1860, called die Froehliche Richtung (joyous movement). Manifesting itself in both Molotschna and Chortitza, because of Wuest's widespread impact (although Wuest himself objected to its excess), its excessive emotionalism (clapping and dancing), false freedom ("sister kiss"), and spiritual despotism (calling themselves "apostles") caused a number to be banned.²³ It led the entire church to be accused of such excesses by its critics in the "old" Mennonite church. Claassen was instrumental in June, 1865, in preparing reso-

sprinkling or pouring mode, commonly used in Mennonite churches, as a result of reading the biography of Anne Judson.

²¹In Winnipeg, 1963, this practice was modified, so that other forms than immersion were to be recognized, but upon confession of faith. See Yearbook of the Forty-Ninth Session of the General Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches (hereafter cited as GCRYB) (Winnipeg: The Christian Press, 1963), p. 8.

²²Toews, ibid., p. 77.

²³For evaluations of its effects, see P. M. Friesen, ibid., pp. 221-237. See also J. A. Toews, ibid., pp. 58-66; and A. H. Unruh, Die Geschichte der Mennoniten-Bruedergemeinde (Winnipeg: The Christian Press, 1955), pp. 108-134.

lutions of reform which delineated the church's prohibition of such excesses.

Despite this setback, the movement grew.²⁴ In Molotschna, although about 465 members had been accepted into the church from 1860 to 1872, the initial years of harrassment saw a more rapid growth than later, and only approximately 200 were members in 1872 because of a heavy migration to new settlements. Also a small group (about twenty) withdrew in 1872 because of the Froeliche Richtung, refusing to accept the June reforms. But interest in missions revived, and by 1883 a huge church edifice was built in Rueckenau. Chortitza saw rapid growth from the outset; and Kuban, the new colony under Mennonite Brethren auspices, grew only slowly, sixty-seven families having settled by 1866, while land was reserved for one hundred. Several Mennonite Brethren families settled in the new colonies of Friedensfeld, in 1867 (by 1885 its membership of Mennonite Brethren increased to 100 with about 150 adherents), Zagradowka in 1872 (which by 1885 also had a Mennonite Brethren membership of 100 with 150 adherents), and on the Don River (later became Baptists). Some 18,000 Mennonites migrated from Russia to United States (10,000) and Canada (8,000) between 1874 and 1880, because of the 1870 Imperial Decree which introduced universal military training (despite a clause allowing alternative service). Of these, about 400 (roughly one-third of Russian Mennonite Brethren) were Mennonite Brethren.²⁵ Large baptisms continued. In 1876, the year follow-

²⁴ Toews, ibid., p. 69-79, for statistics in this paragraph.

²⁵ Estimate by J. H. Lohrenz, Mennonite Brethren History, p. 42.

ing an inter-Mennonite Faith Conference, eighty persons joined the Mennonite Brethren church through baptism; in 1884, eighty-four joined, and in 1885, the largest addition in a year, 127. By its twenty-fifth anniversary on January 6, 1885, its church statistics included the following: six main congregations, seventeen affiliated groups, seven houses for worship, four ordained elders, thirty-five other ministers, total membership of 1800, with another 1200 in America.²⁶ General Conference historian, Cornelius Krahn, assesses the Mennonite Brethren contribution to Russian Mennonitism generally as follows:

What it gave the Russian Mennonites was a rebirth of personal piety, a living piety in which the individual believer receives assurance of the forgiveness of sins, and orders his life definitely according to the teachings of Christ, particularly the Sermon on the Mount.²⁷

This perceived ideal, the return to Menno and the New Testament, was indeed realized.

2. The Sectarian Stance of the First Generation

An analysis of the sectarian nature of the first generation of Mennonite Brethren may best be undertaken by ferreting out its theological distinctives and then comparing it sociologically with the first generation of Anabaptists in the sixteenth century.

Its Theological Distinctives

The first Mennonite Brethren confession of faith subscribed to by

²⁶ Lohrenz, ibid., p. 43.

²⁷ Krahn, "Social Attitudes . . .", pp. 173-174.

the whole Conference was adopted in 1902, some years after the passing of the first generation.²⁸ In the interim, however, several documents were prepared as guidelines. The Molotschna Document of Secession included the following emphases to indicate its position over against the church from which it seceded. Yet it was not intended to be a complete confession of faith.²⁹ The following are summary statements from the Document of Secession:

- (i) Baptism was to be administered on genuine, living faith; not on a memorized faith.
- (ii) The Lord's Supper is a fellowship for believers, not a fellowship of believers and unbelievers.
- (iii) The practice of footwashing was to be observed.
- (iv) Ministers (preachers) are appointed by God alone or through the instrumentality of true believers.
- (v) Carnal and unrepentant Christians must be banned from the fellowship of believers.³⁰

Significant is the last article of the document, which states, "In all other articles of our confession, we are in full agreement with Menno Simons."³¹ The earliest official confession of the Molotschna colonists was the Friesisch-Flaemisch confession of 1660, published by the Rudner-

²⁸The 1902 Confession preserves the Anabaptist-Mennonite distinctives, such as oath, nonresistance, foot-washing, nature of the church, and calling of ministers, emphasizing the brotherhood character of the church. See, Confession of Faith of the Mennonite Brethren Church of North America (Hillsboro, Kansas: M. B. Publishing House, n. d.), 47 pp. See also J. A. Toews, ibid., p. 363.

²⁹Supra, p. 112.

³⁰Toews, ibid., pp. 34-35.

³¹Toews, ibid.

weide Mennonite Church in 1853.³² In Chortitza they used the Einlage Confession of Faith, prepared in 1873 by Abraham Unger, a Baptist confession rewritten to include such Mennonite distinctives as footwashing and non-resistance.³³

In recent times several leading Mennonite Brethren historians and theologians have articulated these distinctives.³⁴ There is much overlapping in the same, Perhaps most representative of the Mennonite Brethren stance through its more than a century of history is the statement by historian J. A. Toews, a summary of which follows:

- (i) practical biblicism, turning to the Scriptures, not to construct systems of theology, but to find solutions to spiritual problems;
- (ii) experiential faith, the Christian life beginning with a radical inward renewal effected by a personal faith in Christ as Saviour and Lord;
- (iii) personal witnessing, the responsibility of every member, rather than a select group;
- (iv) Christian discipleship, the essence of new life, affecting ethical behaviour (refraining from drinking, smoking, dancing) and exhibited in nonresistance (pacifism);
- (v) brotherhood emphasis, avoiding overemphasis on the autonomy of the local church, yet preserving the fellowship of equals;
- (vi) evangelism and missions, an integral part of the church, becomes the responsibility of every member, including ministries of relief and welfare;
- (vii) Christ-centred eschatology, believing in a personal return of

³² Ibid., p. 363.

³³ Ibid., p. 366.

³⁴ See F. C. Peters in Your Church and You (Hillsboro, Kansas: M. B. Publishing House, n. d.), pp. 14-15, and in "The Mennonite Brethren Church", in IMH, pp. 221-23. See also A. E. Janzen, Mennonite Brethren Distinctives (Hillsboro, Kansas: M. B. Publishing House, 1966), 31 pp.

Christ, the spiritual kingdom having begun with the first coming.³⁵

Its Sociological Interpretation

Viewed sociologically, there is a decided continuity with the first generation of Anabaptists, as the following similar outline for the analysis indicates:

The basis for dissent. The Mennonite Brethren secession was, as well, a self-conscious movement of dissent sui generis. In a recent study of Mennonite Brethren origins, C. J. Dyck finds five parallels between 1525 (and 1536) and 1860: the issue of morality, church and state relationships, persecution, aberrations, and the sense of mission.³⁶ It might be argued that, if conditions in the state church were such that the Anabaptist dissent of the sixteenth century was warranted, then, by the same token, similar conditions in the larger Mennonite body being such in 1860 also necessitate a movement of dissent.

The perceived ideal. Even as the movement in the sixteenth century was restitutionist in its attempt to recover the primitive church

³⁵Toews, ibid., pp. 368-74. Toews is careful to note the historic roots of the Mennonite Brethren theological position, namely, the Anabaptist bases, and, in a lesser degree, the pietistic and Baptist influences. He also notes such "outside" influences as Fundamentalism and dispensationalism which have affected the theology in the last fifty years. See pp. 363-367, 375-79.

³⁶Dyck, "1525 Revisited? A Comparison of Anabaptist and Mennonite Brethren Origins", unpublished paper presented to the Symposium on Mennonite Brethren History, May 1-3, 1975, at Fresno, California. Dyck is a member of the General Conference Mennonite Church, the body from which the Mennonite Brethren seceded.

model, so the perceived ideal of the founders in 1860 was to return to the New Testament via the path of Menno. Four references are made to Menno in the Document of Secession which concludes with a statement of its being in accord with Menno.³⁷ This was also the appeal of the brethren to the Supervisory Commission in December, 1860:

... We are the seed of the imperishable Word of God, which was preached to us by the Apostles, ... and have become a fruit of the living faith of our beloved founder (Stammvater) Menno Simons ... hence we can rightly call ourselves the genuine descendents of true Mennonitism.³⁸

The separation necessitated. The Mennonite Church in Russia had become another corpus Christianum in which the church was coextensive with society and membership was virtually acquired by birth with all social, economic, or religious privileges enjoyed by virtue of membership of the group. C. J. Dyck admits, "This does not mean that a 'brotherhood type of church'³⁹ could not have survived in the Russian context, but only that it did not."⁴⁰ The Brethren concluded, "Therefore, we herewith completely dissociate ourselves from these decadent churches...."⁴¹

The voluntary aspect. While the new secession was wholly voluntary, the entrance requirement, as with the sixteenth century movement, was a conversion experience and, somewhat later, once Menno's own position

³⁷Toews, ibid., pp. 34-35.

³⁸Ibid., pp. 363-64.

³⁹Robert Kreider's term for "sectarian". See Kreider, "Anabaptist Conception of the Church in the Russian Environment", p. 22.

⁴⁰Dyck, ibid., p. 5. (Underlining is mine.)

⁴¹Toews, ibid., p. 34.

had been re-studied, baptism by immersion.⁴² The growth of such a voluntary movement is possibly the best argument for the validity of such voluntarism.

The role of charisma. As Grebel gave leadership to the Swiss Brethren and Menno to the Dutch Anabaptists, so Eduard Wuest, although Lutheran pietist who never became part of the movement (his death occurred in 1859), helped precipitate the movement through his evangelistic preaching and promotion of conventicles of "brethren". Eminent historian, P. M. Friesen, regarded Menno as the first reformer and Wuest as the second.⁴³ No doubt, Johann Claassen, although disqualified from holding office, was the unofficial leader of the early movement in his negotiations for freedom and recognition with both state and church.⁴⁴

Its democratic structure. The Mennonite Brethren movement was thoroughly egalitarian in which the laity participated in both worship and leadership. The focus on the individual and his personal relation to God was a direct result of Wuest's pietistic emphasis. Opposing the hierarchical control and failure of the ministers of the old church, the new movement also withstood despotism from within, as in the Froehliche Richtung. Yet it believed in electing and ordaining its own leaders as the Document of Secession indicates.⁴⁵

⁴² See Becker, ibid., pp. 70-72. The author, Jacob Bekker, was the first to baptize by immersion.

⁴³ Supra, p. 109.

⁴⁴ Supra, p. 113.

⁴⁵ Supra, p. 118.

Socio-economic status and relative deprivation. Evidence does not support socio-economic deprivation to account for the origin of the movement.⁴⁶ Historian C. J. Dyck agrees, "Economic factors were present but to see these as primary is to commit the same error present in contemporary Marxist historiography about Anabaptism."⁴⁷ Both landowning and influential, wealthy members of the community, as well as the landless and deprived, joined the new movement.

3. The Developments of the Second Generation and Beyond (1885-1925)

With the large-scale migration of Russian Mennonites to the United States and Canada in the 1870's, the story of the Mennonite Brethren after the first generation unfolds itself in two different locales, North America and Russia.

Developments in North America

Mennonite Brethren first came to Canada from the United States, where they had initially settled in Kansas, Nebraska, Minnesota, and South Dakota--some two hundred families coming between 1874 and 1880, mainly from Molotschna and Kuban, but also a few from Chortitza and the Volga and Don river colonies.⁴⁸ Ebenfeld, Kansas, claims the distinction of the first Mennonite Brethren congregation in North America, organized in 1874

⁴⁶ See Toews, ibid., pp. 51-52.

⁴⁷ Dyck, ibid., p. 8. See also, supra, p. 110.

⁴⁸ J. H. Lohrenz, ibid., p. 64.

under the leadership of Elder Peter Eckert, who unsuccessfully attempted an amalgamation with the Krimmer Mennonite Brethren of nearby Gnadenau.⁴⁹ It was in the Ebenezer church at Buhler, Kansas, that Elder Abraham Schellenberg ministered from 1879 onwards and extended his influence as Conference moderator and promoted missions, publication, and education. The Hillsboro congregation, organized in 1881, was to become one of the largest Mennonite Brethren churches with Conference headquarters located there--the foreign missions office there since its inception in 1885, Tabor College established in 1908, and the publishing house between 1909 and 1913. Henderson, Nebraska, hosted the first Conference of Mennonite Brethren churches in America in 1879. It was Mountain Lake, Minnesota, from which Elder Heinrich Voth evangelized among the conservative Mennonites of Canada. South Dakota was the stronghold of the Krimmer Mennonite Brethren churches. From 1890 onwards, the United States Mennonite Brethren extended their frontiers northwards to North Dakota and Montana; westwards to Colorado, California, Oregon, and Washington (in 1937); and southwards to Oklahoma and Texas. To cooperate in missions, publication, and education, and to retain unity in theology and ethics, a Conference was organized, meeting annually from 1879 to 1909, and triennially thereafter. Eventually four district conferences emerged: Southern (Kansas, Oklahoma, Colorado, and Texas), Central (North and South Dakotas, Minnesotas, Nebraska, Michigan, and Montana), Pacific (California, Oregon, and Washington), and Northern (later named Canadian).

⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 66. In 1960, the Krimmer Mennonite Brethren merged with the Mennonite Brethren.

To establish contacts for evangelism, Heinrich Voth (Minnesota) and David Dyck (Kansas) in 1884 first visited the conservative Mennonites in Manitoba, Canada, some 8,000 having immigrated in 1874-80. Voth continued his ministry, establishing the first Mennonite Brethren church in Burwalde (later moved to Winkler), Manitoba, in 1888. From here the witness was extended to Plum Coulee in 1897 and Kronsart in 1898, and Winnipeg in 1907. Workers were sent to Saskatchewan, where congregations were established in the Rosthern area in the North between 1901 and 1918 and the Herbert area in the South between 1904 and 1914. Especially noteworthy is the work of William J. Bestvater of Mountain Lake, as evangelist and Bible teacher in both Winnipeg and Herbert. In 1888 Mennonite Brethren church membership in North America was 1266 with 18 churches.⁵⁰ and in 1905 a membership of 3487 with 59 churches and 54 ordained ministers.⁵¹ By 1924, fifty years after its beginning in North America, there was a total membership of 8,412 with 86 churches and 110 ordained ministers; of these, 1,763 were Canadian with 20 churches and 31 ministers.⁵² These Kanaedier (that is, Canadians, to distinguish themselves from the Russlaender or Russian immigrants of a later time), who were partly assimilated into the North American culture, were soon to interact with the Russlaender. Little wonder, there initially was a cultural gap.⁵³

⁵⁰ Lohrenz, ibid., p. 77;

⁵¹ Ibid., p. 80.

⁵² Ibid., p. 94.

⁵³ See E. K. Francis, ibid., p. 212. See also Toews, ibid. p. 164.

Developments in Russia

The three decades prior to World War I have been referred to as the "Golden Age" of Mennonites in Russia in general, and of Mennonite Brethren in particular.⁵⁴ New colonies appeared in Memrik (1884 with 10 villages), New Samara (1891 with 14 villages), Orenburg (1893 with 21 villages), Omsk (1900 with 58 villages), Terek (1901 with 17 villages), Slavgorod and Barnaul (in 1907 with 51 villages) and Pavlodar (in 1907 with 16 villages).⁵⁵ No longer persecuted and ostracized, Mennonite Brethren became actively involved, often in positions of leadership, in the socio-economic and cultural life of the larger Mennonite community. In 1902 a new Confession of Faith indicates their theological self-consciousness. New cooperative efforts with the Mennonite Church mark this period with regards to education, health and welfare, and alternative service (in lieu of military service). Publication received attention and involvement in foreign missions, its missionaries being sent under the American Baptist organization. Open communion (regardless of church affiliation) was increasingly practiced, marriage was no longer strictly endogamous, and inter-church Faith Conferences were conducted. In 1905, a new fellowship advocating open communion formed the Allianz (Alliance) Church. Those of this group who emigrated to Canada in the 1920's were in time assimilated by the Canadian Mennonite Brethren Church.⁵⁶

⁵⁴Toews, ibid., p. 86.

⁵⁵See Frank H. Epp, Mennonite Exodus, p. 19. The number of villages is for the year 1918.

⁵⁶Toews, ibid., pp. 86-105.

This era of progress and prosperity ended abruptly with World War I and the Bolshevik Revolution. The war tested the Mennonite doctrine of nonresistance. Concession was granted by the church and agreement was effected with the government allowing the noncombatant medical corps (a civilian organization cooperating with the Red Cross) as a form of alternative military service for all able-bodied men up to the age of forty-five. Six thousand men served the corps with equal numbers in the forestry service. Once the revolution broke out, Mennonites reaffirmed their nonresistance stance, yet allowed it to be interpreted privately. As a result, a radical minority took up arms in the Self-Defense Corps (Selbstschutz). Under the roving Makhno, during the years of anarchy from 1918 to 1920, hundreds were killed.⁵⁷ Unsanitary conditions produced by armed forces and robber bands resulted in the spread of typhus, cholera, syphilis, and malaria. Chortitza was especially hard hit, the population declining from 18,000 in 1917 to 13,000 in 1920.⁵⁸ Molotschna and Zagra-dowka suffered similarly. Mennonite relief agencies from Europe and America responded generously to an appeal for help. The result was the inter-Mennonite relief agency, Mennonite Central Committee. Shortly after, in 1922, the Canadian Mennonite Board of Colonization was formed, an inter-

⁵⁷ See Adolf Ehrt, ibid., pp. 116, 113. Ehrt reports 132 dead as a result of World War I and 647 dead as a result of the civil war. Many, in addition, died of famine and typhoid fever.

⁵⁸ John B. Toews, Lost Fatherland (Scottsdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1967), pp. 35-42. For an autobiographical account of the Makhno reign of terror, see Martin Hamma, Aus der alten in die neue Heimat (Winnipeg: The Christian Press, 1971), pp. 37-48. Frank Epp, Mennonite Exodus, p. 37, estimates that over 2,250 of the Mennonite population met death by violence or disease from 1914 to 1921.

Memnonite agency to negotiate and expedite immigration.⁵⁹

Just prior to the extensive emigration from Russia to Canada from 1923 to 1927, in which some 18,000 Mennonites (of various denominations) trekked to Canada, a spiritual renewal, accompanied by cooperative evangelism, swept through the Russian Mennonite villages. Historian J. A. Toews comments rather poignantly:

The immigrants who came to the new world had few earthly possessions, but they brought with them an enriched Christian experience and a new spiritual concern born in the harsh school of human suffering and in the warm atmosphere of religious revival. The Mennonite Brethren from this background who came to Canada had a decisive influence on the future development of their denomination in this country.⁶⁰

4. An Assessment of Change and Continuity after Two Generations (1860-1925)

In his popular study, The Social Sources of Denominationalism, H. Richard Niebuhr maintains, "By its very nature the sectarian type of organization is valid for only one generation."⁶¹ Either Niebuhr's hypothesis is wrong, or the Mennonite Brethren were not sectarian when they immigrated into Canada in large numbers in the mid-1920's.⁶² Change had indeed taken place since their beginnings some sixty-five years earlier,

⁵⁹For a detailed study of emigration of Russian Mennonites in 1920's, see Frank H. Epp, Memnonite Exodus, and John B. Toews, Lost Fatherland.

⁶⁰J. A. Toews, HMBC, p. 115.

⁶¹Niebuhr, Social Sources of Denominationalism, p. 19.

⁶²J. A. Toews estimates that about one-quarter of the 18,000 Mennonites immigrating into Canada from 1923-1927 were Mennonite Brethren. Ibid., p. 120.

but the change was not so radical nor the secularization process so complete that Mennonite Brethren did not bear the major marks of their earlier sectarian stance. The dominant theme of their sectarian dissent after two generations is that of continuity rather than change.

Perhaps the most valid commentary on change during these years would be that of eminent historian P. M. Friesen, who collected data on the Mennonite Brethren for twenty-five years, completing the writing of his voluminous work in 1910, some fifty years after the sect had seceded from the Mennonite church. In his conclusion, Friesen notes the faithfulness of Mennonite Brethren in matters of faith and life (Rechtgläubigkeit, Herzensgläubigkeit) in keeping with their confession of faith.⁶³ At the same time, Friesen recognizes, in view of the advantage of the Mennonite Brethren, the relatively slow spiritual growth, compared to the kirchliche ("churchly") congregations from which they seceded. The chief error, he laments, is their lack of humility and unsparing self-judgment, failing to see the good in the larger Mennonite church. Moreover, in Christian discipleship and church discipline, they fall short of the ideal, the fault lying in a shallow conversion experience. He disagrees with those who decry a general moral decay, but he does deplore the "terrible materialism".⁶⁴ To stem the tide of such secularization, he does

⁶³ Friesen, Geschichte der Alt-Evangelische Mennoniten Bruderschaft in Russland (1789-1910), pp. 767-773. Friesen draws attention to the Confession of Faith in a footnote, p. 768.

⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 771. "Wahr ist aber eine andere Behauptung, naemlich die, dass ein schrecklicher Materialismus, ein leidenschaftliches, ja wildes Jagen nach Reichwerden immer weiter und tiefer um sich greift...." Italics Friesen's.

not endorse further fragmentation nor organization, but simply recommends a new alliance of all believers. He sees two possibilities: isolated believers or groups of believers within large church bodies or believers' churches. Finally, Friesen proposes that besides preaching, Bible study, evangelism, and exercising church discipline, it is the village grade school⁶⁵ which is most instrumental in arresting secularization and the decline of religiosity.

Friesen completed his work prior to the "purging"⁶⁶ of the Mennonite Brethren church from both materialism and moral and spiritual decay, a purging which came through political revolution (in which large numbers were killed), a socio-economic upheaval (with disease, famine, and financial bankruptcy), and spiritual awakening—all just prior to the large-scale emigration to Canada.⁶⁷ It is not surprising, therefore, that Friesen, writing at the height of the "golden era" of "prosperity and progress",⁶⁸ senses the shift of the sect from its original position fifty years earlier. The oppression and persecution of the 1860's, to fall upon the denomination much more intensely in another decade, was to Friesen a

⁶⁵ It is understood by Friesen that the schools were a private venture with Christian teachers. They were "geistliche Vorbereitungsanstalten fuer die Gemeinschaft" (spiritual training centres for the brotherhood).

⁶⁶ This term best seems to describe the purifying of its sectarian stance.

⁶⁷ A. H. Unruh, who completed his Geschichte der Mennoniten-Brue-dergemeinde in 1954, observes that Friesen, as pastor of a Baptist church in Odessa, was too isolated from the Mennonite Brethren churches to provide an objective account, since his information was based upon isolated reports and visits (p. 326).

⁶⁸ These terms are the choice of J. A. Toews, ibid., pp. 86ff.

thing of the past. The denial of civil protection, the threat of banishment, and frequent dismissal of teachers, as a means of ostracism and economic boycott of the early brethren, was also a thing of the past, and, instead, Friesen observed the "terrible materialism", not realizing that shortly war, famine, and revolutionary devastation would change their prosperous lot to that of the dispossessed. The intimate fellowship and informal Bible studies of the early conventicles had been transmuted to a more structured and formal worship service with limited spontaneous participation and primarily systematic teaching and preaching ministries in the burgeoning Mennonite Brethren congregations. The separatism of closed communion was increasingly being questioned by those of more ecumenical sympathies.⁶⁹ And the early vitality was no longer evident. These changes, which were interpreted as secularization (Verweltlichung), were not arrested through an improved school system, as Friesen had hoped, but through unexpected calamities of violence, disease, and famine, and the spontaneous eruption of spiritual revival.

The Mennonite immigrants from Russia in the mid-1920's came as a "purged" sect with all the traces of sectarian vitality which mark the first generation. It is not surprising, then, that there were some cultural differences between these Russlaender and the Kanaedier brethren,⁷⁰ who, also partly secularized through their fifty-year pilgrimage on the American and Canadian frontier, numbered only one-third the immigrant

⁶⁹ It was over this issue that the Allianz movement was formed. Supra, p. 126.

⁷⁰ Supra, p. 125.

influx of Mennonite Brethren. No doubt, the immigrant influence would facilitate the perpetuation of the less prominent sectarian qualities of the Kanaedier. Combining the experiences of the Russlaender and the Kanaedier, one can then isolate the following components of continuity to explain the survival of sectarianism among Canadian Mennonite Brethren in the mid-1920's.

Redefinition of sectarian boundaries. Once again sectarian boundaries were sharply delineated. The abrogation of the privilege of military exemption in 1870 was a major factor in the emigration of Russian Mennonites to America. Among those who emigrated were the forefathers of the Kanaedier.⁷¹ The Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 and its aftermath of religious oppression again became a primary reason for emigration.⁷² Thus, the promise of religious freedom and the firm assurance of exemption from military service reinforced that stance of religious dissent which had been the very raison d'etre of the sectarian group.

The stubborn clinging to nonresistance--more positively viewed, the ethic of love--was rooted in a system of meaning in which the New Testament was the final court of appeal and the ethic of Jesus the model. So also the calamities of the immigrants' last decade in Russia could be legitimated by a theodicy of the suffering church, not simply reliving the 1860's or the 1530's, but the experiences of the first-century church. Their education, vocations, and experiences in Russia not being readily

⁷¹ See E. K. Francis, ibid., pp. 28-36, 201-202.

⁷² See John B. Toews, Lost Fatherland, pp. 71-72; Frank H. Epp, Mennonite Exodus, pp. 39-48; and J. A. Toews, ibid., pp. 120, 157.

transferable to their new environment, the Mennonite Brethren were highly motivated within the guidelines and normative frameworks which legitimated the utmost utility of their new found-freedoms and opportunities. The "Protestant ethic" had found a new market place in this immigrant group.⁷³

Cohesiveness of families and the ethnic group. The solidarity found in both immigrant families and ethnic groups accounts for much of the continuity of sectarianism. Initially settling primarily on farms and homesteads, the immigrant family worked closely together to sustain their livelihood, and the community of immigrants worshipped together to provide for both their religious and social needs.⁷⁴ In addition, the ethnic nature of the group, the German language having been retained by both the Russlaender as well as the Kanaedier Mennonite Brethren,⁷⁵ helped not only to unify the two groups but also to isolate them from their predominantly Anglo-Saxon environment.

Consolidating identities. Fragile identities were strengthened and new identities consolidated through conversion and charisma. The Kanaedier Mennonite Brethren were either immigrants from the American frontier (or descendants of the same) or the result of the evangelistic

⁷³Max Weber, The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism, chapter 5, "Asceticism and the Spirit of Capitalism".

⁷⁴For an immigrant's account of his first experiences of work and worship, see M. Hamm, ibid., p. 71. "Wie waren die Wochen doch so lang! Froh war ich, wenn es Sonntag wurde. Am Sonntag fuhren wir zur Versammlung ... Eine kleine Gruppe Russlaender hatte zum Sonntagnachmittag eine Tanzhalle gemietet, darin sie ihre Andacht pflegten."

⁷⁵J. A. Toews, ibid., p. 159.

work among the conservative Mennonites through such men as Heinrich Voth, David Dyck, and William Bestvater.⁷⁶ The spiritual revival among Mennonites in Russia, in which the Mennonite Brethren played a leading role, resulted in many conversions and increased membership. Gerhard Lohrenz, representing the "old" church (General Conference Mennonite Church), reports as follows:

That many of the old church joined the new Mennonite movement because they shared the rising vision for evangelism together with a longing for deeper spiritual life is self-evident. Thus, while the Mennonite Brethren Church comprised only 4.3 per cent of total Mennonite population in Russia in 1888, they had grown to include 22.5 per cent by 1925.⁷⁷

Such leaders as J. G. Wiens and A. H. Unruh in the Bible school movement, Adolf A. Reimer and Jacob J. Dyck in evangelism and missions, and C. F. Klassen and B. B. Janz in relief and emigration, were greatly instrumental in consolidating the Russian Mennonite Brethren during times of greatest change just prior to their exodus.

Socialization through group worship and formal instruction.

Wherever a nucleus of Mennonite Brethren families moved, there new congregations emerged. By 1924, the Kanaedier had established twenty churches in Manitoba and Saskatchewan, and the incoming Russlaender greatly augmented the strength of these churches and organized new ones. Coming from some thirty-five to forty congregations in Russia,⁷⁸ the new immigrants

⁷⁶ Ibid., pp. 153-160.

⁷⁷ G. Lohrenz, "The Mennonites in Russia", in Legacy of Faith, p. 183. Lohrenz gets his statistics from Adolf Ehrt, ibid., p. 61.

⁷⁸ J. H. Lohrenz, ibid., p. 44. Statistics represent 1910.

were regular in worship and Sunday school, the latter being an innovation brought into the Russian Mennonite Brethren by August Liebig, the German Baptist.⁷⁹ In addition to the weekly worship and education, there were Bible schools, both in Canada and Russia. William Bestvater not only helped young men obtain exemption from military service during World War I, but, after his years of service in Winnipeg (1913-1921), he taught at the Herbert Bible School earlier begun by John F. Harms in 1913. The Tschongraw Bible School in Crimea, Russia, under A. H. Unruh, J. G. Wiens, and G. Reimer, was transplanted to Winkler in 1925 where the same educators taught during the winter months to prepare for lay leadership in the growing Canadian Mennonite Brethren churches. Continuity of the sectarian vitality was facilitated through such socialization programs.

Integration through Conference structures. Almost from the outset, conference sessions, in which delegates from all churches participated, united the Mennonite Brethren in action. In North America sessions were held annually from 1879 to 1909, and triennially thereafter, to conduct such activities as missions, relief, publication, and higher education.⁸⁰ Until 1954, the Canadians were organized as the Northern District, thereafter becoming the Canadian Area Conference with equal status to the United States Area. In Russia conferences had been conducted since 1872. Especially meaningful were the inter-church Bible conferences begun in 1875. So also was the all-Mennonite conference conducted in 1910 to unify

⁷⁹Toews, ibid., p. 217.

⁸⁰J. H. Lohrenz, ibid., pp. 71-77. See also Toews; ibid., 194-215.

Mennonites in giving them a united voice before the government. Its executive, the Kommission fuer Kirchenangelegenheit, served as liaison with the government, and after 1920, its counterpart, the Studienkommission, arranged for relief and emigration. Thus, Mennonite Brethren from Russia were accustomed to both denominational and inter-Mennonite conferences. They were prepared for integration with their fellow sectarians in conference structures on the new Canadian frontier.

Such, then, was the Canadian Mennonite Brethren church in the mid-1920's, somewhat changed from its original sectarian position, but largely retaining its vitality. The stage is set, therefore, to examine more closely the extent to which these five components of continuity provide for sectarian viability in the next fifty years, 1925-1975.

7

DELINEATING BOUNDARIES THROUGH COGNITIVE AND NORMATIVE FRAMEWORKS

The next five chapters test a central hypothesis of this study, namely, that the synthetic process of sacralization contributes to the continuity of sectarianism. To analyse the sacralization process, these chapters isolate the following components of continuity: the boundaries delineated by cognitive and normative frameworks, the cohesion enhanced by family solidarity and ethnicity, the identity consolidated through conversion and charisma, the socialization facilitated through weekly worship and formal instruction, and the integration provided by structural networks and service agencies.¹ To isolate these components does not exhaust the number of variables nor does it maintain that the factors consistently and exclusively synthesize the religious group. Such would be oversimplifying the complex processes at work. Each of the components to be analysed has its own inherent, countervailing forces. For example, the belief system of Mennonite Brethren, while overwhelmingly continuous, has also been subject to change. These chapters examine the degree to which the sacralization has occurred and test the hypothesis that these factors are predominantly sacralizing in their total effect. Moreover, since the level of analysis is that of a group, not an individual nor the whole of society, the generalizations are applicable to the denomination as a whole;

¹Supra, p. 52.

yet they allow for exceptions which apply to individuals within the group. At the same time, one individual, through his repeated leadership role, editorial influence, exegetical sermon, or historical interpretation influences the group as a whole. The cumulative effect of such individuals will be gleaned from the annual conference yearbooks, quarterly or bimonthly religious journals, and weekly or biweekly denominational periodicals. These become the major source of information to explain the reason for the empirical observations.

To explain the need for boundaries, one must first understand the sociological nature of a group.² A group becomes a group through its associations with individuals and disassociation from the rest of society. It becomes real and palpable through a bond of relationships inclusive enough to warrant its definition and exclusive enough to separate it from society. Its identity is defined by the boundaries which separate it both from self-orientations or from the more heterogeneous social whole. The sharpening of boundaries between in-group and out-group sociations helps to consolidate the group's identity. In the case of a sect, the group also acts as a buffer between personal and social identity, providing a competitive advantage between the amorphousness of the larger social whole and the anomy of self-orientation.³ At the same time, such groups provide for an interdependence with personal and social identities. As

²Park and Burgess define a group as "a number of persons whose relationships to each other are sufficiently impressive to demand attention". See Introduction to the Science of Sociology, p. 116.

³Mol, Identity and the Sacred, p. 167.

Hans Mol indicates, "Groups both provide individuals with possibilities for self-fulfilment, and constrict individual autonomy for the sake of group cohesion. Groups both reinforce many of the goals and values of society, and weaken societal cohesion through concerted protests and conflicting systems of meaning."⁴ The Mennonite Brethren Church will be seen as a group which not only successfully competes with personal and social identities, but also espouses the interdependence which all three identities require.

1. Analysing the System of Meaning

Theoretically, the ideology or belief system of a sectarian group can be explained in terms of the meaning it provides for the movement. There needs to be a central value or Archimedean point which anchors a movement and provides the leverage for its encounter with a hostile environment. Talcott Parsons has conveniently applied the Archimedean dictum, "Give me a place to stand and I will move the world", to the transcendental God and the concept of salvation in the Protestant ethic.⁵ Similarly for Mennonite Brethren, the sacralizing mechanism of objectification, that is, the tendency to sum up the variegated elements of mundane existence in a transcendental frame of reference, to use Hans Mol's explanation,⁶ gives not only meaning and order to their religious separate-

⁴ Ibid. (Italics his.)

⁵ Talcott Parsons, The Structure of Social Action (Glencoe: Free Press, 1949), p. 549.

⁶ Mol, ibid., pp. 206-214.

ness, but the continuing dynamic despite ongoing change and accommodation to the world.

Methodologically, the present chapter begins its analysis of such religious beliefs by examining recent data derived from empirical measures.⁷ These data measure the current degree of orthodoxy, evangelicalism, and Anabaptism of representative Canadian Mennonite Brethren. To interpret the apparent retention of belief and doctrine, a flashback through half a century of ecclesiastical records will be made. It will be shown that such sacralization of its transcendental frame of reference provided continuity for the sectarian group beyond the third generation.

Empirical Measures of Belief

Three groups of variables of belief are selected from the Church Member Profile. These variables measure the degree of orthodoxy, fundamentalism, and Anabaptism of Canadian Mennonite Brethren. Since few other similar measures are available for purposes of comparison, the responses of the Canadian Mennonite Brethren are not only compared with the larger Mennonite Brethren sample of North America, but also with the North American sample of the (Old) Mennonite Church and the General Conference Mennonite Church, the two largest Mennonite denominations. Only

⁷ The data are extracted from a Church Member Profile, constructed by Howard Kauffman and Leland Harder, based on a questionnaire of some 342 questions given to 3,591 church members in five Mennonite and Brethren in Christ denominations in U. S. A. and Canada in 1972. Of these, some 300 questions apply to Canadian Mennonite Brethren given to a scientifically selected random sample of 15 local congregations with a sample population of 359. For further information about how the survey was conducted, see Kauffman and Harder, AFCL, Appendix I, pp. 364-385.

Table V-1
Measures of Orthodoxy

B E L I E F	P E R C E N T R E S P O N S E F O R							
	R.C. ⁸ (N=545)	Prot. (N=2326)	Cong. (N=151)	So.Bap. (N=79)	M.C. (N=1202)	G.C. (N=614)	NAMB (N=712)	CMBC (N=359)
God (really exists, no doubts about it)	81	71	41	99	89	86	92	93.5
Jesus (both human & divine, no doubts)	86	69	40	99	91	85	95	96.1
Miracles (supernat- ural, actually happened)	74	57	28	92	92	81	95	96.9
Christ's Return (will actually return to earth)	47	44	13	94	91	83	97	98.3
Satan (personal devil, active in world today)	75	65	36	97	95	86	97	98.6
Life after Death (definitely)	75	65	36	97	93	87	97	98.0
Resurrection (physi- cal, historical fact)	-	-	-	-	92	86	96	97.7

SOURCE: Church Member Profile, 1972; Glock and Stark, 1966.

a few crude comparisons with other than Mennonite denominations can be attempted because of the lack of adequate data from other groups.

Orthodoxy. Table V-1 indicates the percentage of respondents

⁸ Abbreviations are as follows:

- | | | | |
|---------|---|-------|----------------|
| R. C. | = Roman Catholics; | Prot. | = Protestants; |
| Cong. | = Congregational Church (now United Church of Christ); | | |
| So.Bap. | = Southern Baptists; | | |
| M. C. | = (Old) Mennonite Church; | | |
| G. C. | = General Conference Mennonite Church; | | |
| NAMB | = North American Mennonite Brethren (including U. S. A. and Canada) | | |
| CMBC | = Canadian Mennonite Brethren | | |

choosing the most orthodox response, that is, those beliefs which have represented the central tenets of the Christian faith throughout its history. The first four columns of the table include the responses for six similar items of belief taken from the Glock and Stark study.⁹ Although the time and circumstances of the survey by Glock and Stark differ from the Church Member profile, the results constitute an interesting comparison. Significant in the results are the high responses for Mennonite Brethren, very nearly as orthodox as Southern Baptists. If one were to include the Mennonite Brethren who had doubts about God's existence, the total would be as high as Southern Baptists on that variable. The rating for Canadian Mennonite Brethren, given to the first decimal place, is slightly higher than for the North American Mennonite Brethren. The general Conference Mennonites represents that group from which the Mennonite Brethren seceded in 1860. In two items, belief in God and Jesus, they are exceeded by Southern Baptists; in two, belief in miracles and Christ's return, they significantly exceed the Baptists; and in two, belief in Satan and life after death, they slightly exceed. In each response they significantly exceed the General Conference Mennonites, who themselves have high responses compared to other Christian groups.

Fundamentalism. More indicative of sectarianism than the belief in general orthodoxy is the group of variables suggesting fundamentalism. Table V-2 shows the percentage of respondents who gave the most conservative response possible with reference to five doctrines included in the

⁹Glock and Stark; Christian Beliefs and Anti-Semitism, pp. 3-18.

Table V-2
Measures of Fundamentalism

B E L I E F	P E R C E N T R E S P O N S E F O R			
	MC (N=1202)	GC (N=614)	NAMB (N=712)	CMBC (N=359)
Bible (divinely inspired and infallible Word)	84	71	93	96.6
Virgin birth (Jesus was born of a virgin)	89	80	96	98.3
Creation (God created all in six 24-hour days)	53	42	54	52.7
Flood (Noahic flood was universal)	84	71	90	93.0
Eternal punishment (for all who have not accepted Christ)	77	60	85	86.3

SOURCE: Church Member Profile, 1972.

creed of the World Christian Fundamentals Association (1919). Mennonite Brethren rank high in this fundamentalist scale, exceeding considerably the General Conference Mennonites, which again are significantly higher than Lutheran¹⁰ or United Church of Christ.¹¹ Again, except for the ques-

¹⁰In M. Strommen's fundamentalism-liberalism scale, Lutherans had the following percent most orthodox responses for similar questions: Bible-24; Virgin birth-40; Creation-27; and Eternal punishment-37. See M. Strommen, et al, A Study of Generations (Minneapolis: Augsburg Press, 1972), pp. 378-81.

¹¹The United Church of Christ response is based on questions which are more general (e. g. "the Bible is the Word of God" and "hell is a just punishment for sinners"). The percent response to three such questions was as follows: Bible-67; Virgin birth-58; Eternal punishment-17). See T. Campbell and F. Fukuyama, The Fragmented Layman (Philadelphia: Pilgrim Press, 1970), p. 234.

tion on creation, Canadian Mennonite Brethren are more conservative than the North American.

Anabaptism. Indicators of Anabaptism are taken from Kauffman and Harder's scale constructed on the basis of twenty-two norms identified in H. S. Bender's famous "Anabaptist Vision".¹² Table V-3 indicates the

Table V-3
Measures of Anabaptism

B E L I E F	PERCENT OF RESPONDENTS AGREEING OR STRONGLY AGREEING		
	Anabaptists (N=3591)	NAMB (N=712)	CMBC (N=359)
Discipleship: following Jesus' life, ministry taking priority to security	52	52	57.5
Suffering: obedience to Lordship of Christ results in criticism, persecution	72	76	79.1
Baptism: reject paedobaptism	82	86	88.4
Church discipline: needed to restore or in exceptions exclude faltering members	60	75	87.0
Oath: Christian not to swear oath as demanded by civil government	66	64	79.8
Nonresistance: not to take part in war or war-promoting activities	73	54	65.9
Church and state: certain offices in government not for Christians	74	63	70.0
Litigation: disagree that lawsuits are permissible for Christians if legiti- mate claims	36	42	37.8

SOURCE: Church Member Profile, 1972.

¹² Supra, p. 81.

percentage of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing with the given statements which were selected on the basis of an item analysis test.¹³ Mennonite Brethren are compared with the joint response of five Mennonite and Brethren in Christ groups (including Mennonite Brethren). Especially in nonresistance and separation of church and state, they lag behind other Anabaptists. In church discipline, they lead significantly. Ahead in doctrines relating to the believers' church notion, they lag in the practical expression of their Anabaptist distinctives. Canadian Mennonite Brethren are more Anabaptist than their American counterparts, especially in church discipline, the oath, and nonresistance.

The above measures of Mennonite Brethren beliefs do not constitute so much a portrait of the Mennonite Brethren ideal, or even of their Confession of Faith, but that of the real; not what they prescribe, as much as what they in fact believe. They rank among the most orthodox of Christian groups, with the exception of belief in a six-day, 24-hour day creation; they rank high in fundamentalism; and compare favorably with other Mennonites on Anabaptism, although lagging in the practical expression of the same. After one hundred fifteen years as a separate denomination, Mennonite Brethren have retained the most fundamental Christian beliefs as well as their own distinctives. How then does one account for such retention of beliefs?

Explaining the Continuity of Belief

While most theologians disagree over what one ought to believe,

¹³ Kauffman and Harder, *ibid.*, p. 115.

many would surely agree that religious belief itself is central to keeping a religious movement alive. Sociologists recognize the need for a transcultural belief system to provide the Archimedean point. In their study of the nature of religious commitment, Stark and Glock indicate, for the viability of a religious movement, a preference for a tightly-knit supernatural conception of belief to a more diffuse liberal understanding. The latter, they admit, "may be superior theology, but it strikes us as inferior sociology".¹⁴ Leo Driedger has similarly concluded doctrinal beliefs to be a major factor in the differential perception of social issues, the conservative clergymen which he tested being positively associated with morality, discipline, and social control. Doctrinal orthodoxy accounted for more of the differences than did education.¹⁵

The following analysis of continuity of belief among Canadian Mennonite Brethren focuses as much on the process of how the belief concern is expressed and action is precipitated as on the actual beliefs. Rather than analysing the doctrinal formulations, as a theological enterprise might, this study is more concerned with the approach to the articulation of beliefs and seeks to discover why Mennonite Brethren so successfully perpetuated their ideology. Four separate, although not unrelated, answers are attempted.

Restorationist thinking. Labelled by Franklin Littell as "primi-

¹⁴R. Stark and C. Y. Glock, American Piety: The Nature of Religious Commitment, p. 23.

¹⁵Leo Driedger, "Doctrinal Belief: A Major Factor in Differential Perception of Social Issues", Sociological Quarterly, XV (1974), 60-80.

tivism" or "restitutionism",¹⁶ the stance of the Mennonite Brethren in their return to the sixteenth century and, more importantly, to the first century is here referred to as restorationist thinking. From the very beginning, Mennonite Brethren leaders and spokesmen have had a profound consciousness of their moorings in the past, and, as a consequence, their concern has been more with restoring something old than introducing something new. This attitude has lent permanency to their movement. The following instances are but illustrations of such restorationist thinking.

The seceding brethren in 1860 explicitly prefaced and concluded the doctrinal statement within the secession document with a reminder that they were in "full agreement with Menno".¹⁷ In the official confession of faith, adopted by the General Conference in 1902, the authors express their attempt to recover the biblical concept of the church "as it was in the beginning--in the apostolic church".¹⁸ In tracing the heritage of the Mennonite Brethren church through several centuries of dissenters, P. M. Friesen, early Mennonite Brethren historian, states, "Menno Simons, boldly and humbly recovering that 'which was from the beginning', has built an amazingly simple and comfortable house for us, in which we live 'on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, of which Jesus Christ

¹⁶ F. Littell, The Origins of Sectarian Protestantism, pp. 46-50, 79-82.

¹⁷ J. Bekker, Origins, pp. 44, 46.

¹⁸ Glaubensbekenntnis, p. 5. The term "General Conference" here refers to the triennial session of the North American Mennonite Brethren Church.

is the cornerstone".¹⁹ The model for belief was obviously first-century Christianity.

Similar restorationist thinking has characterized the Mennonite Brethren in the last half century. In 1925, in a series of articles in the Mennonitische Rundschau, German religious family weekly, which had been relocated from Scottdale, Pennsylvania, to Winnipeg in late 1923, G. A. Peters responds to the question, "Why am I a Mennonite?" He explains that it is the manner in which Menno understood the Bible, not so much what he himself asserted. "Actually, of first importance to us is not being a Mennonite and then a Christian, but the reverse: first of all one is a Christian, and then, if necessary, a Mennonite. Above all, however, is Christ."²⁰ In 1926 the Mennonitische Rundschau published the address of Russian Mennonite statesman, Benjamin Unruh, on the subject of nonresistance, to an all-Mennonite conference at Halbstadt, Russia, in 1917. This document, read in Canadian Mennonite homes in the mid-twenties was a similar reminder of restorationist thinking. Unruh recognized the reformers as "restoring apostolic Christianity".²¹ Particularly in the doctrine of nonresistance Mennonites exemplified the restitution of the primitive church,

¹⁹P. M. Friesen, Die Alt-Evangelische Mennonitische Bruederschaft in Russland (1789-1910), pp. 40-41. All translations from the German are my own, unless otherwise indicated.

²⁰G. A. Peters, "Warum bin ich ein Mennonite?" Mennonitische Rundschau (hereafter, MR), XLVIII (April 29, 1925), p. 25.

²¹Benjamin Unruh, "Die Wehrlosigkeit", MR, XLIX (July 21, 1926), p. 12.

... according to the spirit of the Gospel and Christ. It is on the spirit and example of Christ that Menno bases his protest against shedding blood and especially capital punishment Jesus Christ has given man a new commandment, has girded their loins with another sword.... That is the profoundest basis of the doctrine of nonresistance. One senses from the Mennonite church fathers that it was their total concern to translate the spirit and practice of Christ into practical life and suppress and destroy every spirit of vengeance.²²

In 1949 a similar concern was expressed by a young theologian, John A. Toews (who in 1975 published the Mennonite Brethren history). In a Canadian Mennonite Brethren official bimonthly youth magazine, he stated, again with reference to nonresistance, that it is not a "Mennonite Doctrine", but a teaching of the Scriptures. "It is not a doctrine which originated with Menno Simons.... The roots of this teaching are found in the Gospel of Christ."²³ He adds, "Nonresistance is not so much a matter of certain principles as a matter of a definite relationship to the person of Christ. Nonresistance has its source, its centre, its goal, in Christ."²⁴ At the time of its centennial, Cornelius Wall, then instructor at Mennonite Brethren Bible College, viewed the Mennonite Brethren church as a persisting religious movement precisely because of its recourse to a sound basis ("gesunde Grundlage").

The churches of the Mennonite Brethren Conference are based on the foundation, "Jesus Christ", the Son of the Living God, crucified, risen, heaven-ascended, and seated at the right hand of God. From the pulpits of our churches faithful brethren preach about

²²Ibid., p. 13.

²³J. A. Toews, "Nonresistance in the Light of the Old and New Testament Scriptures", Konferenz-Jugendblatt (hereafter, K-J), V (June-Aug., 1949), p. 13.

²⁴Ibid., p. 15.

him with firm conviction.... The Conference of Mennonite Brethren churches recognizes the need to remain on this foundation.²⁵

A new generation of theologians and spokesmen articulated likewise. Both the first editor and present editor of the English denominational weekly, begun in 1962, reflect this sentiment. In 1962, Rudy Wiebe, today a recognized Canadian novelist, introduced a series of four articles on Anabaptist distinctives by the former editor of the independent weekly, Mennonite Observer (also Mennonite Brethren), with the following conclusion:

The apostolic church, not the Anabaptist church, is still our ideal pattern, for it was the former, not the latter, which God saw fit to inscripturate in His holy Word. But this does not blind us to the great strengths of the Anabaptist church, which we must recognize in humble gratitude. And though the sixteenth century Anabaptists lived in much different circumstances than we, when modern democracy and technology were not even wildly dreamed of, yet they had a foundation which stands as firm in today's rocking world as it did in theirs: "There can be no other foundation beyond that which is already laid: Jesus Christ himself". We must learn how they built on this foundation.²⁶

In 1966, editor Harold Jantz reflected on "Primitive Christianity", asserting,

Any dynamic Christian fellowship is characterized to a greater or lesser degree by the primitive forms which were practiced in the apostolic church. The Mennonite Brethren movement derived much of its strength from Bible study and fellowship cells patterned very closely after the New Testament model.... At least two fellowship groups that have formed in Mennonite Brethren circles in recent months have followed a similar pattern.²⁷

²⁵ C. Wall, "Die Mennoniten-Brudergemeinde--eine bleibende Gemeinde", The Voice (hereafter Voice), VIII (Nov.-Dec., 1959), p. 16.

²⁶ Rudy Wiebe, "Why Bother with Mennonite History?" MBH, I (Nov. 23, 1962), p. 3.

²⁷ Harold Jantz, "Primitive Christianity", MBH, V (April 8, 1966), p. 3.

Such restorationist thinking by editors of weekly denominational papers greatly influence the membership at large.

Similarly, Abram Dueck, instructor in historical theology at Mennonite Brethren Bible College, sees the Mennonite Brethren Church as "the result of the application of the restitution method".²⁸ Most recently, a young Mennonite Brethren theologian at Tabor College (also a Mennonite Brethren school, at Hillsboro, Kansas) depicts the Anabaptists as "supremely a movement for the recovery of Jesus and His kingdom as the center of faith and church", and challenges them to "flesh out the New Testament heritage" from the present decadent Mennonite Brethren reality.²⁹ These voices of Mennonite statements, theologians, editors, and historians have inspired Mennonite Brethren through the past half century to continue to look back upon Menno and the first-century church for its pattern.

Biblicist orientation. More precisely, it was through a biblicist orientation that the New Testament vision was recaptured. Such biblicism constitutes a second explanation for the continuity of belief. A mid-century Mennonite Brethren youth publication, Das Konferenz-Jugendblatt of 1949, pictures a men's quartette, Bibles clasped in outstretched arms, singing "Cling to the Bible, my Boy" at the Canadian conference held at Coaldale.³⁰ This portrait is symbolic, not only of mid-twentieth

²⁸ Abram Dueck, "Retrospect or Prospect: Reformatio or Restitutio", Direction, I (April, 1972), 43.

²⁹ John E. Toews, "Where to, Mennonite Brethren...?" The Christian Leader, XXXIX (Jan. 6, 1976), p. 2.

³⁰ K-J, V (June-Aug., 1949), p. 6.

century Mennonite Brethren stance, but representative of its entire 115-year history. Such biblicism is not necessarily to be understood in terms of a mechanistic view of inspiration nor a hyper-literal interpretation of the Bible, but rather that the Bible was taken seriously and used extensively in defining a theological and ethical position. In earlier years the study of the text itself received greater attention, while in recent years more attention, especially in theological circles, has been devoted to a study about the Bible--canonicity, biblical authority, and hermeneutics.

Among the numerous indications of such biblicism, the practice of informal Bible studies, which gave rise to the movement itself,³¹ has been most continuous. These Bibelstunden were conducted weekly and became an integral part of the life of the church.³² Discussion of the text and prayer meetings were incorporated into these studies.³³ H. H. Janzen, influential Canadian leader during mid-century, laments the disappearance of these studies.³⁴ Yet, they continue to the present. The 1970 statistical report indicated that 94 of the 124 Canadian M. B. churches observed a Wednesday night program, in addition to women's societies and boys' and

³¹Supra, p. 110.

³²H. H. Janzen, "Unsere Bibelstunden", Voice, II (Nov.-Dec., 1953), 10. "Wir koennen uns unser Gemeindeleben ohne diese Bibelstunden garnicht denken." See also, Voice, III (Jan.-Feb., 1954), 9-12.

³³For further description of the Bibelstunden, see F. C. Peters, "Movements of Early Mennonite Brethren Teaching", Voice, IX (July-Aug., 1960), 1, and A. J. Klassen, "The Bible in the Mennonite Brethren Church", Direction, II (April, 1973), 45, 49.

³⁴Janzen, ibid., p. 10.

girls' clubs.³⁵ And the 1975 record shows that there were a total of 358 prayer/Bible study groups in the 122 reporting churches, an increase from 275 in the previous year.³⁶ Apparently Bible studies continue to be a vital part of church life among Canadian Mennonite Brethren.

Similarly, Bible conferences (Bibelbesprechungen), frequently a joint effort of several churches, provided for annual intensive studies of longer passages of Scripture or expositions of a book of the Bible. For example, the Mennonitische Rundschau of 1929 publicized a Bibelkonferenz at Winkler for June 8-10. This conference invited neighboring churches and visiting ministers from other than Mennonite Brethren churches. The conference began on a Monday evening and continued with three sessions daily on Tuesday and Wednesday. A. H. Unruh, Mennonite Brethren teacher just having come from Tschongraw Bible School in Crimea, exegeted II Corinthians. Other ministers and educators dealt with educational themes.³⁷ While the Bibelbesprechung has largely been abandoned, the Elmwood Mennonite Brethren Church, Winnipeg, has retained this conference as an annual inter-Mennonite event for the post-Christmas holiday season. It conducted its forty-fifth conference in 1975. In its heyday in 1957, it included such prominent Mennonite Brethren ministers as A. H. Unruh, J. A. Toews, C. C. Peters, D. Ewert, and F. C. Peters, with reports of

³⁵ Year Book of the Canadian Conference of the Mennonite Brethren Churches of North America (hereafter YB), 1970, p. 132.

³⁶ YB, 1975, p. 112.

³⁷ MR, XLVIII (June 3, 1925), p. 6. Participants in this conference included P. H. Neufeld, H. H. Ewert, Abram Peters, Benj. Ewert, D. Schulz, Gustav Penner, Herman Neufeld, and Jakob Siemens.

record crowds. The Mennonite Observer reported as follows:

Visitors from all of Manitoba, representing almost every Mennonite group, nearly filled the large church for the sessions during the day, while the evening meetings drew capacity crowds.³⁸

Reflecting on the "Legacy of the Elmwood Bible Conference", David D. Duerksen, English teacher and frequent contributor to periodicals, writes from the "divide of generations" and admonishes the younger generation to "retain the sincere piety and the unsophisticated love and reverence for the Bible as the inspired Word of God so evident in our elders".³⁹

A further institutionalized form of this biblicism is the Bible school movement. Inheriting its models both from Russia and United States, this movement (to be elaborated upon in chapter eight) has continuously influenced the life of the church from the establishment of the first Bible school in Herbert in 1915 to the present. In 1975 there were 410 Mennonite Brethren students registered in post-high school Bible studies in three Mennonite Brethren Bible schools.⁴⁰

Most persistent, however, in the continued influence upon the belief structure is the biblical preaching within the Mennonite Brethren churches. Besides the weekly preaching service, which the central place of the pulpit in Mennonite Brethren church architecture symbolizes, the

³⁸ Mennonite Observer (hereafter MO), IV (Jan. 3, 1958), pp. 1, 4.

³⁹ David D. Duerksen, "The Legacy of the Elmwood Bible Conference", MBH, VII (Jan. 12, 1968), pp. 7, 18-19.

⁴⁰ YB, 1975, p. 111. This statistic does not include non-M. B. students. One of the three schools is partly supported by G. C. Mennonites. It should be noted as well that, in addition, 151 Mennonite Brethren young people attended non-Mennonite Brethren Bible schools.

itinerant ministry of J. W. Reimer (1860-1948), A. H. Unruh (1878-1961), and David Ewert (1922-) were known for their exegetical preaching.⁴¹ More of the impact of biblical preaching will be noted in chapter eight.

Less obvious, but significant in impact, is the biblicism apparent in theological and ethical studies for publication in conference journals, addresses at faith study conferences, and popular treatises for annual conference sessions or for family periodicals. For example, Die Antwort, monthly publication of Winkler Bible School from May, 1934, to December, 1935, was specifically focused on the content and manner of communicating Scripture, as the sub-titles for the following captions for the journal indicated:

Theologischer Teil: Was sagt die Schrift?
(Theological Section: What do the Scriptures say?)

Homiletischer Teil: Wie predigen wir die Schrift?
(Homiletical Section: How do we preach from the Scriptures?)

Sonntagschularbeit: Wie leben wir die Schrift?
(Sunday School Work: How do we practice what Scriptures teach?)

Jugendarbeit: Wie wecken wir das Interesse fuer die Schrift?
(Youth Work: How do we awaken interest in the Scriptures?)

Aus Welt und Zeit: Was zeigt uns die Schrift?
(Concerning the World and the Present Time: What do the Scriptures show?)⁴²

When the journal discontinued, the editor, A. H. Unruh, assured the reading

⁴¹In a tribute by A. A. Toews, Reimer is viewed as the "bedeutendste Prediger" and "groesste Autoritaet in der Bibelauslegung." See A. H. Unruh Geschichte, p. 826-27. Unruh adds a personal note, "Er war bedeutend in der Kraft der Predigt, weniger in Form und Inhalt." For a biographical tribute to A. H. Unruh, see D. Ewert, Stalwart for the Truth (Winnipeg: The Christian Press, 1975).

⁴²See Die Antwort, I (May, 1934, and July, 1934).

audience that the contents of the publication would be continued in the Mennonitische Rundschau.⁴³ In a keynote address to the Canadian Conference session in 1961, frequent moderator (current President of Wilfred Laurier University) F. C. Peters, for example, urged the correct interpretation of Scriptures, as well as a relevant application and personal appropriation, as the basis for a life of sanctification.⁴⁴ At a Faith and Ethics Conference, Dr. Peters again assumed "that the question of authority in Christian ethics has been settled by establishing the inscripturated Word of God as the absolute authority".⁴⁵ Similarly Dr. David Ewert, long-time professor at Mennonite Brethren Bible College, argued in the College publication, The Voice, that the locus of authority, "the constant factor that the church uses as her standard of judgment", for "Teaching Absolutes in a Day of Relativities" is the Scriptures.⁴⁶ The concern in more recent times has to do with the inspiration, the authority, the use of the Bible, and how the Bible came to us as sacred writing.⁴⁷

⁴³ Ibid., II (Dec., 1935), p. 3.

⁴⁴ F. C. Peters, "Die Heiligung im Lehren und Leben der Gemeinde", YB, 1961, p. 5. "Die Grundlage des Heiligungslebens: korrekte Schriftauslegung, Zeitgenossene Schriftanwendung, und persoenliche Schriftaneignung."

⁴⁵ F. C. Peters, "Consensus and Change in Our Brotherhood", insert in MBH, VII (Jan. 12, 1968), p. 6.

⁴⁶ D. Ewert, "Teaching Absolutes in a Day of Relativities", Voice, XIV (Jan.-Feb., 1965), 12-13.

⁴⁷ Articles presented at faith conferences and in family periodicals: V. Adrian, "The Inspiration of Scripture", Faith and Ethics Conf., Reedley, 1967; F. C. Peters, "The Bible as Authority", Voice, XII (Sept.-Oct., 1963), 16-18; Elmer Martens, "The Use of the Old Testament in the Church", MBH, XIII (Oct. 18, 1974); D. Ewert, "How the Bible Came to Us", series in MBH, XIII (Jan. 11 - May 3, 1974).

The immediate impact of such biblicism is apparent in the increased lay Bible reading. Early Mennonite Brethren were reportedly recognized by the bulging coat pocket which contained a well-worn Bible.⁴⁸ Such "radical reading" of the Bible had both its positive and negative effects.⁴⁹ Daily reading and weekly study of the Bible resulted in informal discussion of its truths; memorization allowed for ready application personally or more forceful "witness" encounters using the exact Scripture quotation. In addition, however, it encouraged subjective understanding, literal interpretation, and arbitrary proof-texting.⁵⁰ Whatever the beliefs such biblicism fostered, it strengthened the cognitive framework and permitted sharper delineation of group identities.

Voluntarism. A third factor accounting for the persistence of religious belief is the vitality and renewal that comes through the voluntary association with a believers' church. Both the initial commitment and repeated deliberate, individual affirmations of the beliefs reinforced the boundaries of the religious group. This voluntarism has explicitly sociological dimensions: experiential faith is begun through a conversion experience; voluntary association is publicly witnessed through believers' baptism; continued membership requires active participation; and lapse of vitality or infidelity necessitates the exercise of discipline, including

⁴⁸ Walter Wiebe, et al, Century of Grace and Witness (Hillsboro, Kansas: M. B. Publishing House, 1960).

⁴⁹ J. A. Toews, "Die Gemeinde radikalen Bibelleser", Voice, IV (May-June, 1955), 11-14.

⁵⁰ D. Ewert, "Reflections on Bible Reading in the Mennonite Brethren Church", Voice, IX (Jan.-Feb., 1960), 3-6.

excommunication, by the group.

Prerequisite to the voluntarism associated with Mennonite Brethren church membership is repentance and regeneration, in keeping with the sixteenth-century Anabaptists and the nineteenth-century Mennonite Brethren emphasis. At the time of its centennial, the editor of the Canadian Mennonite, an inter-Mennonite publication, recognized the Mennonite Brethren for their "consistent emphasis on regeneration and the believers' church".⁵¹ It is not surprising, then, that the editor of Mennonite Brethren Herald, Harold Jantz, commenting on the legitimacy of denominations, sees the role of the Mennonite Brethren Church "to witness to the Mennonite community of the need for a decisive conversion, a turning to Christ which was followed by genuinely transformed living".⁵² As will be shown in chapter seven, conversion has been one of the continuous emphases, despite the countervailing threat of institutionalism in which members of the third and fourth generations have retained the form of conversion but lost its meaning.⁵³

Symbolic of regeneration (referring to the spiritual transforma-

⁵¹ Frank Epp, "A Century of Life", The Canadian Mennonite, VII (Jan. 2, 1959), p. 2. Significant is the fact that Dr. Epp, member of the General Conference Mennonite church, quotes from his editorial at the 1975 symposium on Mennonite Brethren history (see unpublished paper, "Keeping Body and Soul together in Church History", Symposium on Mennonite Brethren History, Fresno, Calif., May 1-3, 1975).

⁵² Harold Jantz, "For Denominations", MBH, III (Sept., 1964), p. 3.

⁵³ J. A. Toews warns in the centennial year of the dangers of the "third generation shibboleths" in which only the "shadow" of the real was left. See "Christ's Challenge to Re-orientation and Restoration", Voice, X (Jan.-Feb., 1961), 4-6.

tion at the time of conversion) and proof of the voluntary commitment to the group is believers' baptism, given only after a test of eligibility. Such tests, however, were not so much an examination of one's knowledge of beliefs (as in a test of a Catechism) as they were of the genuineness of the conversion experience and of a continuing Christian life.⁵⁴ Most emphatic, therefore, for this Anabaptist denomination is the rejection of infant baptism. Not only has this continued to be the official position of the Canadian Conference according to its Confession of Faith,⁵⁵ but also for the inter-Mennonite community.⁵⁶ Regarding the admission into church membership of those baptized by a mode other than immersion, there has been increased openness of the Canadian Mennonite Brethren Church, and a limited form of membership was approved by the General Conference decision of 1963.⁵⁷ For full membership privileges, however, such as in

⁵⁴ See Victor Toews, "Aussprache und Pruefung bei unseren Tauffesten", Voice, VI (July-Aug., 1957), 7-9, and Harold Jantz, "Questions before Baptism", MBH, III (Nov., 1964), p. 3.

⁵⁵ Confession of Faith of the Mennonite Brethren Church of North America, American edition (Hillaboro, Kansas: M. B. Publishing House, n. d.), p. 22. See also revised Confession of Faith of 1975 in General Conference YB, 1975, p. 17.

⁵⁶ J. Warns, "Kennt das Neue Testament die Kindertaufe?" MR, I (Aug. 10, 1927), p. 2.

⁵⁷ GCRYB, 1963, pp. 38, 39. For clarification of the nature of this resolution, see F. C. Peters, "What We Have Done in the Matter of Baptism: A Clarification", MBH, II (Sept. 13, 1963), p. 6, in which he reaffirms the church's stance on believers' baptism. "We cannot open our doors to such who are not able to give personal testimony to their having been baptized (though not by immersion) upon conversion." This question was already raised in 1927 at the Canadian Conference. See YB, 1927, p. 27, 28.

ordination, immersion continues to be required.⁵⁸

Voluntarism does not suggest that church membership is optional, for with the decision to be baptized one also decides to join the local church. Only believers, therefore, who are baptized upon confession of faith can be members, and generally baptism is refused if church membership does not follow forthwith. This underscores the importance of the Christian community affirming the Christian experience, even as Berger and Luckmann have observed.

To have a conversion experience is nothing much. The real thing is to be able to keep on taking it seriously; to retain a sense of plausibility. This is where the religious community comes in. It provides the indispensable plausibility structure for the new reality. In other words, Saul may have become Paul in the aloneness of religious ecstasy, but he could remain Paul only in the context of the Christian community that recognized him as such and confirmed the "new being" in which he now located this identity.⁵⁹

Mennonite Brethren, however, insist upon church membership not merely for sociological reasons, but because of their biblical understanding of the church to be a body of believers who have consciously entered into that fellowship and continue actively to participate. This concern for a biblical "Gemeindegrieff" has repeatedly been voiced during the course of the last fifty years. Marvin Hein, pastor of one of the largest Mennonite

⁵⁸ The limitation of such partial membership which was not transferable was contested by John H. Redekop in "Church Membership and Local Autonomy", MBH, III (Oct., 1964), p. 2, and eventually changed to enable transfer. See GCYB, 1972, p. 10. For further discussion of this question, see MBH, VII (1968), Jan. 12 (p. 2), Feb. 2 (pp. 18-20), March 22 (pp. 2, 18), and April 12 (p. 2).

⁵⁹ P. Berger and T. Luckmann, The Social Construction of Reality, p. 158. (Italics theirs.)

Brethren churches, addressing a study conference on "Church Membership", accented the need of identifying with a covenanting community, "individuals bound into a corporateness, so that the ingredients of fellowship can be supplied and the process of mutual sharing can take place in the believing community".⁶⁰ Some sixteen years earlier, J. A. Toews, professor of historical theology at Memmonite Brethren Bible College, in a keynote address to the Canadian Conference made a three-fold appeal to arrest the decline of religion during the crisis time of the third generation. He urged the retention of a biblical concept of salvation, a biblical concept of the church, and a biblical concept of missions. As threat to the biblical understanding of the church, he cited the loss of influence in the teaching of the church, the neglect in church nurture and discipline, and the abandonment of separatism. For Toews, retention of beliefs goes hand in hand with church discipline and separation from the world, as his ideal for the church suggests: "Die Gemeinde sollte eine Gemeinde der Gläubigen, eine 'Ecclesia' (Herausgerufene) sein, die in Absonderung von der Welt unter der Herrschaft Christi ihre Mission erfüllen sollte".⁶¹ It is this emphasis upon separatism which helped preserve beliefs.

Separatism. A fourth approach to a worldview which has helped to perpetuate a tightly-knit belief system is that of separatism, that is, a perceived disparity between the church and the world. The resulting dis-

⁶⁰ Marvin Hein, "Church Membership: Its Essence and Necessity", insert in MBH, X (Nov. 19, 1971), pp. 21-26.

⁶¹ J. A. Toews, "Die Konferenzbotschaft", K-J, XI (July-Aug., 1955), 6-8.

sent was uniquely part of the Anabaptist vision of reality, which George H. Williams has well recognized.

... The whole Western world, not only the direct descendents of the Continental Anabaptists, not alone even the larger Protestant community, but all who cherish Western institutions and freedoms must acknowledge their indebtedness to the valor and the vision of the Anabaptists who glimpsed afresh the disparities between the church and the world, even when the latter construed itself as Christian.⁶²

The Mennonite Brethren had seceded from the larger Mennonite body in 1860 in order to separate genuine believers from nominal or non-believers, especially for purposes of intimate Christian fellowship, such as in the Lord's Supper.⁶³ That Mennonite Brethren in Canada continued this separatist stance is apparent at the very first Canadian Conference held in Herbert, Saskatchewan, June 27 and 28, 1910. At this occasion, one of the pioneer ministers, Rev. Jacob Loepp of Dalmeny, preached on separation from the world: "Stellet euch nicht dieser Welt gleich".⁶⁴ Subsequent decades of Canadian Mennonite Brethren history retained this motif.

Frequently the separatist emphasis was achieved by explicating the evils of society or the seriousness of the present era. For example, on December 31, 1924, an article in the Mennonitische Rundschau, entitled "Der Ernst der gegenwaertigen Zeit", rehearses the Russian revolution, the increased poverty in Europe, unemployment in America, and the decadent

⁶²G. H. Williams, Spiritual and Anabaptist Writings, p. 25.

⁶³Supra, pp. 111, 121.

⁶⁴YB, 1910, p. 4. A resolution followed in the same conference requesting that the sermon be published in the Zionsbote, official organ of the North American Mennonite Brethren churches at that time.

spiritual condition of the world.⁶⁵ The same evil age ("boese Zeit") is prominent in A. H. Unruh's article in Die Antwort in 1934, "Die gegenwaertige Zeit im Lichte der Bibel", in which he characterizes the era as that of the last times with an increase of evil ("das Geheimnis der Bosheit").⁶⁶ Understandably, World War II gave occasion to test the separatism of Mennonites.⁶⁷ A series of articles on war--its causes, God's sovereignty in war, the people of God and God's attitude to war--was published during the early months of the war.⁶⁸ During the darkest hours of the war, another series was published to give direction and comfort to Christians.⁶⁹

The post-World War II decade concentrated on another phase of separatism: worldliness. The emphasis was especially directed at youth and focused particularly on entertainments of the world. Rarely was materialism or economic self-sufficiency or failure to speak to issues of social injustice called into question. The youth magazine, Das Konferenz-Jugendblatt, was a helpful vehicle for such socialization. In an histori-

⁶⁵ A. Kr. (extent of identification), "Der Ernst der gegenwaertigen Zeit", MR, XLVII (Dec. 31, 1924), p. 4.

⁶⁶ A. H. Unruh, "Die gegenwaertige Zeit im Lichte der Bibel", Die Antwort, I (July, 1934), 83-84.

⁶⁷ Infra, p. 175.

⁶⁸ J. H. Janzen, "Ursachen des Krieges", MR, LXIII (March 27, 1940); "Gottes Walten im Kriege", MR, LXIII (March 27, 1940); "Gottes Volk im Krieg", MR, LXIII (April 10, 1940); "Gottes Stellung zum Krieg", MR, LXIII (April 17, 1940).

⁶⁹ J. B. Epp, "Licht und Trost aus der Offenbarung fuer unsere dunkle Zeit", MR, LXV (March 18, 1942 to Sept. 9, 1942).

cal interpretation of the Mennonite church, G. Lohrenz reminded Mennonite youth of the influences of the non-Mennonite world which the scattered people in Canada encountered.⁷⁰ A sermon by A. H. Unruh, entitled "Die Gleichstellung mit der Welt", based on Romans 12:1, defined the world and worldliness, Satan having devised means for all types of people. After illustrating a number of such means—intimate friendships with non-believers, entertainments, business ventures, learning pursuits, and materialism—Unruh suggests two factors which can provide guidance for the believer: a conversion experience and a worthy calling.⁷¹ A sermon on the same subject and text was published two years later by H. H. Janzen, then president of Mennonite Brethren Bible College.⁷² A. A. Toews queried youth as to the legitimacy of a separatist stance, and answered questions relating to Mennonite conformity, separatism, and withdrawal from society.⁷³ Typically, the last feature article of the last issue of the Konferenz-Jugendblatt was entitled, "Love not the World".⁷⁴

A younger generation of theologians likewise retained this theme

⁷⁰G. Lohrenz, "Etwas zu Unserer Geschichte", K-J, VI-VII (April, 1951), pp. 50-51. "Wir leben in einer uns noch fremden Umgebung.... Kein Wunder, dass fremde Sprache, fremde Weltanschauung, u. auch fremde Lebensart mit Gewalt in unsere Heime draengen."

⁷¹A. H. Unruh, "Die Gleichstellung mit der Welt", K-J, VII (May-Aug., 1951), pp. 3-8.

⁷²H. H. Janzen, "Und stellet euch nicht dieser Welt gleich", K-J, IX-X (Sept., 1953-Feb., 1954), p. 24.

⁷³A. A. Toews, "Ist unsere Absonderung berechtigt?" K-J, VIII (Sept.-Oct., 1952), pp. 3-5.

⁷⁴H. H. Voth, "Love not the World", K-J, (March-June, 1957), pp. 29-30.

in more academic journals. Biblical theologian, David Ewert, provided a New Testament word study on "The World",⁷⁵ and Anabaptist historian, J. A. Toews, lamented the neglect in the emphasis of a distinctive doctrine of the church and suggested as one of the remedies a greater understanding of separatism.⁷⁶ Toews provided a theological and historical framework for the conflicting issues of church and state.⁷⁷ F. C. Peters similarly addressed himself to the students and academic world in his sermon on "Living in the World as Strangers".⁷⁸

The dilemma of the separated church in an evil world has occupied Mennonite Brethren writers and theologians to the present time. Former editor, Rudy Wiebe, argued for unity, rather than uniformity, at the all-Mennonite World Conference and for the retention of sectness or separate-ness to achieve the purpose of the Mennonite Brethren witness in the world. Wiebe concluded his editorial as follows: ●

Can we, as a separate church, witness more completely on the basis which the 1860 reformers took: the Bible as authority, the personal, living faith of each member, a life of personal holiness and

⁷⁵D. Ewert, "Some New Testament Teachings on 'the World'", Voice, III (Jan.-Feb., 1954), 6-9.

⁷⁶J. A. Toews, "Mangelhafte Betonung der konfessionellen Eigenart in unserer religiösen Erziehung", Voice, II (July-Aug., 1953), 21-23. "Die Absonderung der Gläubigen von der Welt ist auch eine Wahrheit, die nicht stark genug betont wird. Gerade auf dieser Linie wird der Kampf immer heisser...."

⁷⁷J. A. Toews, "A Separated Church", Voice, VI (March-April, 1957), 2-5.

⁷⁸F. C. Peters, "Living in the World as Strangers", Voice, XI (July-Aug., 1962), 1-3.

witness combined with church witness and discipline. If so, there remains a need for our separateness; if not, then we better begin talks on unity.⁷⁹

His successor, Harold Jantz, has repeatedly depicted the church over against an unbelieving society. Writing in preparation for a Canadian Conference to be convened in an arena in St. Catharines, he stated,

The theme of the convention, "Separated unto God for Effective Witnessing," will strike a unique tone in the setting in which it will be expounded. It is precisely in the many entanglements that the arena symbolizes that we as Christians are seeking to understand the meaning of separation unto God.... The question will be on my mind whether we can enter into dozens of different vocations and professions and still practice the separated life which will give us a united church witness.... What does "separation unto God" have to do with political parties, labour movements, community associations and clubs, partnerships with non-believers, our friendships with non-believers, or our identification with the great power structures of our time be they financial, social, governmental or intellectual?⁸⁰

Separatism, by now, had seemingly gained new aggressive overtures, not so much withdrawal from the world as confrontation with the world. The subsequent conference messages on separation bear out this emphasis.⁸¹ At the North American General Conference, held in Vancouver in 1969, moderator F. C. Peters addressed the assembly under the theme, "Quo Vadis: Mennonite Brethren Church?" In outlining the general purpose of the church, Peters accented the need to sustain the world, rebuke the world, and re-

⁷⁹Rudy Wiebe, "Part of Something Bid", MBH, I (Aug. 24, 1962), p. 4.

⁸⁰Harold Jantz, "Separated unto God for an Effective Witness", MBH, V (May 27, 1966), p. 3.

⁸¹At the 1966 Conference in St. Catharines, four sermons were preached on the conference theme by J. A. Froese, A. J. Neufeld, H. H. Janzen, and H. J. Brandt. See YB, 1966, pp. 7-14.

deem the world.⁸² This was not an introversionist stance, but an aggressive, conversionist approach.

Thus, in 1975 the Canadian Mennonite Brethren Church was still firmly committed to its strongly orthodox, decidedly evangelical, and distinctly Anabaptist stance despite the many environmental and attitudinal changes. It has successfully delineated cognitive boundaries through its persistently restorationist thinking, its stubbornly biblicist orientation, its voluntary believers' church understanding, and its unchanging separatist stance.

2. Analysing the System of Ethics

With such insistence upon a believers' church and separatist stance, Anabaptists actually expect that being a Christian ought to make a difference in the ethical life of the church member, differences that are visible enough to be empirically measurable. Mennonite Brethren in particular have been known for their prescriptions and proscriptions. Does a further analysis of how Mennonite Brethren make ethical decisions indicate a legalistic moralism? Does the high priority for ethics on a personal level carry over to social ethics, or are Mennonite Brethren to be grouped with those evangelicals who have been principally concerned with individualistic salvation rather than (or even at the expense of) being concerned with social injustices? The remainder of the chapter will speak to these questions.

⁸² F. C. Peters, "Quo Vadis: Mennonite Brethren Church", GCYB, 1969, pp. 123-24.

Empirical Measures of Ethics

The following data on moral issues and social ethics are taken from the Church Member Profile. Such moral issues are selected on which Mennonite Brethren have taken a particular stand or with which they have wrestled in recent times.

Table V-4 indicates the percentage of respondents answering "always wrong". Mennonite Brethren are generally seen to be more restric-

Table V-4
Moral Issues

I S S U E S	PERCENT RESPONDING "ALWAYS WRONG"			
	MC (N=1202)	GC (N=614)	NAMB (N=712)	CMBC (N=359)
Drinking alcoholic beverages (moderately)	56	35	51	52.5
Smoking tobacco	66	50	76	79.9
Use of hard drugs (LSD, heroin, etc.)	97	97	99	99.4
Attending movies rated for adults and children	19	10	25	26.4
Attending movies rated for adults	54	33	55	52.4
Premarital sexual intercourse	85	79	92	95.8
Extramarital sexual intercourse	86	86	86	86.5
Gambling (betting, gambling machines)	80	66	74	78.6
Social dancing	47	26	57	64.7
Reckless driving	88	91	90	91.0
Income tax evasion (not reporting all)	90	89	94	96.1

SOURCE: Church Member Profile, 1972.

tive than the General Conference Mennonites, from whom they seceded, but roughly similar to the American Mennonite Church which had its origin in Switzerland and Germany. The greatest difference with General Conference Mennonites are in drinking, smoking, movies, dancing, and premarital sexual intercourse. Several of these practices have been measured which the forefathers objected to at the time of secession, namely, drinking and smoking. On issues such as hard drugs, extramarital sexual intercourse, reckless driving or income tax evasion, there is great proximity in attitudes. Mennonite Brethren in Canada again are somewhat more conservative in all but one item, adult movies. Sufficient information for meaningful comparisons with other than Mennonite churches is available only with reference to moderate drinking. Here Lenski's survey of Detroit suggests that those answering "always" or "usually wrong" were as follows: Baptists, 46%; Methodists, 41%; Episcopalians, 12%; Lutherans, 7%; Catholics, 11%; Jews, 5%.⁸³ Combining these two responses for Mennonite Brethren would yield 85%. Comparisons with United Church of Canada suggest that in dancing (that is, in a church hall) 16% of laymen disapproved, while for dancing itself, 51% of Mennonite Brethren disapproved. As for gambling, 67% of United Church laymen disapproved, while 74% of Canadian Mennonite Brethren do.⁸⁴

Table V-5 is a comprehensive summary of responses among Mennonite

⁸³ G. Lenski, The Religious Factor: A Sociological Study of Religious Impact on Politics, Economics and Family Life (Garden City: Anchor Books, 1963), p. 166.

⁸⁴ Stewart Crysdale, The Changing Church in Canada (Toronto: United Church Publishing House, 1965), p. 19.

Table V-5
Measures of Social Ethics

I S S U E S	PERCENT RESPONSES FOR			
	MC (N=1202)	GC (N=614)	NAMB (N=712)	CMBC (N=359)
No part in war or war-promoting activities (strongly agree/agree)	87	66	54	65.0
Owning stock in companies producing war goods (always wrong)	55	39	29	37.0
Active promotion of peace position (agree)	54	64	47	52.4
Vietnam necessary to stop spread of Communism (disagree)	50	44	22	20.2
Response to military draft				
- regular military	2	8	8	3.4
- non-combatative	3	15	23	21.5
- alternative service	86	62	48	48.7
- uncertain	7	13	19	22.3
Equality of races (agree)	69	68	65	68.1
Biblical basis for separation of races (disagree)	44	40	29	30.8
Poverty caused by lack of discipline (disagree)	46	50	39	38.6
Minimum annual income guaranteed (agree)	24	30	29	36.4
Stamp out Communism (disagree)	35	31	19	20.1
Confront Communism with Christian truth (agree)	84	72	65	73.4
Church member should not join labour union (agree)	25	10	11	11.8
Capital punishment necessary (disagree)	46	50	17	15.2

SOURCE: Church Member Profile, 1972.

churches on measures of pacifism, race relations, social welfare attitudes, anti-Communism, attitudes to labor unions, and other social concerns. Mennonite Brethren, ranking among the most restrictive in personal

moral issues among Mennonite groups, are among the most lenient within these same groups when it comes to social ethics. The pacifist stance, in keeping with the earlier measures of Anabaptism, is considerably less rigorous than among the Mennonite Church or General Conference Mennonites, but Canadian Mennonite Brethren are more nonresistant than American. On racial issues they are inclined to believe in a biblical basis for separatism. They strongly believe in the Protestant ethic, poverty being caused by lack of discipline, and are reluctant for the government to provide a guaranteed income. Few would prohibit church members from joining labor unions. Most still believe that capital punishment is a necessary deterrent to crime. As Kauffman and Harder tested, fundamentalistic orthodoxy was negatively correlated to the normative Anabaptist position.⁸⁵ Mennonite Brethren rate high on the personal moral issues but less so on the Anabaptist distinctive of social ethics or love and nonresistance. This leads one to ask how Mennonite Brethren make (and enforce) ethical decisions.

On Making and Enforcing Ethical Decisions

In matters of ethics, Mennonite Brethren do not maintain a consistent position. In keeping with the high response to orthodoxy, evangelicalism, and Anabaptism, they have been shown to be the most restrictive in personal moral issues. They have indeed been prone to prescribed and proscribed behavior, and have especially been champions of abstinence

⁸⁵ Kauffman and Harder, AFCL, pp. 135, 149.

from smoking, drinking, and dancing. However, contrary to their high rating in traditional and Anabaptist beliefs, they are usually more lenient than their Anabaptist brethren in the matter of social ethics. This incongruency leads one to examine how Mennonite Brethren make and enforce ethical decisions.

Instances of making ethical decisions. Four specific instances are examined to discover how Canadian Mennonite Brethren have wrestled with and settled some of the ethical issues. The position taken with reference to tobacco suggests that in some issues there is virtually no change. The behavioral response on this question indicated that only 1.1% of Canadian Mennonite Brethren currently use tobacco. In 1869 twelve members, influenced in their use of tobacco by the German Baptist J. G. Oncken who was ministering to Baptist and Mennonite Brethren congregations in South Russia, were excommunicated for refusing to renounce their smoking habit.⁸⁶ The decisive stand of the Mennonite Brethren Church, entered into after considerable discussion, was reaffirmed in Vancouver one hundred years later.⁸⁷ From time to time in the interim, the reasons why Christians were advised not to smoke were reviewed. Its

⁸⁶ J. A. Toews, HMBC, p. 73.

⁸⁷ GCRYB, 1969, pp. 18-20. The resolution read as follows: "In view of what the above information has revealed about the effects of smoking on the human body, and bearing in mind the Biblical teaching that our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit and that smoking is a contradiction of the Christian's life and calling ... we, therefore, as members of the Mennonite Brethren Church covenant together not to use tobacco. We further pledge ourselves to support all legitimate efforts to curtail or eliminate the practice of smoking and to promote the prevalence of clean and free lives."

harmfulness to the body, its addictiveness, and its waste are usually given as primary reasons for abstinence.⁸⁸ A special warning was given to young people at the time of being admitted to church membership and through religious periodicals.⁸⁹ Moreover, in 1948, a categoric decision was reached by the Canadian Conference in Port Dalhousie, Ontario, in which the resolution of the Fuersorgekomitee (Committee of Reference and Counsel) was approved by the Conference.⁹⁰ Smoking was simply not permitted.

On the question of the use and ownership of television, the Canadian Mennonite Brethren have shown their capability of changing their stance on an ethical issue. Influenced by the long-standing proscription (which is now considerably relaxed) on attendance of movies and theatres,⁹¹ the Mennonite Brethren Church was quick to respond to the first impact of television. In 1954, after listing eight dangers of the television, the Conference prohibited the sale and purchase of television sets and requested the Christian Press to publish a tract of this proposal for dis-

⁸⁸ H. Neufeld, "Die Frage des Rauchens", MR, XLVII (June 11, 1924), p. 1. See also, "Selbstgespräch eines Rauchers", MR, XLVIII (March 25, 1925), p. 4.

⁸⁹ H. H. Janzen, "Warum die Mennoniten Brueder eine solch' strenge Stellung gegen das Rauchen einnimmt", K-J, II (June, 1946).

⁹⁰ The resolution came in response to a question about the propriety of selling tobacco: "Diese Frage ist in der Geschichte der M. B. Gemeinde bereits beantwortet und wir schärfen es unsern Gemeinden noch einmal ein, dass wir weder mit Tabak handeln, noch denselben rauchen, kauen oder ziehen." YB, 1948, p. 118.

⁹¹ See, for example, such persuasive presentations as those by A. H. Unruh, "Das Theater", Die Antwort, II (Aug., 1935), 94-5, 108; II (Oct., 1935), 151-53; F. C. Peters, "Are we too strict in our attitude toward commercial movies?" Voice, VIII (Sept.-Oct., 1959), pp. 4-8.

tribution in the churches.⁹² The 1958 Conference reaffirmed the position taken in 1954. In 1962 the dangers were again reviewed and a strong plea made neither to sell nor purchase a television set. However, where home or business required it, greatest caution was to be exercised.⁹³ A major change was made through a resolution by the Committee of Reference and Counsel in 1963. After acknowledging the need for timely warnings in previous conferences, the Committee proposed the following concession:

'In view of the fact that there are more acceptable programs ... we believe that the purchase and use of TV will have to be determined by the conscience of the individual and especially Christian parents in the light of circumstances in the individual homes. Nevertheless, let us not close our eyes to the destructive effects of uncontrolled and indiscriminate viewing of programs.

May the Lord grant us grace to maintain a tender conscience about the advisability of purchasing a TV set and about the type of programs we permit to be viewed in our homes....⁹⁴

Guidance, however, on the Christian's discriminate use of television continued.⁹⁵ Interestingly, by 1967 the B. C. provincial conference requested guidance on the advisability of implementing a gospel program on television. The Conference did not give its approval, since the vote of 169 affirmative to 97 negative did not quite constitute a two-thirds majority.⁹⁶ Reflec-

⁹²YB, 1954, pp. 84-86. The dangers include: corruption of manners, conveying false impressions of life, cigarette and beer commercials, depicting unfaithful marriages, mothers becoming lax in housework, homework habits of children, loss of interest in religious matters, and evils not counter-balanced by one good religious program.

⁹³YB, 1958, pp. 154-55; YB, 1962, pp. 110-11.

⁹⁴YB, 1963, p. 118.

⁹⁵H. Giesbrecht, "The Christian and the Use of TV Today", Voice, XVI (May-June, 1967), 7-13.

⁹⁶YB, 1967, p. 21.

ting on such change in Conference thinking, columnist John Redekop remarked, "TV is what we make of it, or what we permit it to make of ourselves; nothing more and nothing less".⁹⁷

A third instance, the attitude to war, indicates on a behavioral level only partial compliance to a doctrine or ethical position to which the church has continuously given lip service. The first decade after 1925 represents a time of adjustment for the largely immigrant denomination. Looking for political and religious freedom, along with economic opportunity, the Canadian Mennonite Brethren needed to be reassured that they held such a nonresistant view and, in the event of war, would be granted military exemption. The Mennonitische Rundschau became a suitable vehicle to accomplish such socialization.⁹⁸ The next decade provided the occasion to test the nonresistant stance. In the years prior to World War II, B. B. Janz in particular appealed to the Canadian Conference annually to alert the church to the possibility of war and to propose ways to avoid participation.⁹⁹ With such indoctrination and provision for non-

⁹⁷ H. J. Redekop, "Reflections on Television", MBH, VII (March 22, 1968), p. 2.

⁹⁸ Supra, p. 148. B. Unruh's article on "Wehrlosigkeit" appeared in MR, XLIX (July 14, 21, 28, 1926). See also, "Unsere Stellung zum Krieg", MR, XLVIII (Dec. 16, 1925), p. 6, and "Behmühungen zur Sicherung der Wahrfreiheit fuer unsere ungetaufte Juenglinge", MR, L (Dec. 7, 1927), p. 2.

⁹⁹ YB, 1934, pp. 76-77, records resolution not to try to prevent war, but to find ways of avoiding participation; YB, 1935, pp. 49-54, reports on consultations with the Canadian government, and urges teaching of nonresistance in churches; YB, 1936, pp. 79-81, cautions the Conference on the imminence of war, and the need to cooperate with other Mennonites in making preparations to find means of alternative service; YB, 1937, pp. 60-61, urges extensive socialization through literature, youth seminars, itinerant ministry in order to retain the historic peace position; YB,

combatant alternative service, some 4,425 Mennonite men (including other than Mennonite Brethren) avoided the draft.¹⁰⁰ Moreover, a small number was involved in non-combatant military service (the medical corps) following an Order-in-Council in September, 1943.¹⁰¹ Yet a number of Mennonite Brethren chose to join the military service, a fact regretted by the Committee of Reference and Counsel and resulting in another appeal to teach the doctrine more thoroughly.¹⁰² No other single aspect of Mennonite Brethren belief received such attention in the years after the war. There seemed to be a fear that a time of peace would result in an erosion of this distinctive. Year after year the Conference expressed concerns over the failure in teaching the doctrine, and a resolution was passed in 1946 requiring baptismal candidates to assent to the teaching.¹⁰³ During

1938, pp. 54-55, resolves, "Dass die Vertiefung der wehrlosen Ueberzeugung in dieser Zeit vor dem Sturm unsere vornehmste Aufgabe bleibe"; YB, 1939, pp. 61-63, B. B. Janz states, "Gott sei Dank, heute haben wir noch keinen Krieg"; he then reminds the Conference of its official stance taken in 1936 and appeals for civil alternative service rather than military.

¹⁰⁰ J. A. Toews, Alternative Service in Canada During World War II, p. 99.

¹⁰¹ YB, 1944, pp. 64-65.

¹⁰² YB, 1945, p. 144. "Das Fuersorgekomitee stellt mit Bedauern fest, dass in den Jahren des Krieges mancher Sohn aus mennonitischer Familie den Boden der Wehrlosigkeit verliess.... Die Wehrlosigkeit war von ihnen nicht verstanden worden und sie hatten diesselbe im Glaubensleben der Gemeinde nicht genug gesehen."

¹⁰³ In 1946 H. H. Janzen and J. B. Toews were requested to write a pamphlet explaining the fundamental teachings of faith. Five brethren (Aaron Toews, J. A. Toews, C. D. Toews, C. C. Peters, and I. Thiessen) were requested to teach the distinctives of the M. B. faith, especially the nonresistance doctrine. See YB, 1946, p. 163. See also YB, 1949, p. 94; YB, 1951, pp. 41-42; YB, 1953, p. 98; YB, 1954, p. 88. In a survey of Bible schools, it was noted that two of the eight schools did not teach the doctrine; YB, 1946, p. 115.

these post-World War II years, The Voice, official organ of Mennonite Brethren Bible College, and Konferenz-Jugendblatt, official youth organ of the Conference published a number of articles on the doctrine.¹⁰⁴ In addition, almost annually peace conferences were conducted on a massive scale in which prominent speakers articulated exuberantly on the peace doctrine.¹⁰⁵ In the last decades peace literature and peace conferences have, on the one hand, rigorously objected to the involvement in Vietnam and, on the other hand, have interpreted the peace witness to apply to the injustices of society. Especially influential have been editor Harold Jantz, columnist John H. Redekop, and historian J. A. Toews,¹⁰⁶ Illustration

¹⁰⁴ Harold Buller, "Why I am a Conscientious Objector", K-J, IV (Oct., 1948), pp. 56-57; J. A. Toews, "Nonresistance in the Light of the Old and New Testament", K-J, V (June, 1949), pp. 13-16; J. A. Toews, "Die Wehrlosigkeit im Lichte des Alten Testament", Voice, I (May-June, 1952), 3-5; J. A. Toews, "Die Wehrlosigkeit im alten Testament im Lehre und Leben", Voice, I (Sept.-Oct., 1952), 4-7; J. A. Toews, "Wie koennen wir unser Friedenszeugnis staerken?" Voice, VII (Sept.-Oct., 1958), 1-4; C. Wall, "Wie werde ich mit der Wehrlosigkeit fertig?" Voice, IV (July-Aug., 1955), 15-19.

¹⁰⁵ See L. Stobbe, "Unity of Purpose Fostered", for editorial reflections on a peace conference. MO, III (Nov. 16, 1956), p. 2. In another editorial Stobbe predicts, "If war should break out, a hastily-called series of meetings on 'Wehrfrage' will not change many a young person's basic convictions. They may help him to say the appropriate phrases before the judge and thus escape military service, but they will not make him a peacemaker", MO, II (Nov. 16, 1956), p. 2.

¹⁰⁶ See Jantz's editorials on Vietnam: "The War in South Viet Nam", MBH, III (Aug. 21, 1964), p. 3, in which he asserts, "We cannot align ourselves with a cause that involves such bloodshed"; "The Cost of Peace", MBH, IV (Nov. 5, 1965), p. 3; "Viet Nam Profile", MBH, V (Feb. 25, 1966); and "The Failure of Force", MBH, VII (Feb. 9, 1968), p. 3, in which he warns, "No nation can use its powers so callously for so long without suffering inevitable spiritual and moral retribution." Especially J. H. Redekop has applied the doctrine positively in "A Christian Pacifist Looks at the Expression of our Peace Witness", MBH, VII (Nov. 1, 1968), pp. 7-10; and "Race and the Gospel of Love", MBH, IV (April 2, 1965), p. 2, "Many of us are grieving our Lord by our safe and smug silent." J. A. Toews, in

tive of a current expression of this doctrine is Redekop's sermon at the 1973 Canadian Conference session in which nonresistance is depicted as "limitless love":

The doctrine of Limitless Love is no odd option, it is no quaint aberration, it is no tangential tenet, it is no fifth wheel, it is no apocryphal afterthought, nor is it a denominational hobby horse. It is the logical and intrinsic part of the one and only ethic God has given us in His inspired Word!¹⁰⁷

Throughout the past fifty years, and in the last quarter century particularly, Canadian Mennonite Brethren emphasized this distinctive doctrine; yet, a segment of the membership has consistently refused to take a separatist stand, and increasingly as Mennonite Brethren are assimilated into Canadian society and become more aggressively evangelistic, this ethical distinctive becomes more difficult to enforce.

A fourth ethical issue suggests a doctrine over which there is considerable diversity of opinion and in which the church assumes an openness. Most Mennonite Brethren apparently support capital punishment despite their nonresistant stance. Only 15.2% disagree that capital punishment is necessary to deter crime. The discussion on this issue has surfaced only in recent years and as yet the Conference has taken no official stand. Influential leaders, however, have addressed themselves to this issue. In 1966 J. H. Redekop presented his five reasons for opposing capital punishment, among which is the fact that it is inconsistent with

"Nonresistance or Non-Involvement", makes a plea for a positive peace expression, not mere withdrawal; MBH, IV (April 30, 1965), p. 2.

¹⁰⁷ YB, 1973, pp. 37-38. See also YB, 1968, pp. 105-107, for the Conference declaration on peace witness, and "The New Conscientious Objector", MBH, XII (March 21, 1975), p. 8.

the nonresistance position.¹⁰⁸ In 1973 three statements appeared in Men-
nonite Brethren Herald, one clearly favoring capital punishment, one dis-
tinctly opposed, and a third dealt mainly with an approach to decision-
making in such an instance.¹⁰⁹ More recently yet, Dr. F. C. Peters, cur-
rently moderator of the Canadian Mennonite Brethren Church, admitted his
former ambivalence and declared his unapologetic stand in opposition to
capital punishment, in view of his nonresistant interpretation of the New
Testament.¹¹⁰ In a series of ten letters to the editor, which Dr. Peter's
declaration generated, only two favored capital punishment.¹¹¹ Thus,
while the majority of members may still side with capital punishment, the
leadership is strongly influencing the membership to the contrary. As
yet, the Mennonite Brethren Church has not taken an official stand.

How the decisions were made and enforced. At least several, and
in some instances all, of the following means are employed to make and
enforce ethical decisions. First, and most important, is the role of
systematic and authoritative teaching. As chapter eight indicates,

¹⁰⁸J. H. Redekop, "Capital Punishment", MBH, V (Jan. 7, 1966), p.
2.

¹⁰⁹H. R. Baerg maintained that both Jesus and Paul supported capi-
tal punishment; J. M. Klassen saw the sword of Romans 13 as a symbol of
authority rather than instrument of execution; and H. H. Voth asked whether
restitution is not better met by gaining life in service to humanity than
submitting to the death penalty. MBH, XII (Nov. 2, 1973), pp. 21-23.

¹¹⁰F. C. Peters, "Capital Punishment", MBH, XV (Jan. 9, 1976), p.
17.

¹¹¹H. R. Baerg (XV, Feb. 20, 1976) and Val Konig (XV, April 30,
1976) favor capital punishment, while opposing letters come from Vic Unruh
(March 5, 1976), Marie K. Wiens (March 19, 1976), Ronald Neufeldt, F. V.
Klassen, W. Janzen, Al Peters, Elmer Thiessen (all April 2, 1976) and J.
A. Toews (April 15, 1976).

socialization occurs from childhood at several levels--in the home, in private schools, and in the church. Adults meet for regular Sunday worship, delegates attend annual provincial and national conferences, and pastors and laymen interact at occasional study conferences. Through the church's family periodicals, parents read such editorials as the one by Leslie Stobbe, entitled "Moral Heritage", in which he states,

We are thankful for our heritage of loyalty to marriage vows. When we gave our promise to be true to each other "until death do us part" we meant it because we loved each other. But we also intended to keep our promise because we had been taught that it was biblical and our church and community expected it of us. This heritage of loyalty to each other on the part of husband and wife had become part of our moral fibre....¹¹²

The Conference message by A. H. Unruh was translated into English and published as a series of devotionals in the same family magazine. In that keynote address of 1957, Unruh exhorted,

When we think of church discipline we are not solely concerned with the punishment of the offenders, but also with the life of sanctification in the church.... For this reason Scripture teaches church discipline from two perspectives: separation and sanctification.¹¹³

Similarly, the publication of D. Ewert's presentation of "An Approach to Problems of Christian Ethics", first given at a Faith and Ethics Conference of Mennonite Brethren at Winnipeg on February 15 and 16, 1967, was widely circulated as a pamphlet insert in the Mennonite Brethren Herald. Ewert outlines ten principles to guide one in solving ethical prob-

¹¹² Leslie Stobbe, "Moral Heritage", MO, VII (Jan. 27, 1961), p. 2.

¹¹³ A. H. Unruh, "God's Word as Guide in Church Discipline", MO, III (Aug. 9, 16, 23, 1957). An abridged version of the same address was published in MBH, VI (Nov. 24, 1967), pp. 4-6.

lems.¹¹⁴ In a similar, popular vein, Dr. F. C. Peters published a series of articles on ethical subjects under the broader title, "The Christian in the World".¹¹⁵ An evaluation of situation ethics was given at the Canadian Conference in Clearbrook in 1968 by Victor Adrian, currently President of Ontario Bible College, in which he maintains that Christian ethics repudiates legalism, subjectivism, and relativism, and submits itself to the norms and principles of Scriptures.¹¹⁶ Such thorough-going, Bible-based teaching has been the greatest single factor in deciding and enforcing ethical issues.

A second means of enforcing ethical decisions has been exemplary leadership. In addition to teaching, preaching, and writing, the example of prominent ministers, teachers, and Conference leaders has been instrumental in shaping the life-style of Canadian Mennonite Brethren, especially until recent times. This role of charisma cannot be elaborated upon in this chapter, except to provide the illustration of such an effect. When Dr. F. C. Peters, former pastor and Bible College professor, presently moderator of the Canadian Mennonite Brethren Churches and President of Wilfred Laurier University, openly indicates in the Mennonite Brethren Herald, "Moderator's Corner", that he has abandoned an ambivalent position

¹¹⁴David Ewert, An Approach to Problems of Christian Ethics, MBH, VI (March 24, 1967), 25 pp. Ewert published a similar article, "Fragen um das 'Fragliche' im Christenleben", in Voice, V (Sept.-Oct., 1956), 9-14.

¹¹⁵F. C. Peters, "Act or Motive?" MBH, IV (Jan. 8, 1965), p. 7; "Does Ethics have an Umpire?" MBH, IV (Feb. 5, 1965), p. 7.

¹¹⁶Victor Adrian, "Is Situation Ethics the Answer?" YB, 1968, pp. 81-94.

and fully opposes capital punishment, such example, for the many who have not independently thought through the issue, is bound to have an effect.¹¹⁷ Unfortunately the measure of impact of such a single example cannot be determined.

A third and more concrete means has been the debating of controversial issues until consensus is reached on local, provincial, or Canadian Conference levels. The Mennonite Brethren Church has repeatedly sought to avoid an individualistic approach to ethics and to strive for consensus. When editor Jantz interviewed David Ewert about the manner of applying ethical principles, Ewert explained,

... Only when a believer lives in fellowship with God is he in a position to apply biblical teaching to questionable things. For, unless his conscience is made sensitive to spiritual things, his sense of discernment in spiritual matters will be lacking.

However, a completely individualistic approach to questionable things can lead to confusion, for in order to grow in the "knowledge of the Lord" we need the fellowship of the Word as it is given by ministers of the church.¹¹⁸

More to the point is F. C. Peters' presentation at the Study Conference at Reedley, California, on "Consensus and Change in our Brotherhood" in which he explains that group consensus is not ultimate authority, and that "the value lies more in the process than in the product".¹¹⁹ Examples of wrestling with such issues occurred at the same conference when a measure

¹¹⁷ Supra, p. 179.

¹¹⁸ H. Jantz, "An Interview with the Author", MBH, V (Jan. 14, 1966), pp. 6-7. Ewert had earlier published "Guideposts to Christian Behavior" (Dec. 10, 17, 24, 1965).

¹¹⁹ F. C. Peters, "Consensus and Change in our Brotherhood", insert in MBH, VII (Jan. 12, 1968).

of consensus was reached on the subjects of the divorced and of planned parenthood.¹²⁰ At the subsequent General Conference session at Vancouver in 1969 a resolution was adopted by the Conference indicating why seeking consensus is the appropriate method, why changes must occur, the criteria of consensus and change, and manner of appropriation ("once consensus has been arrived at ... such a decision is accepted in the spirit of love and voluntary submission as a guideline by all persons belonging to the consensus group").¹²¹

A fourth means of effecting an ethical decision is through the behavioral requirements of a local church. Dean Kelley has observed that Anabaptists and Wesleyans traditionally conserved social strength by the "power of the gate", not being in haste to take anyone into membership, demanding attitudinal and behavioral tests for membership, and requiring continuing faithfulness.¹²² This, in fact, characterized the Mennonite Brethren church until recent times, as the Committee of Reference and Counsel statement of 1950 suggests.¹²³ Marvin Hein, one-time moderator

¹²⁰ See pamphlets by J. H. Quiring, "Dealing Redemptively with the Divorced and Remarried", insert in MBH, VII (February 23, 1968), and Dr. A. B. Voth, "Christian Responsibility in Relation to Planned Parenthood", insert in MBH, VII (Feb. 9, 1968).

¹²¹ GCRYB, 1969, pp. 11, 12.

¹²² Dean Kelley, Why Conservative Churches are Growing (New York: Harper and Row, 1972), pp. 125-29.

¹²³ YB, 1950, pp. 122-123. "Frage der Wehrlosigkeit in die Gemeinderegeln aufnehmen. Nach der Beleuchtung dieser Frage einigt man sich dahin, der Konferenz zu empfehlen, dass wir anstatt die Lehre von der Wehrlosigkeit in die Gemeinderegeln aufzunehmen, lieber einem jeden Taufkandidaten das gedruckte Glaubensbekenntnis in die Hand geben sollten und den Inhalt in speziellen Versammlungen mit ihnen besprechen. Bei der Aufnahme moechte man dann zuerst Ruecksicht auf das Glaubensbekenntnis nehmen und dann die Gemeinderegeln vorlegen."

of the General Conference, has argued that ideally the church needs no rules, but because of human frailty, it has them; however, he maintains, "Church rules can hardly be called requirements for membership".¹²⁴ This is in keeping with the more ameliorative approach of a once legalistic moralism, as also the Vancouver resolution on "The Individual Member and Guidelines of the Church" indicates, "that we will consider such guidelines, not as conditions for membership in our church, but rather as ideals, the attainment of which remains the constant goal and desire of each member".¹²⁵ Whether this weakening of the "power of the gaffe" will enable the church to maintain a separatist stance or further facilitate accommodation still needs to be tested.

Finally, the church exercises discipline to implement its ethical stance. Admittedly, excommunication is the ultimate step in exercising discipline, yet a comparison of membership, baptisms, and number of excommunications suggests a general relaxation in the same. Table V-6 compares the number of excommunications with the membership and baptisms in four separate decades, the early 1920's offering a significant difference from the time after the Russian immigration. The early 1930's and mid-1950's indicate excommunications roughly at the rate of ten percent of the number of baptized, which in early 1970's is less than five percent. The percentage of excommunicated compared to membership suggests a similar decline in recent times. Changes in recent times can be attributed to

¹²⁴ Marvin Hein, "The Church, Its Regulations, and the Individual Member", insert in MBH, VII (Jan. 26, 1968).

¹²⁵ GCRYB, 1969, p. 13.

Table V-6

Comparing Number of Excommunications with Memberships and Baptisms¹²⁶

YEAR	MEMBER-SHIP	BAP-TISMS	NO. OF EXCOM.	PERCENT OF MEMBERSHIP	YEAR	MEMBER-SHIP	BAP-TISMS	NO. OF EXCOM.	PERCENT OF MEMBERSHIP
1920	1786	125	12	.67	1954	11924	405	45	.38
1922	1801	96	25	1.39	1955	12239	390	64	.52
1923	1834	78	35	1.91	1956	12514	475	45	.36
1924	1797	11	27	1.50	1957	12967	475	89	.69
1925	1774	163	17	.96	1958	12338	390	64	.52
1928	2783	128	13	.47	1971	17025	651	29	.17
1929	3305	302	31	.94	1972	17502	789	31	.18
1932	4186	340	29	.69	1973	17735	583	25	.14
1933	4857	255	20	.41	1974	17794	567	14	.08
1934	5195	172	29	.56	1975	17958	774	42	.23

SOURCE: Canadian Conference Yearbooks.

increased secularization, but also to renewed understanding of discipline. Considerable effort has been made to teach church discipline. F. C. Peters, having indicated the basis and purpose for discipline, suggests the various steps: admonishment by individuals, group admonishment, church admonishment, and excommunication. Reasons which would warrant such discipline are

¹²⁶See respective year books. Records were not given in missing years.

given: unforgiving spirit, false doctrine, causing divisions, immoral conduct, disorderly conduct.¹²⁷ Despite such teaching, recent years have witnessed a decline in excommunication. Rather than reflecting secularization alone, this decline may well be because of the new understanding of discipline. Typical of this redemptive approach to discipline is Herbert Giesbrecht's plea for a covenanted code of ethics in which one distinguishes between principle and prescription. He explains,

A brotherhood of believers can be spared much needless perplexity and pain if it understands from the outset that while ethical principles are fixed and enduring, specific ethical prescriptions may require periodic amendment or may even be altogether discarded without spiritual loss to the church in a given situation.¹²⁸

Church discipline is not thereby discarded but reinterpreted in a less legalistic spirit. Indeed, discipline continues as long as the church is in the world, as Giesbrecht so aptly says, "The formulation, application, and review of covenantal codes of ethics are therefore all integral aspects of the earthly pilgrimage of the Church as it contends daily with the world and the devil".¹²⁹ Unquestionably, Mennonite Brethren ethics have helped delineate boundaries and thereby perpetuate the religious group.

¹²⁷F. C. Peters, "Rethinking Church Discipline", K-J, XI (July and Sept. 1955), pp. 11-12, and 6, 32. Similar articles were written by A. H. Unruh, "God's Word as a Guide in Church Discipline", MO, III (Aug. 9, 16, 23, 1957); I. W. Redekop, "Biblische Gemeindegerechtigkeit", Voice, IV (July-Aug., 1955), 10-15; and H. H. Voth, "Gemeindegerechtigkeit und Seelsorge", Voice, XII (July-Aug., 1963), 2-4.

¹²⁸Herbert Giesbrecht, "In Search of Discipline: Ethical Covenants and Codes in the Local Church", Direction, V (Jan., 1976), 4.

¹²⁹Ibid., p. 9.

Summary of Chapter Five

The Canadian Mennonite Brethren Church has successfully confronted change and accommodation during the past half century by consciously delineating boundaries with its beliefs and ethics. The resulting continuity in its sectarian beliefs is evident in the high measure of orthodoxy, evangelicalism, and Anabaptist distinctives, separating itself significantly from the Mennonite church from which it seceded. In analysing the modus operandi which might explain such retention of conservative beliefs, at least four contributing perspectives reoccur in its official proceedings, principal spokesmen, and denominational periodicals. First, Mennonite Brethren have continued to look back at the pattern of Menno and the first-century church. This is not simply equivalent to saying it is biblical in orientation. It is biblical in an Anabaptist sense, that is, even as the sixteenth-century Anabaptists did, it seeks to take the New Testament as final and the model of Christ as determinative. Secondly, the church has demonstrated a rigorously biblicist position, repeatedly appealing to the Scriptures for its final authority, not through arbitrary proof-texting but through diligent study and application. Thirdly, the beliefs of church members are those of believers who have consciously experienced Christ and voluntarily submitted themselves to the norms of the group, including the possibility of exclusion from the group. Fourthly, the group sees itself in constant conflict with society which is non-Christian, not simply withdrawing from society, but confronting the societal value-system in terms of its own value-system.

In personal, moral issues Mennonite Brethren hold a rather conser-

vative position, similar to the Mennonite Church, but significantly more restrictive than the General Conference Mennonites. In social ethics Mennonite Brethren are more lenient than other Mennonite groups, except for capital punishment. Instances of ethical decision-making show that Mennonite Brethren refuse to change in some issues, such as smoking; change their stance in some issues, such as owning and selling television; partially comply to one of the distinctives of the faith, as in nonresistance; and indicate an openness in such a matter as capital punishment. In order to teach and enforce an ethical position, Mennonite Brethren follow one or more of the following: systematic instruction, exemplary leadership, reaching consensus, behavioral requirements, and the exercise of discipline, the ultimate form of which is excommunication.

It would appear that by delineating cognitive and normative boundaries, Canadian Mennonite Brethren have successfully sacralized their identity and facilitated the persistence of sectarianism. Indeed, it appears that the reports of God's demise have been exaggerated.

VI

ENHANCING COHESION THROUGH FAMILY SOLIDARITY AND ETHNIC SECLUSION

A religious movement may be held together by other than strictly cognitive and normative parameters. Group cohesiveness may also be the product of simple biological and cultural continuity. In his study of Manitoba Mennonites, sociologist E. K. Francis attributes Mennonite group solidarity to region, church, and family.¹ While the latter two surely apply to Canadian Mennonite Brethren, settling in close geographic proximity, as the conservative Mennonite groups did in their emigration to the East and West Reserve of Manitoba in the 1870's, can hardly be applied in the same way to Mennonite Brethren. And yet, since the mid-forties many an isolated Mennonite Brethren family moved to a larger Mennonite community, be it St. Catharines, Winnipeg, Saskatoon, or the Fraser Valley. To a degree, no doubt, all three of Francis' perspectives apply to Canadian Mennonite Brethren.

This chapter analyses two factors--family solidarity and ethnic seclusion--which contributed to cohesiveness and, thereby, enhanced sectarian continuity. The chapter will test the hypothesis that "the more compact an immigrant group is and the fewer its contacts with the absorbing society the stronger the transplanted church will be and the more it

¹E. K. Francis, In Search of Utopia, p. 277.

will reinforce the cohesion of the group".² It will also indicate that with the disruptive influences upon family life and with the loss of ethnicity, the sectarian group will need to rely more and more for its continuity on such trans-cultural factors as ideology. The preeminence of such theological identity is the thrust of Redekop's critique:

... To the extent that we have exhibited a theological identity in the past few generations it has rested largely on social, ethnic and geographic separatism. That age is past. Unless we manage to teach younger generations the distinctive qualities of our orientation our future is not particularly bright. We may well become little more than a recruiting ground for both narrow fundamentalism or easy-going, "cheap grace", common denominator, evangelicalism.³

This chapter examines the past with its social, ethnic, and geographic separatism to determine, how, sociologically speaking, group structure enhances the maintenance of religious values.

1. Mennonite Brethren Family Solidarity

In examining the extent to which the Canadian Mennonite Brethren family contributes to group cohesiveness, one does well to begin with the biblical understanding of the family, then note the empirical evidence of its solidarity, review its role in counteracting the disruptions wrought through migration and confrontation with a secular society, and finally note its rigorous attempts to retain solidarity in the face of the threats of erosion.

²Hans Mol, Churches and Immigrants (R. E. M. P. Bulletin), IX (May, 1961), p. 75.

³J. H. Redekop, "Anabaptism", MBH, V (Sept. 30, 1966), p. 2.

The Biblical Understanding of the Family

It is not the intent of this study to explore the usually acknowledged contributions of the family to society, such as, reproduction of the young, physical maintenance of family members, social placement of the child, socialization, and social control.⁴ It is the added dimension which a religious group contributes to the meaning of a family that is of interest here. In keeping with their biblicism, Mennonite Brethren anchor marriage theologically as an institution ordained of God.⁵ It follows that marriage is monogamous and indissoluble, and, because of its sanctity, believers are advised to marry believers only.⁶ Until 1975, marriage of believers and unbelievers meant automatic excommunication.⁷ Emphasis is also placed upon the sanctity of courtship and engagements,⁸ and wed-

⁴William J. Goode, The Family (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1964), p. 5.

⁵H. S. Voth, "Das christliche Familienleben", YB, 1933, pp. 89-93. Voth explained, "Die Ehe ist das aelteste menschliche Institute der Welt. Sie ist eine goettliche und daher heilige Verordnung, eingesetzt zum Besten der Menschheit und hat im Laufe der Jahrtausende nichts von ihrer Wichtigkeit verloren bis auf den heutigen Tag."

⁶D. B. Wiens, "Marriage of Believers and Unbelievers", MBH, VI (Mar. 3, 1967), pp. 4-7. See also, J. H. Quiring, "Dealing Redemptively with the Divorced and Remarried", MBH insert, VII (Feb. 23, 1968), p. 4.

⁷YB, 1975, p. 10. The more lenient manner of disciplining those who marry unbelievers, however, in no way mitigated the theological sanctity of marriage and biblical necessity for believers to marry believers only.

⁸L. Stobbe, "Laying Spiritual Foundations for Married Life", MO, IV (June 13, 1958), p. 2. See also, H. R. Baerg, "Principles for Love, Courtship, and Engagements", Voice, VII (May-June, 1958), 10-12.

dings are meant to have a distinctly Christian quality.⁹ Children are viewed as gifts of God,¹⁰ and abortion is generally opposed.¹¹ When questioned by the editor of the Mennonite Brethren Herald, "What have been the strengths of the Mennonite Brethren home?", twelve Mennonite Brethren replied with the following: simple biblicism, spontaneous fellowship, dignity of work, respect for authority, family altar, healthy economic struggle, Bible discussions, sanctity of marriage, father as priest of the family, authority of God's Word, church doctrines stressed, and genuine conversion experience.¹² The collective thrust of these subjective evaluations underscores the impression that for Canadian Mennonite Brethren family solidarity is rooted in more than just a sociological understanding of the family, for it is understood biblically.

A Look at the Data

Is there empirical evidence to support the facts implied by the above impressions? In the Church Member Profile, 88.0% (N=316) of Canadian Mennonite Brethren view marriage as a lifelong commitment never to be

⁹Waldo Hiebert laments that church weddings have become the most secularized of all church functions. See, "Wanted: A Christian Philosophy of Weddings", MO, IV (June 13, 1958), p. 8.

¹⁰A reader from Coaldale, Alta., wrote to the Mennonitische Rundschau, "Unser wertvollster Besitz sind unsere Kinder, versäumen wir doch nichts in unserer Aufgabe ihnen gegenüber,--sie sind Ewigkeitswerte....", MR, LI (Jan. 18, 1928), p. 8.

¹¹V. Ratzlaff, "A Christian Perspective on Abortion", insert in MBH, X (Nov. 19, 1971), 9-14.

¹²MBH, "What Have Been the Strengths of the Mennonite Brethren Home?" V (Dec. 2, 1966), pp. 4-8.

broken except by death, and another 11.1% (N=40) view it as a lifetime commitment as well, but which may be broken only if every attempt to reconcile disharmony has failed. On a behavioral level, the 1975 Year Book lists of total of 494 marriages contracted, over against 17 separations or divorces for Mennonite Brethren families (the previous year 7 divorces occurred).¹³ Table VI-1 summarizes those facts, indicating the types of marriage unions, which could be gleaned from yearly statistical reports to the Canadian Conference.¹⁴ The percentage of mixed marriages (that is,

Table VI-1

Types of Marriage Unions

	NO. OF MEMBER-CHURCHES	TOTAL SHIP	BELIEVERS' MARR.	MIXED MARRIAGES	MARR. & % OF TOTAL	MARR.	UNBELIEVER COURT MARR.	DIVORCEE MARR.
1948	79	8,921	152	120	14	.157	18	0
1955	79	12,437	260	219	12	.096	1	27
1960	82	13,573	241	215	13	.096	12	1
1965	110	15,315	240	206	13	.085	19	2
1970	124	17,056	319	263	16	.094	32	6
1975	130	19,051	494	393	18	.094	70	4

SOURCE: Canadian Conference Yearbooks.

¹³YB, 1975, p. 113, and YB, 1974, p. 113. Earlier statistical reports indicate the number of divorcees who are remarried, but not the number of separations and divorces.

¹⁴The years cited reflect the information of the previous Conference year, but reported in the respective Year Book. Annual reports are available only after 1954 (and not every year after that) and prior to this only in 1947 and 1948, the latter being the more complete report on marriages.

where only one party is a believer) remains roughly the same from 1955 to 1975, with a fluctuation of about .01%. While the number of marriages of unbelievers seems to have increased rather sharply, statistically this does not affect the marriages of church members, since neither party belongs to the church. However, the number of divorcees remarrying is significantly increasing, and 53.8% (N=189) believe that a divorcee who has confessed his wrong and made all possible restitution can also be readmitted to church membership.

The solidarity of the marriage union is further confirmed by the largely endogamous marriages. The Church Member Profile showed that at the time of marriage 80.8% (N=214) belonged to the same denomination as the spouse, the percentage increasing by the time of the survey to 96.3% (N=258). Moreover, 73.9% (N=260) have no other denominational affiliation in any member of the immediate family, and for 79.3% (N=284) of the respondents both mother and father were of the same denomination. Thus, there is considerable denominational homogeneity. A quick survey of the family names of the largest Mennonite Brethren Church in Winnipeg shows that of 376 families (with a church membership of 736) nine family names account for one-third of the church families.¹⁵ Other factors reflecting on the solidarity of the family can similarly be gleaned from the Church Member Profile:

90.5% (N=340) say grace before every meal, and another 4.5% (N=16) before most meals;

¹⁵ Church Directory (Mennonite Brethren Churches of Winnipeg, Manitoba, 1976), pp. 37-47. These most prominent names, in order of decreasing frequency, are: Klassen, Loewen, Janzen, Martens, Neufeld, Dyck, Reimer, Friesen, Wiens.

69.3% (N=242) have family worship other than grace at meals;¹⁶

95.8% (N=338) believe that premarital sexual intercourse is always wrong;

86.5% (N=300) believe that extra-marital sexual intercourse is always wrong;

86.6% (N=284) believe that a legal abortion is wrong if one does not want a baby; 73.4% (N=254) allow it only if it endangers the mother's health.

Finally, the fact that 87.7% (N=314) of Canadian Mennonite Brethren own a home (with 9.8% renting and 2.5% living in a home which is rent free) may also reflect upon the solidarity of the family.

The Sociological Function of the Family

Fifty years after the major immigration of Mennonites into Canada, the Mennonite Brethren family still occupies essentially the same pivotal place in the whole social structure, for it has acted as a buffer for the individual both in his adjustments as an immigrant and in his encounters with a secular society. The mediating function of the family within the larger society is especially apparent among immigrants. While retarding social integration, the family served as a shock-breaker¹⁷ for those who felt alienated and thus enhanced personal integration for the first generation particularly. The dependence upon the immediate family and the desire to locate relatives in the newly-adopted host society is especially evident in the letters and reports that Mennonites sent to Die Mennoniti-

¹⁶ In a Conference statistical report in 1958, 88% indicated morning devotions. YB, 1958, p. 109.

¹⁷ Mol, The Churches and Immigrants, p. 61.

sche Rundschau. For example, in 1924 the Mennonites wrote some 290 letters under the almost weekly column, "Verwandte gesucht". A typical shorter letter reads as follows:

Gesucht wird Jakob Jakob Dyck, eingewandert aus Sued-Russland, Jekat. Gouv. Nikolaipoler Wollost, Dorf Morosowa. Von seinem Bruder David J. Dyck, c. o. Johann H. Coleman, New Dundee, Ont. ¹⁸

The intimate warmth of family and church is evident in the following excerpt from a report by Mrs. T. Dyck of Gilroy, Saskatchewan.

I've been here for only one month, and yet I feel quite at home among the Geschwister (transl. as "family" or "church community"): We have our worship services in a church which was kindly made available to us by the Anglo-Canadians. The services are well attended.¹⁹

What the family provided by way of personal security for the first generation immigrant in the face of his strange environment, it also does for the third and fourth generation sectarian for whom the church is a haven in an uncertain and secular world. This haven must have a Christ-centered atmosphere, according to F. C. Peters. Having depicted the influences upon the family by secular society, he concludes an article on "Families in a Secular Society" by posing a question and supplying the answer:

What then makes a home Christian? A home is not Christian by default. In our society, it's not Christian simply because it is nothing else. It's not Christian because the parents belong to the Church. It's not Christian in the deeper sense simply because the parents are saved or the Bible is read. The home is Christian because of an atmosphere—an atmosphere that permeates everything

¹⁸MR, XL (1924), January - 13 letters; February - 12; March - 21; April - 47; May - 16; June - 14; July - 13; Aug. - 8; Sept. - 52; October - 42; November - 23; December - 30.

¹⁹T. Dyck, "Aus dem Leserkreise", MR, LI (Jan. 18, 1928), p. 9.

which happens in that home--in which Christ is truly centre and a philosophy of living grows up which honors him.²⁰

Peter and Brigitte Berger have suggested that "the family is a refuge from the macro-world; it is a place to which they can retreat from the latter's tensions, frustrations and anxieties ... the locale of highly significant expectations for self-fulfilment and emotional satisfaction".²¹ For Mennonite Brethren, the family provides both this sociological dimension and the added Christian atmosphere.

The Threat of Erosion

Despite the on-going sociological functions of the family and the Mennonite Brethren consciousness of the unique dimension of the Christian home, the data suggest that Mennonite family solidarity is no longer to be taken for granted. Increasingly the crises of society at large impinge upon the church-related family. And yet, it is not a recent phenomenon to lament the crises that the families face.

Already in the 1920's there were threats to Mennonite family solidarity. On the one hand, immigrants suddenly suffer anomie when the security of belonging to a closely-knit group with similar norms and habits is removed. The result may not only be loneliness and nostalgia, but also disappointment and hopelessness, as the following two examples of immigrant anomie suggest. The first expresses the nostalgia of one who is

²⁰ F. C. Peters, "Families in a Secular Society", MBH, VIII (April 4, 1969), pp. 6, 7.

²¹ Peter and Brigitte Berger, Sociology: A Biographical Approach (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1975), p. 86.

separated from family and reminisces on better times.

One imagines himself in circles of loved ones who were so dear to us and with whom we shared joy and sorrow--one awakens, and an unutterable longing grips the heart, which accompanies one well into the next day.²²

The second expresses a cynicism and hopelessness with the new country.

Well, well--this is Canada! The land of promise, the land so greatly desired, the land so much discussed.... What I did not all imagine. Here things were really to happen ... But--it happened so differently.... Now I am sitting here; sitting and thinking; thinking because it has turned out so differently ... Hopeless pessimism strikes my soul....²³

No doubt, such nostalgia and pessimism added to the adjustment strains of the immigrant. On the other hand, the Mennonite community already resident in America in 1925 was alarmed at the dissolution of the American family in such "times of darkness".²⁴

By mid-century, the threat of erosion was certainly more real and accurately defined and scientifically measured. Two Mennonite sociologists commented on the Mennonite family in the United States. Because of the close parallel to the Canadian Mennonite Brethren, these studies are a helpful commentary on the Canadian scene for the 1950's. J. Howard Kauffman lists the following social changes as most detrimental to the family

²² Mrs. Peter Regier, "Korrespondenzen", MR, LI (Feb. 15, 1928). p. 4.

²³ J. K., "Es kommt noch nicht, das Paradies", MR, XLVIII (Jan. 21, 1925), p. 9.

²⁴ An American, J. D. Buller, wrote on "Ehescheidung und wieder Verhehelichung", "In dieser dunklen Zeit, vor dem baldigen Kommen des Herrn, wo Suende und Ungerechtigkeit ueberhand nehmen, werden auch die heiligsten Band der Liebe und der Ehe von so vielen mit Fuessen getreten ... und unser liebes Mennonitenvolk ist auch schon laengst nich mehr frei davon". MR, XLVIII (April 8, 1925), p. 4.

in general:

- (1) increased rates of marital breakup;
- (2) increased family mobility;
- (3) increased population density and crowded housing, particularly in larger cities;
- (4) increased problems in the care of the aged;
- (5) the tendency for family members to find most of their leisure time pursuits outside the home and family;
- (6) specialization in occupations, making it less possible for the family members to share in the work of the husband and father;
- (7) a decrease in the opportunity for children to experience a work apprenticeship in the home; and
- (8) an increased tendency for mothers of young to work outside the home.²⁵

His own scientific findings, however, show no appreciable difference in family success between urban and rural families. J. Winfield Fretz drew attention to seven long-time trends which were affecting the family.

These are the following:

- (1) the family in the home is ceasing to be a production unit and is almost totally a consumption unit;
- (2) increasing impermanence of location;
- (3) decreasing family size;
- (4) changing morality;
- (5) decline of masculine dominance and emergence of the democratic family;
- (6) changing roles in modern marriage;
- (7) gradual acquisition of new family functions.²⁶

Pooling the joint response of 150 students, Dr. Fretz reports the following forces pulling apart the family at mid-century: over activity, individual independence, failure to adjust to technological change, mobility,

²⁵ J. Howard Kauffman, "Tradition and Change in Mennonite Family Life", in Proceedings of the Eleventh Consultation on Mennonite Educational and Cultural Problems (hereafter CMECP), 1957, pp. 113-130.

²⁶ J. Winfield Fretz, "Social Trends Affecting the Mennonite Family at Mid-Century", Eleventh CMECP, 1957, pp. 131-135.

competition between individuals within a family and between families in a community, materialism, working mothers, urbanization, and conflicting time schedules.²⁷ While the evidence from the Canadian Mennonite Brethren scene does not come from sociologists, several perceptive comments do support these above trends. In an editorial in 1958, Leslie Stobbe viewed overly busy homes as "broken homes",²⁸ and H. R. Baerg considered the following as contributing to the crisis in the family: urbanization, mass communication, affluence, marriage based on romantic and erotic love, working mothers, and decline in faith.²⁹ Obviously, the subjective assessments of Fretz, Stobbe, and Baerg are not shared by J. Howard Kauffman, whose study shows that family size, urbanization, non-farm occupation, and the trend from traditional to emergent family are not detrimental to the achievement of family success goals.

More recently, George Konrad, professor of Christian education, himself a Canadian, viewed the societal influences of mobility, changing roles, neglect in child training, and depersonalization as leading to deterioration of the family, seen in the loss of stability, loss of faith and loss of function (including reproduction, protection and care of children, economic production of family goods and services, socialization of children, recreation and giving affection).³⁰ The Mennonite Brethren

²⁷ Ibid., pp. 136-37.

²⁸ Leslie Stobbe, "When Is a Home 'Broken'?" MO, IV (Mar. 21, 1958), p. 2.

²⁹ H. R. Baerg, "Die Krise im Familienleben", Voice, XI (May-June, 1962), 4-7.

³⁰ George Konrad, "Christian Families--Another Look", Voice, XX (April, 1971), 12-20.

Herald has in the last years drawn special attention to the crises and needs of the family. Editor Jantz, introducing a series of articles on the family, states,

In a day when societal pressures almost totally aim toward propelling women out of their homes, we will hopefully be able to provide greater incentive to think in the other direction, and to give men a greater desire to take their place as genuine fathers.³¹

The erosive forces at work upon the Canadian Mennonite Brethren family are keenly felt by perceptive analysts, and hence the concern to nurture its solidarity.

The Nurture of Family Solidarity

Because of the firm belief in the supra-societal components both in the very foundation of marriage and in the on-going life of the institutional family, and because of their awareness of the erosive forces of society at large, Canadian Mennonite Brethren have consciously and increasingly sought to nurture family solidarity. Such nurture, in turn, has facilitated the persistence of the religious movement. The nurture has transpired at two levels, at least. On a general and more theoretical plane, the socialization has involved academic discussion among Conference leaders, pastors, and Christian educators. On a more specific and practical plane, the nurture thrust actually reached the family members. A closer examination of how this nurture has occurred will enable one more readily to understand its enduring impact despite the continuing erosive

³¹ Harold Jantz, "No Replacement for the Family", MBH, XIV (May 2, 1975), p. 11.

forces.

Examples of the first level of socialization include the publication of articles in Conference academic journals which reach its schools, pastors, and interested individuals who choose to subscribe.³² As will be seen below, this focus on the family just after mid-century was continued by the denominational weekly periodicals, Mennonite Observer (1956-1961) and Mennonite Brethren Herald (1962 to the present). The preservation of the Christian family has also become the subject for position papers at study conferences.³³ In a like manner, for one decade (1954-1963), almost annually one of the devotional sermons at the Conference was centered on the family.³⁴ The concern with the family at the Conference

³² The Voice, official organ of Mennonite Brethren Bible College, published the following articles relating to the family: J. H. Quiring, "Thoughts about Weddings", II (May-June, 1953), 18-19; J. A. Toews, "The First Commandment with Promise", II (May-June, 1953), 15-17; J. A. Toews, "Wie erhalten wir unsere Gemeinden ihre Jugend?", III (Jan.-Feb., 1954), 15-18; H. Regehr, "Der Einfluss des Heimes auf die Jugend", III (July-Aug., 1954), 9-12; H. Regehr, "Die Gefahren der Jugend", III (Sept.-Oct., 1954), 6-9; H. R. Baerg, "The Parents' Role in the Christian Home", IX (May-June, 1960), 6-9; H. R. Baerg, "A Blessed Mother", X (May-June, 1961), 1-3; H. R. Baerg, "Die Krise im Familienleben", XI (May-June, 1962), 4-7; C. Wall, "Some Unforgettable Lessons I Learned in the Family", XI (May-June, 1961), 7-9; G. Konrad, "Christian Families--Another Look", XX (April, 1971), 12-20.

³³ At a Faith and Ethics Conference in Winnipeg, Feb., 1967, D. B. Wiens presented a paper on "The Marriage of Believers and Unbelievers". See MBH, VI (Mar. 3, 1967), p. 4-7. At a Conference On Issues of Church and Home, in Reedley, Calif., Nov., 1967, J. H. Quiring discussed, "Dealing Redemptively with Divorced and Remarried", and Dr. A. R. Voth explained the "Christian Responsibility to Planned Parenthood". See inserts in MBH, VII (February 9 and 23, 1968).

³⁴ Prior to 1954, only one such family theme was discussed, namely, by D. K. Klassen, "Die geistliche Pflege in der Familie", YB, 1914, pp. 18-20. See also, J. Thiessen, "Die Familie als den untersten Zweig der Missionsarbeit", YB, 1954, p. 112; J. H. Epp, "Kampf fuer den Glauben im Heim und Schule", YB, 1956, p. 177; I. W. Redekop, "The Word of God as a

level has thus been especially prominent in the past twenty-five years.

On a more practical plane, various ways and means have been used to reach the family itself, rather than merely a discussion among ecclesiastical leaders. On a social level, Mennonites are known for family reunions. Some of these even receive news coverage in the denominational weekly.³⁵ They assemble particularly on festive days--Christmas, Easter, Thanksgiving, and Mother's Day--and for numerous less auspicious occasions--birthdays, anniversaries, and routine visits. Family camps have become a special attraction, every province having one or more camp sites from which to choose.³⁶

More specifically geared to occur in the church setting are weddings and funerals, for which whole families assemble, and Mother's Days. Increasingly, Mennonite Brethren attend special family seminars or clinics. At a recent interdenominational family conference in Hamilton, some 1754 adults attended. Of these 410 were Mennonite Brethren from the Ontario churches.³⁷ Moreover, ministers preach sermons specifically focusing on family needs.³⁸

Guide for our Homes in the Mennonite Brethren Conference", YB, 1957, p. 167; D. B. Wiens, "Jesus Christus, der Herr im Familienleben", YB, 1958, pp. 194-95; D. K. Duerksen, "Das Heiligungslében in der Familie", YB, 1961, pp. 243-44; and J. J. Toews, "Contending for the Faith in the Home", YB, 1963, p. 139.

³⁵ See G. Geddert, "Familientreffen", MR, XCV (Nov. 8, 1972), p. 5.

³⁶ See also, H. R. Baerg, "Camping with a Purpose", Voice, VII (March-April, 1958), pp. 12-15; and H. R. Baerg, "The Camping Program", Voice, VIII (March-April, 1959), pp. 11-14.

³⁷ The attendance figure was personally obtained from the chairman of the conference, Rev. Norman Neufeld.

³⁸ At the author's home church, the River East Mennonite Brethren

Reaching the family in its homes are the denominational periodicals, one German (Mennonitische Rundschau) or one English (Mennonite Brethren Herald) automatically being sent to each home. The Mennonitische Rundschau served as an inter-Mennonite paper from its inception in 1877 in United States, through its move to Canada in 1923, and increasingly became denominational in coverage as it was gradually acquired from private ownership from 1945 to 1960.³⁹ It continues to serve the elderly, German-speaking church community today. The Konferenz-Jugendblatt (1946-1957) became the official, bilingual organ designed for youth, initially eighty percent German in content and concluding its thirteen years of publication of sixty-nine issues almost wholly English.⁴⁰ From 1955 to 1961 a private English weekly, published by The Christian Press, served a somewhat broader Mennonite constituency.⁴¹ In 1962, the Mennonite Brethren Herald,

Church, Winnipeg, in March, 1976, four consecutive Sundays were devoted to a family theme: March 7: Dr. John Regehr, "Made for Relationship--Covenant in Marriage"; March 14: Rev. Harold Jantz, "A Sense of Worth"; March 21: Dr. Alex Deasley, "A Biblical Pattern for Child-Rearing"; March 28: Rev. Ernie Isaac, "Marriage as It was Meant to Be". In addition, evening services discussed practical themes relating to family life.

³⁹ See YB, 1963, pp. 115-116. For a history of the Mennonitische Rundschau, see YB, 1960, pp. 81-86; YB, 1961, pp. 84-86; YB, 1962, pp. 78-81; YB, 1963, pp. 102-116.

⁴⁰ For a brief survey of the history of Canadian Mennonite Brethren publications, see R. Wiebe, "The Mennonite Brethren Herald: English Family Paper of the M. B. Conference", MBH, I (January 19, 1962), pp. 5, 12, 14.

⁴¹ Editor Leslie Stobbe expresses the purpose of the Mennonite Observer in his second editorial: "Here at home the minds of our children and young people are being poisoned by comics, westerns, thrillers, and racy novels. And when Mennonite parents grow concerned (as too few do), they try to give the best available literature... to their children.... To help fill this need we have started this newspaper." MO, I (Sept. 25, 1955), p. 2.

in coverage and content very similar to Mennonite Observer, became the official successor to Konferenz-Jugendblatt. Produced in English only, its focus was on the family. Conference moderator, J. H. Quiring, writing the first editorial, expressed its purpose as follows:

It will strive to educate and to edify, to inform and to inspire, to foster love and loyalty for Christ and His Church, to broaden our vision and to correct and confirm our views; to credit our virtues and criticize our vices.⁴²

To achieve this purpose, the first editor, Rudy Wiebe, included a family section.⁴³ Subsequently, beginning January 8, 1965, a daily devotional guide was included, since "mid-Twentieth Century families have a harder time staying a cohesive unit than did their forebears two or three decades ago".⁴⁴ The devotional guide was discontinued when a special family worship booklet, Worship Together, was published in 1966, followed by an inter-Mennonite family devotional quarterly, Rejoice, in 1972, sent to all who subscribe through their local church. The family has continued to be kept in mind, as a revised statement of editorial policy at the 1976 Canadian Conference indicates: "The focus of the Herald's thrust is the local congregation and the family".⁴⁵ Thus, through an aggressive effort to

⁴² J. H. Quiring, "Editorial", MBH, I (January 19, 1962), p. 2.

⁴³ YB, 1962, p. 203.

⁴⁴ Harold Jantz, "Devotional Guide for the Family", MBH, IV (Jan. 8, 1965), p. 2. L. Stobbe, editor of MO, likewise accented the importance of the "family altar". See "Strength Through the Family Altar", MO, II (Sept. 28, 1956), p. 2.

⁴⁵ YB, 1976, p. 101. A series of articles focusing on the family indicate this editorial policy: Art Linkletter, "America's Home Life Needs Refurbishing", MBH, XIV (May 2, 1975), pp. 26-27; Kathy Rieger, "Ideas for Family Worship", MBH, XIV (May 16, 1975), pp. 2-4; Cliff and Jeanette Ratz-

nurture family solidarity, Canadian Mennonite Brethren have enhanced that cohesiveness which sacralizes their identity and thereby facilitates the continuity of the movement.

2. Mennonite Brethren Ethnicity

Ethnicity denotes a social group which, within a larger cultural and social system, claims or is accorded a special status in terms of traits it exhibits or is believed to exhibit, prominent among which are traits of linguistic and religious character.⁴⁶ Shortly after their immigration, Mennonites did not hesitate to admit such ethnicity. However, assimilation for one-half a century has considerably changed both facts and attitudes.

Interpreting Ethnicity

When in 1925 he responded to the question, "Warum bin ich ein Mennonit?", G. A. Peters unashamedly admitted that he was born Mennonite.⁴⁷ When Mennonites in Southern Alberta instituted their own German school in a rented United Church, the Anglo-Saxon community interpreted this move as a step in "incipient nationhood".⁴⁸ Such personal admissions of ethni-

laff, "Why Not Form a Couples Group?" (May 16, 1975), pp. 4-7, 23; Hugo Jantz, "Sanctifying Sex in the Family", (May 30, 1975), pp. 5-7. See also, May 30, June 13, Aug. 11, 1975.

⁴⁶ J. Gould and W. L. Kolb, A Dictionary of the Social Sciences (New York: Free Press, 1964), p. 243.

⁴⁷ G. A. Peters, "Warum bin ich ein Mennonit?" MR, XLVIII (May 6, 1925), p. 3.

⁴⁸ YB, 1928, pp. 50-51. B. B. Janz quotes the reaction of the

city from within and allegations from without, added to the more conspicuous features of different language, distinctive foods, and separate church services, further entrenched cultural separateness. Forty to fifty years later, a new generation of spokesmen was critical of any signs of ethnicity or of confusing the cultural or ethnic components with those of religion. In 1960 Leslie Stobbe, former editor of Mennonite Observer, spoke of ethnic or race consciousness as an "effective barrier to the fulfillment of our God-given purpose as a church".⁴⁹ Rudy Wiebe lamented that, with the Mennonite migration to the cities, "the heavy accent is still on Mennonite and not on Brethren. With few notable exceptions our city churches tend to foster ethnic differences rather than Christian witness".⁵⁰ Peter Klassen, interim editor of the Herald, castigated the "stunted form of Christianity which we too frequently exhibit in the 'Mennonitism' which many of our idealistic young people object to".⁵¹ And John Redekop, columnist for the Herald, reacted to a letter which asked, "What do we gain by dropping our own language and thus lose our individuality as a German race?" by asserting,

We do well to remind ourselves that "MB" refers to a denomination, and an international one at that. We are not a race. In

"Englischer" as follows: "Nun separieren sich die Mennoniten ganz und assimilieren nicht, wollen eine eigene Nation bilden".

⁴⁹L. Stobbe, "Ethnic Consciousness as Barrier", MO, VI (Jan. 22, 1960), p. 2.

⁵⁰R. Wiebe, "Away from the Mennonite Masses", MBH, I (Mar. 16, 1962), p. 4.

⁵¹P. Klassen, "It Couldn't Happen Here", MBH, III (Mar. 6, 1964), p. 3.

fact, most MB's are not white and most do not know a word of German. Even here in Canada many of us who came from long-time MB families are of Dutch, Russian, or mixed ancestry, and literally hundreds of first generation MB's come from directly British, French, and other backgrounds It is my fervent belief that the doctrine of racism has no place in the church of Christ. Our denomination is surely open to all races.⁵²

Despite this denunciation of ethnicity, it will be shown that even today some elements are present, and that ethnicity has, perhaps, contributed to the persistence of the movement.

It is the sociologists who recognize what ethnicity does to retain both the cohesiveness of a group and, thereby, the continuity of a religious movement. John Ross found that ethnic differences helped maintain denominational pluralism and that each wave of immigration brings a new church into being.⁵³ Sociologist E. K. Francis, who studied Mennonites in Manitoba, grasped the ambiguous meaning of the word "Mennonite", a notion of a distinct religious affiliation in one case, but something quite different in another.⁵⁴ However, his study showed that "ethnic communities perform a valuable function in adjusting immigrants to the ways of their adoptive country, and in maintaining social controls during the crucial period of transition following immigration".⁵⁵ He further comments,

⁵² J. H. Redekop, "Answering the Critics", MBH, III (July 31, 1964), p. 2.

⁵³ John A. Ross, Regionalism, Nationalism, and Social Gospel Support in the Ecumenical Movement of Canadian Presbyterianism, unpublished Ph. D. dissertation, McMaster University, 1973, p. 24.

⁵⁴ E. K. Francis, In Search of Utopia, p. 2.

⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 6.

... The preservation of strong ethnic ties does not necessarily prevent adjustment to the pattern of the dominant components of a total society. It is only that adjustment, when achieved by the group as a whole instead of individually, does not lead to the sudden breakdown of social organization but to gradual imperceptible (and thus often all the more effective) change, until a certain equilibrium is reached which is acceptable to both, the large society and the minority.⁵⁶

In other words, ethnicity enhances group cohesion, which, in turn, enables a religious group to remain viable while adjusting to society. In addition, true integration also occurs within the absorbing society, for there is an "interactional process of mutual change and adjustment between immigrants and receiving groups".⁵⁷ The recent Mennonite Brethren critics of ethnicity, impatient with the adjustment process, possibly failed to recognize that, sociologically viewed, precisely the ethnic aspects contributed strongly to the preservation of the church.

Intimations of Ethnicity

Is there empirical evidence of continuing ethnicity of the Canadian Mennonite Brethren, or are they completely assimilated? Several studies by Mennonite sociologists reflect such ethnicity. Mennonite Brethren sociologist L. Roy Just, current president of Tabor College, discovered in his research of social distance that, of the three largest Mennonite bodies, Mennonite Brethren had the least social "nearness" (that is, being tolerant and sympathetic in understanding). Yet, he found that generally among Mennonites "separation from the world" was not positively

⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 7.

⁵⁷ Mol, Churches and Immigrants, p. 8.

correlated with "farness".⁵⁸ Although Just's findings reflect the American scene in the early 1950's, they do support two of the above observations about contemporary Canadian Mennonite Brethren: that their attitudes do in fact reflect ethnicity, and that holding a separatist religious stand does not necessarily militate against social adaptation. In 1971 two Manitoba sociologists, Leo Driedger and Jacob Peters compared ethnic identity among Mennonite and other German university students. Using factors of parochial education, language, religion, endogamy, friends, and voluntary organizations, they discovered that a greater percentage of Mennonite university students in Manitoba hold positive attitudes toward their in-group and participate in its institutions than do other German students within their in-group.⁵⁹ And John W. Friesen, in his recent study of Mennonite identity in Southern Alberta (including Mennonite Brethren, General Conference, Old Mennonite, and Mordeman), concluded that a Mennonite culture exists, for "the ways, manners and customs of Mennonites differ significantly from those of other Canadians, so that they are easily distinguished by non-Mennonites as well. Language is ranked as a second factor."⁶⁰

The data from the Church Member Profile show that of the 359

⁵⁸L. Roy Just, "An Analysis of the Social Distance Reactions of Students from the Three Major American Mennonite Groups", Ninth CMECP, 1953, pp. 73-77.

⁵⁹Leo Driedger and Jacob Peters, "Ethnic Identity: A Comparison of Mennonite and Other German Students", MQR, XLVII (July, 1973), 225-44.

⁶⁰John W. Friesen, "Characteristics of Mennonite Identity: A Survey of Mennonite and non-Mennonite Views", Canadian Ethnic Studies, III (June, 1971), pp. 25-41.

Canadian Mennonite Brethren respondents, all but one are white racially, 63.0% (N=218) were born in Canada, 30.6% (N=106) in Russia, 2.9% (N=10) in South America, the remaining mostly from European countries. The fact that in excess of one-third of the sample population is foreign-born would in itself indicate the likelihood of a high degree of ethnicity. Nonetheless, on the basis of Leo Driedger's factors of ethnicity, devised by factor analysis in his search for cultural identity factors,⁶¹ the following table (VI-2) has been constructed and summarizes the responses to similar questions posed by Kauffman and Harder in the Church Member Profile. Driedger's third factor, language, representing 8% variance, is not included because the survey questionnaire did not include questions about language.

Ethnicity factors relating to religion (accounting for 27.9% of the variance in Driedger's factor analysis), more exhaustively treated in chapter five, indicate an attitude similar to other groups for the general question of feeling the presence of God, although it is high compared to Congregationals (25%) and Roman Catholics (43%).⁶² However, in such more specific, separatistic items as a sense of being saved by Christ or in weekly church attendance or degree of voluntarism in church participation, Mennonite Brethren rank significantly higher, in the latter two items Canadian Mennonite Brethren ranking higher than their American brethren.

⁶¹L. Driedger, "In Search of Cultural Identity Factors: A Comparison of Ethnic Students", Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology, XII (1975), 150-162.

⁶² Stark and Glock, American Piety, p. 131.

Table VI-2

Factors of Mennonite Brethren Ethnicity

ETHNICITY FACTORS		PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION FOR			
		MC (N=1202)	GC (N=614)	NAMB (N=712)	CMBC (N=359)
RELIGION	Feeling the presence of God	72	69	74	75.2
	Sense of being saved by Christ	80	70	92	91.5
	Weekly church attendance (or more)	71	58	80	82.7
	Voluntary participation in church	70	69	76	80.5
ENDOGENY	Same denomination as spouse at time of wedding	82	65	75	80.8
	Same denomination as spouse now	94	94	96	96.3
	Important to marry member of own denomination	56	49	55	59.9
	Both parents of same church as you are now	82	77	75	79.3
ORGANIZATIONS	Youth groups (church organizations included)	--	--	30	33.6
	Church organizations (percentage belonging to one or more)	--	--	15	14.9
	Should continue to publish two or more publications (rather than join U.S.)	--	--	55	60.1
PAROCHIAL EDUCATION	Attended Mennonite school	--	--	53	59.1
	Should attend at least one year in Mennonite post-high school	--	--	60	73.6
	Social dancing not permitted in church college	--	--	85	92.4
	Required chapel attendance at church college	--	--	82	86.1
	Admit more students from minority groups	--	--	61	68.6
FRIENDS	Three or more closest friends in local church	43	48	52	58.1
	Four or five closest friends in same denomination	48	47	51	61.2
MISCELLANEOUS	Most satisfaction in being Mennonite	13	17	16	14.0
	Fit fairly well or very well with people of church congregation	--	--	85	76.3

SOURCE: Church Member Profile, 1972.

no doubt, because of their more recent immigration.

Endogamy factors (accounting for 9% of the variance in Driedger's analysis) indicate Mennonite Brethren to be higher than the General Conference and much like the Mennonite Church, the Canadian being significantly more endogamous than their American brethren, again, no doubt, on account of the more recent immigrant influx. In all instances spouses seem to join the same denomination after marriage, suggesting that Mennonites prefer denominational homogeneity.

The questions relating to church organizations (over 6% of variance for Driedger) show that about one-half the members are involved in one or more church-related organizations and more than one-half feel strongly about publishing their own denominational paper, rather than jointly with the United States Mennonite Brethren. Again the Canadian Mennonite Brethren response appears somewhat more parochial than the American.

The parochial education factors (only 5% of variance for Driedger's analysis) uniformly show a higher response for Canadian than for American Mennonite Brethren, and the friends factor (only 4% variance) show Mennonite Brethren to be more communal than other Mennonites, with Canadian Mennonite Brethren being more restrictive to their own church than the Americans. Finally, in several miscellaneous factors, not included in Driedger's analysis, Canadian Mennonite Brethren appear less smug about satisfaction with their own denomination or fitness within their own local church. On the basis of the earlier data, one would have expected them to rank higher than their American counterparts. Perhaps these last questions reflect a measure of anomie in which the more recent

immigrant still has not as fully been assimilated.

With fifty or fewer years in Canada, most Canadian Mennonite Brethren still indicate ethnic overtones. Although such conspicuous factors as clothes, houses, modes of transportation, occupational involvement, or foods do not set aside Canadian Mennonite Brethren as ethnics, other more subtle factors relating to religious separation, endogamy, parochial organizations, education, and their choice of friends do intimate ethnicity.

The Pertinacity of Ethnicity

To examine the impact of the survival remnants of ethnicity is not to vouch for their rightness nor wrongness, but rather simply to analyse those factors which have contributed to the persistence of a religious movement. It does not mean that the process of assimilation has not rigorously been at work, as will be seen in chapter ten, nor does it mean that entrenchment in excessive ethnicity may not lead to petrifaction and loss of religious vitality. The present discussion is meant, simply, to view historically those factors which have contributed to the present remnants of ethnicity and to discover what impression these factors have made on Canadian Mennonite Brethren.

Immigration. The upheaval of transplanting a church from one culture to another naturally brings a new cohesiveness to the group. Three separate waves of immigration brought a new consciousness of ethnicity to the slowly assimilating Kanaedier already resident. But none of the waves was as forceful as the immigration of 1923 to 1930, during

which time 20,201 Mennonite immigrants came from Russia (of these approximately 25% were Mennonite Brethren).⁶³ No doubt, many of the earlier immigrants came because of economic and cultural reasons, but increasingly the pressure was political and religious.⁶⁴ Many were bereft of home and fortune as the following poem by one such immigrant suggests:

Sie wanderten aus!
 Die wilden Stuerme im Lande
 die hatten getrieben das Glueck aus dem Haus,
 den Wohlstandt geraubt, zerrissen die Bande,
 die so eng einst verknuepften den ziehenden Mann,
 mit der Heimat, --der Heimat, die der Sturm ihm nahm.
 Sie wanderten aus.⁶⁵

This transplantation of people severed families and villages in Russia, but formed new bonds among immigrants as they retold their individual experiences,⁶⁶ travelled together, had their names published in immigrant

⁶³ For the Mennonite Brethren proportion, see J. A. Toews, HMBC, p. 282. (Of these, 13,354 were credit passengers.) The account in MR, L (Aug. 24, 1927), p. 4, suggests 18,098 came from July 21, 1923, to Aug. 24, 1927.

⁶⁴ The prominence of economic motivation became apparent in the search of land by early immigrants, as reported by P. B. Klassen in "Reiseskizzen von der Landsuche", MR, XLVI (Oct. 31, 1923, and Nov. 14, 1923). The list of some 100 articles left behind at Montreal when disembarking suggests that these immigrants were hardly dispossessed (see MR, XLVII, Sept. 17, 1924, pp. 5-6). Some explicitly state they left Russia to protect children from Communist socialization (see MR, XLVII, Mar. 12, 1924, p. 12). Jakob Thiessen, in a series of three articles, "Warum muss die Auswanderung der Mennoniten aus Russland fortgesetzt werden?" gives three reasons: the economy is slavery, children's education, and lack of religious freedom (see MR, XLVII, Feb. 27, Mar. 12, and Mar. 19, 1924).

⁶⁵ Gerhard A. Peters, "Sie wanderten aus", MR, XLVII (Jan. 16, 1924).

⁶⁶ Typical of the many experiences retold through the Mennonitische Rundschau is the account by an anonymous immigrant, entitled, "Die Nacht des Schreckens", MR, XLVII (April 2, 9, 16, and 23, 1924).

lists,⁶⁷ and were grouped in new settlements scattered across the prairies. The relatively few names, both Christian and surnames, suggest the ethnic bond of these immigrant communities.⁶⁸ Recollecting the meaning of such an emigration for a people (ein Volk), B. B. Janz, some thirty-five years later, still keenly felt the bond between those who emigrated and those who were left behind. Janz recalls,

The ruin of the dear old home, all earthly possessions and, which was much more costly, many a precious life. A lesson which a people on God's earth could scarcely experience more severely....

And what is now the result of the better life, of all those who were rescued, while at the same time many thousands are still languishing in the old country?

We wept as we left, and we knew that those who remained would weep later. And until today the tears have not run dry. The deep sorrow continues. Are you mindful of that?⁶⁹

Such ethnic ties between old and new, and among those who together experienced transplantation, are not readily forgotten nor abandoned.

More recent waves of Mennonite immigrants represent similar reasons, the post-World War II immigration of refugees seeking political assylum, religious freedom, and economic opportunity. The Mennonite

⁶⁷ Immigrants were listed by name, age, address and arrival date in many of the Mennonitische Rundschau issues from 1925 to 1927, frequently in a special supplement (Beilage). For example, 1034 families were listed between Jan. 14 and Mar. 25, 1925.

⁶⁸ A statistical analysis of the 4070 immigrants of 1924 indicate that the most prominent twelve Christian names for men and women each constituted 87.4% and 72.7% respectively, and of the 152 different family names the twelve most prominent (Dueck, Friesen, Wiens, Thiessen, Neufeld, Penner, Rempel, Enns, Toews, Klassen, Janzen, and Peters--in order) constituted 41.4%. See H. Neufeld, "Eine Einwanderungstatistik", MR, XLV (April 22, 1925), pp. 5, 8.

⁶⁹ B. B. Janz, "Die Grundlage der grossen Auswanderung aus Russland in den 20er Jahren", MR, LXXXIV (Aug. 30 and Sept. 6, 1961).

immigrants from South America (Paraguay, Uruguay, and Brazil) were attracted by better economic conditions and the cultural opportunities among a larger and more affluent Mennonite community. Both immigrations strengthened ethnic ties and revived an interest in the retention of German.⁷⁰

The full saga of the Canadian immigrant settlement needs yet to be told. Vignettes of unexpected hardships and heroic endurance, of courageous ambition and humbling despair, of bumper crops and crop failures, of inflation and depression have been attempted in novels, in poetry, in autobiography, history, and personal recollections—all by Mennonite Brethren authors.⁷¹ Die Mennonitische Rundschau is another

⁷⁰ YB, 1963, p. 52, suggests that 20,201 immigrated after World War I and 12,144 after World War II.

⁷¹ Novels depicting Mennonite settlement are written by Margaret Epp, The Earth is Round (Winnipeg: The Christian Press, 1974); and Rudy Wiebe, The Blue Mountains of China (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1970), and Peace Shall Destroy Many (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1962).

Poetry has been written by Jakob W. Goerzen, Germanic Heritage: English, Low German, German--Canadian Lyrics in Three Languages (Edmonton: J. W. Goerzen, 1962); and Abraham P. Willms (a personal collection of hundreds of his poems in MBBC archives).

Biographical accounts have been written by Frank J. Baerg, A Teacher's Short Life Story during the Pioneer Years of Saskatchewan from January 2, 1903 - June 30, 1940, Hepburn, Saskatchewan (no publisher indicated), 1966; by C. A. DeFehr, Memories of My Family Recalled for My Family (Altona: D. W. Friesen, 1967); by D. Ewert, Pilgrims and Strangers: The Story of Our Exodus from Russia and Settlement in Canada (transl. by D. Ewert, Jr., unpublished in MBBC archives, 1973); by M. Hamm, Aus der Alten in die Neue Heimat (Winnipeg: The Christian Press, 1971); by Gerhard Peters, How God Leads: the Life of Anna and Gerhard Peters (Sardis, B. C., 1974, in MBBC archives); by Anna Redekopp, Wilhelm J. Bestvater: a Biography (Herbert, Sask., 1975, in MBBC archives); by Elizabeth (Unruh) Schultz, What a Heritage: Autobiography of Mrs. Elizabeth Schultz, nee Unruh (transl. and ed. by Annie (Schultz) Keyes, 1933, in MBBC archives).

such source of information. Specific accounts of settlers' impressions and experiences are recorded about Yarrow and Agassiz in B. C.;⁷² about Coaldale, Swalwell, and La Glace in Alberta;⁷³ about Osage, Mullinger, Carrot River, and Herbert in Saskatchewan;⁷⁴ about settlement possibilities in Steinbach, North Kildonan, and Dominion City in Manitoba;⁷⁵ and about Reesor, Ontario (a short-lived pioneer venture in Northern Ontario which immigrants had to abandon on account of severe temperatures and unusually difficult hardships).⁷⁶

It was the common experience of wrestling with the exigencies

⁷² See MR, LI (Feb. 1, 1928), p. 9; and Sept. 5, 1928, p. 5; and Jan. 18, 1928, p. 4.

⁷³ For Coaldale, see MR, LVIII (Feb. 15, 1928), p. 5; for Swalwell, see MR, XLVI (Oct. 17, 1923), p. 10; for La Glace and Clairmont, see the many letters (mostly by P. Schroeder, who lured immigrants to the Peace River through his optimistic reports) in MR, XLVII (1924): Dec. 3, p. 7; in XLVIII (1925): April 22, p. 10; June 10, p. 9; June 24, p. 6; Aug. 19, p. 8; Oct. 22, p. 9; in XLIX (1926): Jan. 27, p. 10; Feb. 24, p. 4; Mar. 17, p. 9; Mar. 24, p. 8; May 5, p. 5; May 12, p. 8; May 19, p. 10; May 26, p. 8; Aug. 1, p. 9; Sept. 1, p. 4; Sept. 15, p. 8; Sept. 29, p. 4; Nov. 10, pp. 8-9; in L (1927): Mar. 23, p. 9; June 22, p. 7; June 29, p. 9; July 13, p. 5; Sept. 21, p. 4; in LI (1928): Jan. 11, p. 5; Feb. 22; May 2, 1928, p. 8; Sept. 5.

⁷⁴ For Osage, see MR, LI (May 9, 1928), p. 9; for Mullinger, see XLI (Apr. 4, 1928), p. 5; for Carrot River, see LI (June 6, 1928), p. 5; for Herbert (in poetry form) see, XLVII (Aug. 13, 1924), p. 8.

⁷⁵ For Dominion City, see MR, XLVII (Nov. 26, 1924), p. 11; for Gruenthal, see LI (Jan. 11, 1928), p. 9; for Steinbach, see XLVI (Oct. 24, 1923), p. 11; for North Kildonan, see LI (Jan. 4, 1928), p. 11.

⁷⁶ Like Peace River country, this settlement received much attention in the MR by both settlers and visitors. See XLVIII (1925), Mar. 4, p. 4; Dec. 9, p. 5; L (1927): Jan. 11, p. 14; Jan. 18, p. 8; Feb. 15; April 18; May 2 and May 9; and XLIX (1926): June 2, p. 5; Oct. 26, p. 11; Nov. 2, pp. 11 and 14.

of pioneer life that welded together new cohesive communities of the scattered and potentially fragmented immigrants. The account of one such immigrant could well have been the story of many. Five problems are treated as uppermost in his concerns: the Reiseschuld (travel debt), the many who left Russia but were not allowed to enter Canada on account of illness, the sick one among the new immigrants, those desperately poor, and the need for the many immigrant teachers to learn the language to be able to enter their own profession.⁷⁷ Reporting on the Reesor, Ontario, settlement, A. H. Unruh contrasts the optimism of the settlers with the following more typical mood of other settlers:

The discouraged and embittered spirit, which regretfully is so prominent among the newly immigrated and Mennonite settlers in Western Canada, we have not observed anywhere.⁷⁸

An immigrant in Alberta intimates that his faith in Christ is his only refuge in such times of despair.⁷⁹ The significance of itinerant ministerial visits is expressed by another immigrant from Lebret, Saskatchewan.⁸⁰ The importance of living in proximity with the Christian commu-

⁷⁷MR, "Probleme und Beduerfnisse in unserer Immigrationsarbeit", L (Aug. 24, 1927), p. 4.

⁷⁸A. H. Unruh, in a letter to the editor, LI (Jan. 11, 1928), p. 14.

⁷⁹Peter Riediger, "Aus dem Leserkreise", MR, LI (Jan. 11, 1928), p. 9. "Was das geistliche Leben betrifft, so ist es hier sehr einsam, gleich einem alleinstehenden Strauch in der Wueste. Waren die Wurzeln nicht tief--in Christo, mit Christo in Gott--so wuerden wir wohl verdorren."

⁸⁰G. and T. Berg, "Aus dem Leserkreise", MR, LI (Jan. 11, 1928), p. 9. "Besonderes gross war uns die Freude, dass sie (Zwei Schlitten Mennoniten Geschwister) einen Reiseprediger mitgebracht hatten, der uns an zwei Abenden gesegnte Andachten hielt, und am Tage Hausbesuche machte" (LI, Jan. 11, 1928).

nity is likewise recognized.⁸¹ All the immigrants, however, did not adjust to the new conditions and find refuge in an ethnic group. For some immigrants, ethnicity made them marginal to the group and to society, as E. K. Francis so perceptively observed it.

While some submit to the painful and slow process of acculturation, many others never lose an attitude of superiority mixed with resentment at having lost their former--real or imaginary--social status. These live and pass away as strangers to both cultures, that of their native, and that of their adopted country--truly marginal men, uprooted, lonely and out of tune with their environment. Usually the isolated of this type has little chance of causing a great stir.⁸²

Despite such exceptions, most immigrants were forged into a new cohesive unit through migration and settlement itself, and by doing so the ethnicity of the new community enhanced the vitality of the religious movement.

Reiseschuld. Not only the experience of migration itself, but the debt incurred in the emigration (Reiseschuld) was a reminder to many immigrants of their foreign origins. The cohesive impact of the Reiseschuld was not so much in the common experience of having a debt (as it was for two-thirds of them), but in the experience of a common debt, that is, the collective burden of debt was placed upon all the immigrants, for the C. P. R. had assumed a debt of \$1,924,727 on behalf of the Mennonite

⁸¹ Martin K. Unrau, "Kurzer Bericht von der Ansiedlung auf dem C. P. R. Lande bei Mullinger und Mayfair", MR, LI (Apr. 4, 1928), p. 8. "Wenn wir Ansiedler auch viel Entbehrungen entgegenzunehmen und Strapazen durchmachen haben, so haben wir doch auch Vorteile solchen gegenueber aufzuweisen, die vollbesetzte Farmen, vielleicht weit abgelegen von mennonistischen Gemeinschaften gekauft haben."

⁸² Francis, ibid., p. 212.

community;⁸³ On account of the depression, almost one-half was still unpaid by 1939; and in the meantime, some debtors had died, and others refused to pay. Since the original contract with the C. P. R. had required full payment in two years, interest at six percent mounted. It was the struggle of the Canadian Mennonite Board of Colonization, representing members of both the General Conference and Mennonite Brethren churches, to have the churches assume jointly the debt (less the interest of over one million dollars which was cancelled by the C. P. R.) which helped forge the immigrant community once again.⁸⁴ In the end it was the church community that collected the total remaining debt, which was paid in full by November, 1946. The burdensome Reiseschuld had not only helped weld together the Mennonite Brethren in their common dilemma, but also brought together the larger Mennonite community of Mennonite Brethren and General Conference.

Muttersprache. The retention of the German language constituted another, sometimes dubious legacy of ethnicity. The longer the immigrant community resisted change and social integration, the more secure it remained in its ethnic seclusion; but the surer the day of a radical transition. To prevent serious conflict and loss of community, the change

⁸³ F. Epp, Mennonite Exodus, pp. 281-95, 335-46. The terms used were "allgemeine Haftbarkeit" (general obligation) and "solidarische Zusammengehörigkeit" (collective responsibility), p. 288.

⁸⁴ After 1933 annual reports at the Canadian Conference call attention to the Reiseschuld and make appeals to the Conference as a whole. See YB, 1933, pp. 65-66; 1934, pp. 69-70; 1935, pp. 48-49; 1936, pp. 76-77; 1937, pp. 55-56; 1938, pp. 48-49; 1939, pp. 56-57; 1941, pp. 47-48; 1942, pp. 60-61; 1943, pp. 55-56; 1944, pp. 75-80; 1945, pp. 125-126; 1946, pp. 155-58. Note, there was no Canadian Conference in 1940.

required the passing of a generation, for the Muttersprache had an aura of sanctity which sacralized the identity of its bearers.

Several distinct phases marked the total transition.⁸⁵ Until 1939, the immigrants were comfortable with the German language, and numerous almost jingoistic pieces of literature resounded their glory in the Mutterprache.

The Kanaedier had similarly held tenaciously to the German.⁸⁶ Not only was German to be preserved for its cultural worth, but for the preservation of youth and for its religious value for the future of the church.⁸⁷ German and religion were thought to be inseparable.

During World War II, Mennonites learned to be more cautious about their use of the Muttersprache to which they clung so fondly. For exam-

⁸⁵ Especially during the first years German was lauded. Daniel P. Enns, "Die deutsche Sprache als Kulturfaktor", MR, XLVIII (1925): May 13, pp. 5, 8; May 20, pp. 4, 5; May 27, pp. 5, 8; June 3, p. 5; J. K., "Die Pflege der deutschen Sprache", MR, XLVIII (June 24, 1925), p. 5; G. Lepp, "Misbrauch der deutschen Sprache", MR, XLVIII (Aug. 11, 1925), p. 2; Abendschule, "Die Herrlichkeit der deutschen Sprache", MR, XLIX, (Aug. 11, 1926), p. 2; MR, "Bedeutet Deutsch etwas fuer die Mennoniten?" L (Aug. 6, 1927), pp. 3, 15; F. Rocksches, "Was verraet dir deine Muttersprache?" MR, LI (Sept. 26, 1928), pp. 7, 11. Three arguments are advanced in this last mentioned article: the mother tongue betrays the fact that one is living in an old world of ideas, that one speaks foreign words, and that one's thoughts and words build the Word of God.

⁸⁶ Already in the 1911 Year Book, the Conference recommended that provision should be made to teach German in the public schools, if possible. YB, 1911, p. 14. See also, YB, 1912, pp. 12-14.

⁸⁷ In an editorial, reprinted from Mitarbeiter, H. H. Ewert explains "Unsere Stellung zur deutschen Sprache", giving three reasons for its retention: feeling of pietism, cultural value, and religious value, MR, L (Dec. 14, 1927), p. 3. See also MR, XLVIII (Feb. 25, 1925), pp. 13-14, "Der deutsche Unterricht unserer Jugend", and MR, XLIX (Jan. 20, 1926), pp. 2-4, "Warum muessen unsere Kinder in der christlichen Religion und in der deutschen Sprache unterrichtet werden?" (by G. Loewen).

ple, the issues of June 5 to October 2, 1940, of the German Mennonitische Rundschau had both the first and last page printed in English. No doubt, this was intended to avoid offence. Moreover, increasingly they acknowledged the need to be bilingual.⁸⁸ It was viewed as one of the chief problems in the annual Sunday School report that in twenty-three percent of the schools, instruction was bilingual, the remaining in German only.⁸⁹ The pacifist stance of the Mennonite community during time of war had already elicited considerable criticism and resentment and to insist upon speaking German, the language of the enemy, only aggravated the suspicion of the Anglo-Canadians. The Muttersprache facilitated the separatism which was centered in religious belief.

Following World War II, renewed, rigorous effort was made at regaining lost ground in the retention of the Muttersprache, as the annual reports of the Komitee zur Pflege der deutschen Sprache indicate.⁹⁰

⁸⁸ YB, 1939, pp. 24-27. "Wir brauchen zur allseitigen Ausbildung und Erziehung zwei Sprachen--An vielen Plaetzen tritt man energisch und zielbewusst fuer unsere Muttersprache ein."

⁸⁹ YB, 1943, p. 33.

⁹⁰ In 1946, the Conference appealed to families and churches to teach children German to allow the instruction in the newly established Bible College (YB, 1946, p. 114). In 1947, the Fuersorgekomitee recommended "dass ein entsprechender Appel an die Heime, an die Gemeinden und auch an die Kreise gerichtet werde mit der freundlichen Bitte alles zu tun, damit uns die deutsche Sprache im Heim, in den Religionschulen, in den Bibelschulen, in den Sonntagschulen und auch in den Gottesdienste erhalten bleibt" (YB, 1947, p. 156). Aggressive plans were begun in 1949 (YB, p. 57) and 1950 (YB, p. 90), a lengthy rationale was given in 1951 (YB, p. 58), and annual reports and appeals in subsequent years (see YB, 1952, p. 97; 1953, p. 96; 1954, p. 98; 1955, p. 124; 1956, pp. 136-38; 1957, p. 116; 1958, pp. 132-33; 1960, pp. 210-11; 1961, pp. 145-51). Finally in 1963 the committee was dissolved (YB, 1963, p. 117). "To do mission work successfully, we must learn the language of the Bible of different people."

Teachers' conferences conducted entirely in the German language were also held.⁹¹ Over against this apparent resurgence was increased cynicism towards such societies. An anonymous article published in the Mennonite Observer stated,

A number of young people have viewed this endeavor with some cynicism and suspicion during the first years of its existence. Among possible reasons was the seeming tendency by some to make the preservation of the German language a holy crusade, to promote it from behind the pulpits and in other ways give it special attention. This could not be understood by those whose primary interest is the proclamation of the Gospel.⁹²

In the face of such possible conflict over language, appeals were made for a "legitimate compromise" to avoid a "break with our older brethren and sisters whose wise counsel and wider experience is desperately needed in guiding our churches through the crucial times in which we live".⁹³

The 1960's became the decade of change with reference to language.

For five years (1963-1968) Conference year books were published in two languages.⁹⁴ Most local churches were shifting from a predominantly

⁹¹ At a Mennonite Teachers' Society, president G. N. Janzen had stated, "We want to promote religious instruction in our schools and to preserve the German language". See MO, IV (Oct. 31, 1958), p. 1. At such a meeting, J. H. Quiring addressed the teachers on the subject, "The Mennonite Teacher as a Missionary of the Future", MO, IV (Oct. 31, 1958), p. 4. See also articles on methodology of teaching German by Anne Wiebe, "Wie erzielt man Liebe und Verstaendnis fuer die Muttersprache", K-J, III (June, 1947), pp. 6, 7; and Harold Fehderau, "About Our Church German Schools", MO, VI (April 8, 1960), p. 10; printed also in MBH, I (Oct. 12, 1962), pp. 4, 5.

⁹² MO, "Perspective in Time", I (Oct. 5, 1955), p. 2. See also editorial by Rudy Wiebe, MBH, I (Sept. 21, 1963), p. 3.

⁹³ J. A. Toews, "A Legitimate Compromise", MO, VII (April 7, 1961), p. 2.

⁹⁴ From 1952 to 1962, an English synopsis accompanied the mainly German Conference Year Book. A motion to publish them in English was defeated in 1952 (See YB, 1952, p. 161).

German service to a bilingual or from a bilingual to English. Already in 1964, editor Harold Jantz observed the language change at the annual conferences.

Where only a few years ago German was clearly the language of the moderators and the younger delegates though fluent in English struggled to express themselves in German, today the situation has reversed itself....

The failure of the German-fluent brethren to persist in using the German can have some serious consequences. Mistrust and breakdown of fellowship easily results when there is not sufficient expression of the thinking of the elder brother.⁹⁵

By and large, the transition was, if somewhat slow, yet amicably achieved. But throughout most of the half-century, language continued to be a prominent factor of ethnicity, and with the retention of the language there was also the pulse-beat of religion, the language of the soul.

Commemorations. Finally, what lingers when assimilation is completed and the Muttersprache is abandoned are memories of the ethnic distinctives, hallowed by the religious setting in which they are rehearsed. Mennonites, either for reasons of gratitude or for the social occasion, enjoy commemorations. In 1924 the fiftieth anniversary of the coming of the Mennonites to the United States was celebrated.⁹⁶ Recollections of the arrival of immigrants were recorded and published.⁹⁷ Immigrants assembled as well to discuss common problems along with the celebration of their having emigrated from Russia.⁹⁸ Others would assem-

⁹⁵ Jantz, "Another Look at the Language Question", MBH, III (Aug. 14, 1964), p. 3.

⁹⁶ B. Sch., "Mennoniten Wanderung", MR, XLVIII (Sept. 3, 1924), pp. 6-7.

⁹⁷ MR, "Eine dankbare Russlaenderin! Erinnerung an den 22 Juni u. 21 Juli, 1923", XLVIII (June 25, 1925), p. 10.

ble as an alumni gathering of a school⁹⁹ or as former residents of a village.¹⁰⁰ The centennial of the 1874 immigration proved to be a special year of commemorations.¹⁰¹ Even more recently a Canadian Mennonite Historical Society was organized in Winnipeg (December, 1975) with Dr. Ted Regehr, University of Saskatchewan, as chairman, and a centre for Mennonite Brethren Studies was established in Winnipeg in July, 1976, as well as a Mennonite Brethren Historical Society of Canada.¹⁰² Such deliberate attempts to recollect and rehearse Mennonite ethnicity will only further sacralize their identity and help preserve their separateness.

Summary of Chapter Six

The cohesiveness which contributes to sectarian persistence is particularly evident in the family solidarity and, until recently, the ethnicity of Canadian Mennonite Brethren. Because of their biblical understanding of the family, Mennonite Brethren emphasize the sanctity

⁹⁸ MR, "Immigranten-Versammlung in Waterloo, Ont.", XLVII (Oct. 15, 1924), p. 7. See also, "Eine Immigrantenversammlung in Winkler, Man.", XLVII (Oct. 15, 1924), p. 5.

⁹⁹ Halbstadt Kommerzschueler met at Winnipeg on Dec. 31, 1927, to Jan. 1, 1928. See MR, LI (Jan. 11, 1928), p. 6.

¹⁰⁰ B. H. Wall, "Dank-Fest-Feier der in B. C. Wohnenden Sgradower", Sardis, B.C., May 23, 24, 1948; minutes of assembly in MBBC archives. See also "Alexanderkroner Treffen", MR, XCVIII (Sept. 10, 1975), pp. 5, 9; "Erinnerungen aus der Krim", MR, XCVIII (Aug. 27, 1975), p. 3; and "Rueckblick auf das Ufimer Treffen", MR, XCVIII (Sept. 24, 1975), p. 12.

¹⁰¹ Both MBH and Mennonite Reporter featured special issues with much material of historical and ethnic interest. See MBH, XIII (July 12, 1974), and Mennonite Reporter, IV (Nov. 25, 1974).

¹⁰² See YB, 1976, pp. 76-79.

and indissolubility of marriage. Empirical evidence supports this view and practice of marriage and the family. Marriages are largely endogamous, and few separations and divorces occur. At the same time, the common practice of grace before meals and family worship, and the firm belief that pre-marital and extra-marital sex are always wrong, indicate such solidarity, as does the fact that almost all Mennonite Brethren families own their home. The sociological function of the family serves to act as a shock-breaker to the first and second generation immigrants and to withstand the encounter with the secular world for the third and fourth generations. The threat of family erosion has increasingly been perceived by its church leaders, and rigorous attempts have been made to promote family solidarity both on a Conference level, through study sessions and official pronouncements, as well as at the family level by encouraging social functions which tie families together, deliberately structuring local church events to focus on the family, and bringing appropriate literature into the home.

Despite obvious change in the degree of ethnicity and the increased self-criticism which it engendered, ethnicity nonetheless prevails, if not conspicuously, then in rather subtle factors. The large percentage of foreign births and the continuous use, until recently, of the German language have been strong factors in the pertinacious hold of ethnicity. Not so obvious are factors of religious belief and participation, endogamous practices, parochial education and organizations, and the communalism apparent in the choice of friends. Yet, intimations of ethnicity continue to characterize Canadian Mennonite Brethren. The cohesive force of such ethnicity becomes apparent when one notes the common experiences accompany-

ing successive waves of Mennonite immigration, when one appreciates how the collective responsibility of the Reiseschuld forged a common community, when one senses the emotional and associational bonds of a common Muttersprache, or when one rehearses through commemorative occasions those events which have become part of an ethnic heritage.

The cohesive impact of family bonds and peoplehood have undoubtedly facilitated the sacralization of the Mennonite Brethren identity and to that degree contributed to the persistence of sectarianism.

VII

CONSOLIDATING IDENTITIES THROUGH CONVERSION AND CHARISMA

Crucial to Mennonite Brethren reality is the notion of a believers' church. Both the Anabaptist movement of the sixteenth century and the sectarian emergence of the Mennonite Brethren in the nineteenth century insisted upon a church in which believers voluntarily joined following baptism upon confession of faith. The believers not only witnessed to an experiential faith, begun through a conversion experience, but to an ongoing growth in faith, referred to here as sanctification. The consequence of such an experiential faith was devotionism, that is, the cultivation of habits of devotion, and evangelism--encouraging others to embrace the same faith. Psychologically and sociologically, such personal transformation resulted in a new identity formation. Old ways were broken up and abandoned and a new self was forged, not only, theologically speaking, through regeneration or conversion, but, sociologically speaking, through adopting a new orientation and re-ordering of priorities and values and by interaction with a new community. Through conversion and its correlatives, thus, a new identity was consolidated on a personal or micro-sociological plane.

But why, in the following discussion, does one group conversion or religious transformation with charisma or religious leadership? It is because what happens psychologically through conversion and sanctification

on a personal level occurs sociologically through charismatic leadership on a group level or macro-sociological plane. As Hans Mol maintains, conversion is to the person what charisma is to the social group.¹ In both instances, identities are consolidated—one personal, the other group or denominational. Gifted, influential leaders enable a group to make major adjustments and to forge a new identity so that members of a group evolve a collective awareness of their unity. Both conversion and charisma are in this sense mechanisms to facilitate change and consolidate identities. Such consolidation of identities enabled the Canadian Mennonite Brethren to persist as a religious movement in the twentieth century.

1. Conversion and Spiritual Life

Among the seven distinctives of the Mennonite Brethren Church, listed by J. A. Toews in his recent history, are experiential faith and personal witnessing.² Especially these two distinctives come into focus at this time. The overarching purpose in the discussion of these aspects is to show that religious transformations have consolidated identity on a personal level. As a result the identity of Canadian Mennonite Brethren has been sacralized, thus facilitating the continuity of the religious movement.

Empirical Evidence of Identity Change

To incorporate the full scope of the identity change on a personal

¹Mol, Identity and the Sacred, p. 50.

²Supra, p. 119.

level, four separate measures are used to indicate the same.

Initial conversion. As in the discussion by Kauffman and Harder, "initial conversion" indicates the first major, subjective encounter with God accompanied by a personal crisis and resulting in a change of allegiance and behaviour.³ Its measure through four separate questions taken from the Church Member Profile is summarized in Table VII-1. Initial conversion was explained to the respondents as a definite decision to become vitally committed to God, an explicit acceptance of Christ as Saviour, or as a time in life when they became aware of making a new start to walk with God. Among the groups measured, Canadian Mennonite Brethren have the highest percentage of conversion experiences. The score of 95.3% (N=341) for Canadian Mennonite Brethren compares to only 34% (N=2174) in a sample measured by E. T. Clark.⁴ Since baptism upon confession of faith is a requirement for membership, such a response is not surprising. In fact, while one would not expect all members to have a particular type of conversion experience, all would be expected to witness to some experience with Christ. It may be that the several exceptions simply cannot pinpoint the "initial" part of the experience. What is astonishing is that almost one-half of the respondents had more than one such experience. Perhaps the second or subsequent experience is viewed as a renewal of the original commitment. The median age, interestingly, is lower than in other Mennonite groups when, in fact, the necessity of

³ Kauffman and Harder, AFCL, p. 84.

⁴ Ibid., p. 87. See also, E. T. Clark, The Psychology of Religious Awakening (N. Y.: Macmillan, 1929), pp. 47, 48.

Table VII-1
Initial Conversion Experience

QUESTION AND RESPONSE	PERCENT DISTRIBUTION FOR:			
	MC (N=1202)	GC (N=614)	NAMB (N=712)	CMBC (N=359)
1. Was there a particular point in your life when you had a conversion experience?				
YES	80	65	93	95.3
NO	7	19	3	2.2
UNCERTAIN	13	16	3	2.2
2. How many such experiences have you had in your life?				
ONE	42	52	57	51.5
TWO	34	27	26	29.7
THREE	14	10	12	14.1
FOUR OR MORE	10	10	5	4.7
MEDIAN NUMBER	2.2	2.0	1.9	1.97
3. How old were you at the time of the first such experience?				
MEDIAN AGE	13.7	14.9	13.1	12.78
4. Where or how did this first experience occur?				
PUBLIC CHURCH MEETING	72	55	56	48.0
PERSONAL INVITATION	10	10	19	19.1
CHURCH CAMP OR SCHOOL	5	12	6	8.5
PRIVATE EXPERIENCE	7	9	7	8.8
SMALL GROUP	0	4	1	2.4
OTHER	5	10	11	13.1

SOURCE: Church Member Profile, 1972.

a conversion experience is more prominent among Mennonite Brethren.⁵

⁵ From a study of Manitoba Mennonite Brethren in 1957, Dr. G. D. Huebert ascertained from 1401 respondents that the average age was 13.3, and that most conversions (772) occurred at home with the assistance of

Does this mean that more and more Mennonite Brethren are recognizing and encouraging children's salvation? If so, what trend will develop with the age of baptism (of which the median age for North American Mennonite Brethren is 16.4),⁶ since 17.6% (N=63) are baptized at the age of 14 or less. While most decisions for Christ (i. e. 48% where N=158) are made in public church meetings, Mennonite Brethren, much more so than the other Mennonites, are led to such a decision by personal invitation (19.1% where N=63), which indicates that personal evangelism is stressed among Mennonite Brethren.

Sanctification. The ongoing experience of being saved by which the new identity is further consolidated is referred to as sanctification. The understanding is not simply theological in which an instantaneous moral perfection or forensic righteousness is ascribed to the believer, but, on a practical level, the awareness that the believer encounters experiences of God, especially also the presence of the Holy Spirit in his struggle against a personal devil. Table VII-2 lists the responses which indicate "Yes, I'm sure I have" to a number of such religious experiences in the day to day believer's life. Again, these were taken from the Church Member Profile. As the religious factor of ethnicity, so also here Canadian Mennonite Brethren have intense religious experiences, sensing keenly the presence of God and being saved by Christ,⁷ as well as

the parents (488 cases), and in 407 cases with the help of the minister or evangelist. See L. Stobbe, "Encouragement for Parents and Children's Workers", MO, III (July 5, 1957), p. 2.

⁶Kauffman and Harder, ibid., p. 71.

⁷Supra, pp. 211-12.

Table VII-2

Measures of Sanctification

RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE (Response: "Yes, I'm sure I Have.")	PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION FOR			
	MC (N=1202)	GC (N=614)	NAMB (N=712)	CMBC (N=359)
A feeling that you were in a holy place	57	58	60	58.1
An awareness that sin and evil were all around you	64	58	68	69.6
A sense of being tempted by the devil	75	58	80	81.9
A feeling that some personal misfortune was caused by the devil	16	11	16	16.4
A feeling that God had delivered you from danger in a difficult situation	65	61	71	72.8
A sense of being loved by Christ	78	70	85	87.9
An experience of being healed by God	32	31	29	26.8
A feeling that the Holy Spirit gave you a special understanding concerning God's truth	45	39	60	60.6
A feeling of being filled by the overwhelming joy and power of the Holy Spirit	45	38	52	54.4
An experience of speaking in tongues	3	1	2	0.9

SOURCE: Church Member Profile, 1972.

the presence and activity of the devil; yet, few feel that personal misfortune was caused by the devil. While 72.8% (N=257) feel that God delivered them from danger in a difficult situation, only 26.8% (N=92) have experienced healing. Again while most Canadian Mennonite Brethren have experienced the work or filling of the Holy Spirit, only 0.9% (N=3) have had the ecstatic experience of speaking in tongues. It appears that, while believers experience religion intensely, few claim to have the more radical healing by God, the more ecstatic encounters with the Holy Spirit, and the more direct misfortune caused by the devil. Canadian

Mennonite Brethren obviously cannot be grouped with the charismatic movements; yet, they do claim to have consciously ongoing and meaningful religious experiences.

Devotionalism. The religious practices which reflect these experiences are included in such devotional exercises as Bible reading, prayer, and commitment to God in the decisions of life. Table VII-3 indicates five such measures of devotionalism taken from the Church Member Profile. Once again, in all five measures Canadian Mennonite Brethren

Table VII-3
Measures of Devotionalism

QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION FOR			
	MC (N=1202)	GC (N=614)	NAMB (N=712)	CMBC (N=359)
1. Other than at mealtime, how often do you pray to God privately on the average?				
DAILY OR MORE	78	73	82	86.8
2. Do the members of your household have a family or group worship other than grace at meals?				
YES	41	42	61	67.4
3. How often do you study the Bible privately, seeking to understand it and letting it speak to you?				
FREQUENTLY/DAILY	68	58	77	83.4
4. In general, how close do you describe your present relationship to God?				
CLOSE/VERY CLOSE	54	48	56	58.7
5. When you have decisions to make in your everyday life, how often do you ask yourself what God would want you to do?				
OFTEN/VERY OFTEN	61	55	68	69.7

SOURCE: Church Member Profile, 1972.

rank higher than the others measured. Stark and Glock found that 75% of Protestants pray once a week,⁸ which for Canadian Mennonite Brethren would be about 99% (grouping the responses "several times per day", "daily", and "occasionally"). While 83.4% (N=297) of Canadians study their Bible frequently (at least once a week) or daily (49.4% study it daily), Stark and Glock noted that only 23% of Protestants in America read the Bible at home once a week or more and only 13% study it daily.⁹ Canadian Mennonite Brethren, thus, observe fairly rigorous devotional habits.

Evangelism. Three questions on the Church Member Profile measure the degree of personal evangelism. Table VII-4 summarizes this information. Canadian Mennonite Brethren tend to be somewhat more bashful about sharing their Christian experience than their American counterparts. No doubt, the high degree of ethnicity accounts for part of this reluctance. And yet, Mennonite Brethren as a whole tend to be somewhat more active in personal witnessing than the two larger Mennonite groups with whom they were compared.

Non-theological Dimensions of Religious Transformation

For Mennonite Brethren theologians, identity change or religious transformation has uniquely theological or supernatural components not subject to psychological or sociological analysis. Those who have experienced such conversion maintain, "We cannot explain a Biblical conver-

⁸ Stark and Glock, American Piety, p. 112.

⁹ Ibid., p. 110.

Table VII-4

Measures of Personal Evangelism

QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION FOR			
	MC (N=1202)	GC (N=614)	NAMB (N=712)	CMBC (N=359)
1. How frequently do you take the opportunity to witness orally about the Christian faith to persons at work, in the neighborhood, or elsewhere?				
NEVER	32	40	31	30.2
SOMETIMES	51	44	49	52.9
OFTEN/VERY OFTEN	17	16	20	16.8
2. How frequently have you invited non-Christians to attend your church and/or Sunday school services?				
NEVER/SELDOM	59	62	54	56.7
OCCASIONALLY	34	34	39	36.8
FREQUENTLY	7	4	8	6.5
3. Have you personally ever tried to lead someone to faith in Christ?				
NO, NEVER	25	26	13	13.7
YES, A FEW TIMES	67	66	74	76.0
YES, OFTEN	8	9	13	10.3

SOURCE: Church Member Profile, 1972.

sion in its supernatural aspect, of course; nor were it necessary or profitable to do so."¹⁰ When, therefore, a philosopher analyses the process, the following response of a pastor is not surprising:

Now when a mind with a philosophical bent ... seeks to interpret and evaluate the powerful and mysterious working of the Holy Spirit in terms of a psychological process, then we stand in danger of diverting from the truth.... Not everything related

¹⁰ Herbert Giesbrecht, "A Biblical Conversion", K-J, VIII (March-April, 1952), pp. 24-25.

to the Christian experience can be explained. The moment a man's total experience in Christ can be broken down and explained by a psychologist or philosopher, or anyone else, he ceases to be a Christian....¹¹

Notwithstanding such contention, for a sociological analysis of a religious movement, one needs to analyse other than strictly theological components. And in doing so, one does not deny the preeminence of the theological.

The insistence upon conversion. The importance to Mennonite Brethren of the initial conversion experience is apparent not only in the early history of the movement,¹² but also in its continued emphasis to the present. As chapter five indicates, Mennonite Brethren see the very purpose of their denomination to witness to the need of a decisive conversion.¹³ Conversion has veritably become one of the rites of passage in the Mennonite Brethren life cycle. To test the accuracy of such an assertion, obituaries were read of two separate times, the last twenty published in the Mennonitische Rundschau in 1950 and the last twenty published in the Mennonite Brethren Herald in 1975. Of the twenty obituaries published in 1950, fifteen make special mention of conversion, indicating the age or approximate time when it occurred. Three of the five not mentioning conversion (although baptism was mentioned) were members of the General Conference Mennonite Church. All of the other seventeen obitu-

¹¹ Herbert J. Brandt, "What does 'New Wineskin for Old Wine' say about Conversion?" MBH, V (April 15, 1966), pp. 8, 9. The response was written with reference to Delbert Wiens' New Wineskin for Old Wine (Hillsboro, Kansas: M. B. Publishing House, 1965).

¹² Supra, pp. 107-18.

¹³ Supra, p. 158.

aries were of Mennonite Brethren.¹⁴ Of the twenty obituaries published in 1975—all initially Mennonite Brethren—all but one specifically indicate the time of conversion.¹⁵ It has become routine for Mennonite Brethren, therefore, to perceive of conversion as a conscious, measurable (in terms of time) experience of the believer, as the 95.3% of the respondents in the Church Member Profile indicated.

A closer look at psychological and sociological components of the conversion experience shows, first, that the median age for the initial conversion experience of Mennonite Brethren is just under thirteen. Moreover, such an experience in earlier times was an emotional crisis during which time one felt guilt and remorse for sin, after which came acceptance of forgiveness as a gift from God, the transformation being possible only by faith, not through any rite or merit. From a booklet containing thirty such testimonies of conversion of Mennonite Brethren (including eight former or deceased Canadians), two brief excerpts are included here as examples of the above. Long-time Bible teacher, pulpiter, and author, Dr. A. H. Unruh, reports the following about his own conversion in Russia in 1895 after he had become a teacher at the age of seventeen:

One evening I walked back and forth in my room and came to the point of giving up saving myself. I thought of a verse of the song, "Jesus thy blood and righteousness, my beauty are, my glorious dress, By these of God loved and blest, I will pass to to heaven's rest." I was left standing with the thought: "Jesus"

¹⁴MR, LXXIII, Aug. 9 to Dec. 27, 1950.

¹⁵MBH, XIV, Oct. 3 to Dec. 26, 1975. The one obituary not specifying conversion indicated that the deceased had been a member of the Mennonite Brethren church, and more recently Alliance, but that he had been a very active Christian.

blood and righteousness," and said to myself, "When I will appear before the judgment bar, I'll say, 'I have nothing but there is Jesus who atoned for me'" At that moment a ray of light fell into my heart and I dared to embrace by faith the substitutionary suffering and death of Jesus Christ (Romans 8:16).

I thank the Lord that He revealed salvation in this manner to me. So I was not misled to consider myself a Christian while still unsaved but the Lord gave me the foundation of salvation on which I still stand.¹⁶

A second testimony of conversion is that of Dr. G. W. Peters, Canadian immigrant of 1920's and currently Professor of World Missions at Dallas Theological Seminary, who reports:

It was in my eleventh year when the Lord first brought me to a clear knowledge of my lost condition.... Then followed years of greatest entanglements about which I often weep.... While in a service conducted ... the following song was sung responsively

Then my heart broke. Deeply gripped by that song I hurried out of the service weeping. I went and threw myself under a tree. Am I really deceived? Is there really an anchor for every need in life? What questions for me as a young man who was alone without a father, without a God, and without a Bible.... Then followed days, rather months of reading, seeking and praying. My lost state became more evident but the salvation through Jesus Christ also became clearer. So it happened one evening after about a year and a half of seeking and praying that while reading Isaiah 43:24, 25, I was permitted to find rest for my soul and assurance for my heart....

Deeply convinced of the truth of the word I knelt at my bed and thanked God who had become a reality for the forgiveness of my sin. This consciousness has remained and today, years after that experience, I can joyfully thank the Lord that He has blotted out my transgressions and will not remember my sins....¹⁷

A third instance is the record of a young man who experienced conversion

¹⁶ A. H. Unruh, "The Grace of God in My Life", in Henry E. Reimer, Being Born Again—By the Word of God (Hillsboro, Kansas: Henry E. Reimer, 1970), pp. 7, 8. (Italics his.)

¹⁷ G. W. Peters, "My Conversion Testimony", in Henry E. Reimer, Being Born Again, pp. 29-30.

just before his early death at the age of twenty. His father, a minister, writes the following account:

... I stayed with him for two days, and did not conceal the fact that his condition was very serious and that he could suddenly die. There now was a severe struggle and battle to obtain eternal life. What God promises in His Word, "For whoever calls on the name of the Lord will be saved", Romans 10:13, that now was here confirmed. He called upon the name of the Lord, and the Lord in his boundless grace received him.¹⁸

These instances, as most testimonies by candidates for baptism indicate, suggest a consciousness of sin preceding the release of guilt which comes when faith is exercised. Many testimonies convey feelings of joy and gratitude which then follow.

To experience initial conversion as child, youth, or adult does not resolve all struggle with sin in the subsequent life. As the Church Member Profile indicates, a number have a second such experience or more. Mennonite Brethren anthropologist Jacob Loewen analyses his own childhood conversion experiences and asks,

Was I converted in stages? Did the change include only those areas of my self-life of which I was conscious at the time of conversion? Was it the recognition of guilt in "new" unregenerate areas in my life that precipitated the need for further experience? Were some of my intermediate conversions basically attempts to discharge guilt that arose from inadequate mastery of the Christian ideal? Were some of the crisis experiences necessitated by inadequate support during the learning or rehearsal of the Christian role?

Our candid answer to all of these questions is a qualified "yes".¹⁹

¹⁸ Nicolai and Tina Rempel, "East Chilliwack, B. C.", MR, LXXIII (Dec. 6, 1950), p. 3.

¹⁹ Jacob and Anne Loewen, "Can Child Conversions Last? Socialization and Child Conversion: A Personal Record", MBH, VIII (Oct. 17, 1969), pp. 2-6.

Viewed sociologically, such experiences appear to be renewal or revitalization crises in which the identity change is further consolidated. Viewed theologically, Mennonite Brethren have a greater problem explaining such repetition of "conversion". Even more problematic to the theologians is the increasingly early experience. One pastor, a former Canadian, surveyed 206 Mennonite Brethren members in the Central District Conference in the United States (Nebraska, Kansas, Oklahoma, and Colorado) to discover that the average age of conversion for those fifty years of age and older was 17; for those 40 to 50 years, 16.2; for those 30 to 40 years, 15; for those 20 to 30 years, 11.5; and those under twenty, 7.7.²⁰ He then poses the resulting problem:

However, how well does the 7 or 8 year old child understand the conversion experience? Does he need special nurture and training as a young Christian? ... How should this effect [sic] our entire teaching program?²¹

Kauffman and Harder, on the basis of the five denominations surveyed in Church Member Profile, indicate a similar trend. The median age for conversion for the older generation (50 and over) was 15.2, for the middle generation (30-49) it was 13.8, and for the younger generation (20-29) it was 12.8.²² The resulting dilemma has been recognized in several studies of conversion in Mennonite Brethren churches. I. W. Redekop, in a thesis submitted to United College (now University of Winnipeg), notes that "conversion-regeneration" grew out of an adult experience in the Mennonite

²⁰ J. A. Froese, "Watching a Trend", MO, VI (Feb. 3, 1961), p. 2.

²¹ Froese, ibid.

²² Kauffman and Harder, AFCL, p. 88.

Brethren Church, the experience preceding the theological formation of it.²³ The resulting inability of children to match the deeply subjective and radical change in adults (or of pagans) and the failure of the church to provide for adequate nurture of children has led Mennonite Brethren philosopher Delbert Wiens to conclude,

Because we have a theology of conversion appropriate to adults but no adequate theology of Christian nurture, we know what to do with pagans but not what to do with our own children.²⁴

However, these unresolved theological problems have not unduly complicated the psychological and sociological understanding of the need for identity change. In fact, when theology fails to provide the needed rationale, some social-psychological explanation accounts for the on-going necessity for religious transformation. In this instance, socialization has advanced the age where children can grasp the need for religious commitment.

Despite the theological problems, the necessity of conversion continues to be emphasized. This is apparent in the revised draft of the Confession of Faith, which states,

We are saved by the grace of God through faith in Christ. The Holy Spirit, through the Word of God, convicts man of his sin and need for salvation. Those who repent of their sin and trust in Christ as Saviour and Lord receive forgiveness. By the power of the Holy Spirit they are born into the family of God and receive the assurance of salvation. Saving faith involves a surrender of the will to Christ, a complete trust in Him and a joyful obedience to His Word as a faithful disciple.²⁵

²³I. W. Redekop, "The Development of the Concept of 'Conversion' in the Mennonite Brethren Church", unpublished thesis for Bachelor of Theology at United College, Winnipeg, 1959.

²⁴Delbert Wiens, New Wineskins for Old Wine: A Study of the Mennonite Brethren Church, p. 7.

²⁵GCRYB, 1975, p. 10.

Evidence of the conversion experience continues also to be the primary test of eligibility for baptism and church membership. Two statements in the revised Confession of Faith reflect this. Concerning the organization of the church, the Confession reads:

The local church is an association of believers, baptized and organized for worship, fellowship, nurture, service, and witness.²⁶

Concerning Christian baptism, it reads:

To qualify for baptism one must repent of sin and trust Jesus Christ as personal Savior and Lord.²⁷

Moreover, increasingly membership classes, in which conversion is studied theologically, are conducted prior to baptism.²⁸ In addition, conversion has been taught in Sunday schools, vacation Bible schools, and from the pulpit. Especially until mid-century, conversion became a frequent theme of the annual Canadian conference messages.²⁹ Since then, conference themes wrestle more with issues facing the church, and The Voice, official organ of Mennonite Brethren Bible College, became the forum for a theological treatment of conversion.³⁰ While conversion per se has not been

²⁶ GCYB, 1975, p. 11.

²⁷ GCYB, 1975, p. 13.

²⁸ See chapter one, "Beginning the New Life in Christ", in John Unger, ed., Becoming Disciples: A Manual for Church Membership Classes (Fresno: Board of Christian Literature of the General Conference of M. B. Churches, 1973), pp. 7-13.

²⁹ The following are examples of such sermon topics (see respective year books): 1928, A. H. Unruh, "Die biblische Bekehrung"; 1932, N. N. Hiebert, "Errettung ist gross"; 1937, H. S. Rempel, "Wie kann ich selig werden?"; 1944, C. C. Peters, "Jesus nimmt die Suender an"; 1954, H. Lenzmann, "Die Öffene Tuer".

³⁰ While only an infrequent theme for theological or practical

the subject of a study conference, it was prominent in the first international evangelism consultation of the Mennonite Brethren at Winkler, Manitoba, in 1975. Here Canadian moderator and Mennonite Brethren spokesman, F. C. Peters, in his keynote address, "The Mennonite Brethren Vision", asserted, "The evangelism of all Mennonite Brethren as I have come to know them is conversion centered. An attempt is made to solicit a definite response from the hearer resulting in an overt decision-making experience in his life."³¹ Through various means, thus, conversion has been kept central in Mennonite Brethren teaching.

The practice of piety. The high response of Canadian Mennonite Brethren to the measures of devotionalism indicates that conversion is but a beginning in the Christian life, not an end in itself. Instruction to new believers was not given simply to prepare them for baptism, but, more importantly, to develop habits of Christian devotion which would foster spiritual growth. Typical of such exhortations via sermon, Sunday school lesson, or youth program is the sermon reproduced in Die Mennonitische Rundschau, entitled "Directives for Newly Converted". The directives include: believe in Jesus only for your salvation, forget the sins of your past life, do not depend on your feelings, do not depend on things you do, pray regularly, study the Bible personally, cultivate fellowship

analysis, the following articles have been written: J. A. Toews, "Child Conversion", Voice, I (July-Aug., 1952), 12-15; H. R. Baerg, "Conversion", Voice, XIX (Jan., 1970), 5-8; and H. H. Voth, "Conversion, Baptism and Church Membership", Voice, XIX (Jan., 1970), 66-74.

³¹F. C. Peters, "The Mennonite Brethren Vision", paper submitted to the World M. B. Consultation on Evangelism, Aug. 13, 1975, at Winkler, Manitoba.

with God's people, assume Christian responsibilities in the home and to the state (pray for those in authority, pay your taxes, vote responsibly).³² Such formal exhortations were buttressed with the informal, personal interest of a fellow believer, who especially in earlier times, would probe, "Ist es noch immer so?" (meaning, "Is Jesus still your Saviour?").³³ While theologically attempting to straddle the Calvinist-Arminian controversy,³⁴ in practice Mennonite Brethren have been more Arminian, and failure to cultivate devotional habits has suggested a state of being a backslider.

Enthusiasm to share the faith. Personal witnessing was one of the hallmarks of Mennonite Brethren in their early days. To a lesser degree such spontaneous sharing of the faith characterized the new immigrant in the mid-twenties, often legitimately inhibited by his inability to communicate freely to his Anglo-Saxon neighbour. Theoretically, personal evangelism was believed in³⁵ and preached³⁶ and taught (especially in the Bible schools), but practiced less. The Canadian Mennonite Breth-

³² Submitted by K. J. Janzen, "Ratschlaege fuer Neubekehrte", MR, LXIV (Sept. 3, 1941), pp. 2, 3.

³³ George Epp, "Alexander Voth—He Made Himself Available", MBH, VII (Dec. 13, 1968), pp. 9, 10.

³⁴ D. Ewert, "The Scriptural Teaching on the Preservation of the Believer", study conference of the Mennonite Brethren in Denver, Colorado, 1958; document in MBBC archives, pp. 47-62.

³⁵ Illustrative of the desire to share the faith with those in one's community is the following statement of concern from a settler in the Peace River area: "Ich denke oft, es wird so viel Mission getrieben, aber in der Naehel wird es vernachlaessigt. Es sollte sich jemand aufmachen, der gut geuebt ist in der englischen oder der russischen Sprache maechtig ist und her kommen, denn diese verlorene Schafe sind dem Herrn gerade so viel wert, als die in China, Indien oder Afrika", MR, XLVII

ren record of personal evangelism, according to the Church Member Profile data, while somewhat higher than the other Mennonite groups, does not speak of an aggressively conversionist sect. Only 16.8% (N=60) witness often or very often, and only 10% (N=37) have often tried to lead someone to faith in Christ. However, the relatively inactive second and third generations are likely not indicative of an indefinite decline in evangelism. Increasingly in recent years such evangelistic agencies as Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship, Campus Crusade, Navigators, Child Evangelism Fellowship, and various community crusades have stimulated Mennonite Brethren to become more active. Especially the teaching of Mennonite Brethren missiologists, such as J. J. Toews and G. W. Peters, have promoted evangelism on both a personal and denominational level.³⁷ In 1972, an inter-Mennonite consultation on evangelism met at Minneapolis to discuss the many-faceted methodologies.³⁸

• Sporadic renewal through revival. Routinization of charisma results in a loss of religious vitality. Both on a personal and group level, revival provides renewed commitment to the faith and joyous enthusiasm in sharing the same. Such renewal, then, becomes an effective

(Jan. 2, 1924), p. 8.

³⁶ See YB, 1944, pp. 21-24, for record of Conference sermon on personal evangelism by J. F. Redekopp, "Biblische Seelsorge", and pp. 29-33 for sermon by J. A. Harder, "Wie verwirklichen wir die biblische Seelsorge in den Gemeinden?"

³⁷ J. J. Toews, "The Role of the Layman in the Evangelistic Church", Voice, XVIII (Oct., 1969), 40-47; G. W. Peters, Saturation Evangelism (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1970).

³⁸ For news coverage of "Probe", see MBH, XIV (May 19, 1972), p. 11 and (June 2, 1972), p. 9. See also, Mennonite Reporter, II (May 15, 1972), pp. 6-10.

mechanism for the consolidation of personal and group identity. Through the denominational papers, Mennonite Brethren spokesman have both lamented the formalism of institutionalized religion and lauded the spontaneity of revivalism. Editor Leslie Stobbe has forthrightly written of the conditions required on the part of individuals to experience such renewal.

And when the individual will repent of his coldness, worldliness, pride, boasting, lying misrepresenting, unforgiving spirit, malice, love of money, exhibitionism, then God will revive the individual—and thus the church, for it is made up of individuals.³⁹

Columnist John H. Redekop lamented that "the average Sunday morning service in the average Canadian M. B. church is much too formal.... What I miss is the element of spontaneity".⁴⁰ A year later he dispels the notion that education and sophistication make revivalism unnecessary. Himself the head of a political science department in a Canadian university, he opines,

... Revivalism is the antidote for sin and lukewarmness in the life of the Christian, not for ignorance and simplicity. The Christian who has a Doctor's degree needs revivalism just as much as does an illiterate garbage collector.⁴¹

More recently, Redekop distinguished between evangelism and revival, and again made an appeal for the latter to diminish the need of the former.

Evangelism involves bringing unbelievers to personal salvation; revival involves renewing the faith and the fervor of believers so that they will become more obedient disciples and more concerned about the lost.

³⁹L. Stobbe, "Revival Will Come, If ...", MO, II (Feb. 17, 1956), p. 2.

⁴⁰J. H. Redekop, "Formalism in the Church Service", MBH, III (Apr. 3, 1964), p. 2.

⁴¹Redekop, "Revivalism", MBH, IV (Mar. 12, 1965), p. 2.

What I am suggesting is that we should have more, not fewer, revival campaigns so that we will need fewer, not more, evangelistic campaigns.⁴²

Editor Harold Jantz expressed the same need a year later.

To speak of revival makes us uneasy.... It is an admission of waywardness and coldness.... It is a word that doesn't fit easily into our social and cultural milieu.

Yet as I look throughout our Canadian M. B. churches, I sense a deeply felt need for a great quickening from above.⁴³

These voices from the media are representative of similar appeals from the pulpits.

Repeatedly, though sporadically, revivalism has spread through the Mennonite Brethren churches in the last half-century and brought renewal to individual members. Already in 1924 and 1928 the Mennonitische Rundschau reported such revival campaigns.⁴⁴ Typical of community campaigns, combining both evangelism and revivalism, often inter-church or inter-Mennonite, were those conducted by (Old) Mennonite evangelist, Dr. George Brunk,⁴⁵ or by Mennonite Brethren evangelists Waldo Wiebe or Rudy

⁴² J. H. Redekop, "Revival", MBH, VI (Mar. 3, 1967), p. 2.

⁴³ H. Jantz, "Revival", MBH, VII (Jan. 5, 1968), p. 3.

⁴⁴ In 1924, P. H. Penner reported on a week of meetings at Winkler, Manitoba, conducted by H. Neufeld of Herbert, Saskatchewan, "Alle Abende stroemten so viele Andaechtige zur Kirche, dass die Raeume meistens ueberfuellt waren." MR, XLVII (April 9, 1924), p. 4. In 1928, C. Penner reported on revival at McMahon, Saskatchewan, conducted by C. N. Hiebert and F. Janzen, "Dem geistlichen Leben fehlte es aber eine lange Zeit an der wirklichen geistlichen Waerme, und wie sich die Erde nach anhalten der Duerre nach Regen sehnt, so schauten die ernsten Kinder Gottes nach einem erquickenden, geistlichen Segen aus. Ganz anders ist es jetzt in der Versammlung geworden...." MR, LI (March 21, 1928), p. 9.

⁴⁵ See John Thiessen, "Revival Fires in British Columbia", MO, II (Sept. 5, 1958), p. 12.

Boschman.⁴⁶ Particularly confining himself to conduct revival meetings as a result of the 1971 Saskatoon revival, Mennonite Brethren pastor Nick Willems toured Canada and Europe for several years in a revival ministry.⁴⁷ And these scattered references are typical of many others. Mennonite Brethren private high schools were frequently the spawning grounds for such revival. Reporting on several such renewal waves, Leslie Stobbe concluded in 1956, "... These spiritual awakenings have proved that private Christian high schools can be centers from where new spiritual life is carried into the homes and churches."⁴⁸ Such sporadic renewal, then, revitalized the spiritual fervor of initial conversion and facilitated growth or sanctification of the believer's life. Sociologically viewed, revivalism served as a further mechanism to consolidate a fragmenting religious identity and lend permanency to a movement, but not at the expense of petrification. Rarely, however, did revival occur without the catalytic help of a charismatic leader.

⁴⁶Waldo Wiebe, "Revival at Greendale", MBH, II (Mar. 8, 1963), p. 14; and Mrs. J. B. Martens, "Revival Moves into Manitoba", MBH, XI (Jan. 14, 1972), p. 17; and E. J. Lautermilch, "Rudy Boschman Team at Swift Current", MBH, XI (Dec. 1, 1972), p. 9.

⁴⁷See Nick Willems, "Revival in Review", MBH, XII (June 29, 1973), p. 2, in which he legitimates the emotional component. "When people renew their love for Jesus emotions may be involved.... Shouldn't we become emotional when heaven rejoices over one repenting sinner?" It should be noted that Willems was not officially sponsored by the Mennonite Brethren church, although he ministered in a number of their churches.

⁴⁸L. Stobbe, "A Fellowship of the Concerned", MO, II (April 6, 1956), p. 2. Earlier in the same year the MO reported on revival at Alberta Mennonite High School, Coaldale, as a result of the ministry of Abe Regier (see MO, II, Jan. 27, 1956, p. 1) and at Mennonite Educational Institute, Clearbrook, B.C., as a result of the preaching of Henry Unrau of the Canadian Sunday School Mission (see MO, II, Mar. 16, 1956, pp. 1, 8).

2. Charisma and Religious Leadership

What conversion does to identity formation on a personal level, charisma does on a group level. It picks up the loosened pieces of the social fabric, dislodged by the forces of change and secularization, and welds these into a new identity. It anchors change in the emotions of men.⁴⁹ Hans Mol sees charismatic leaders more as catalysts for change than as innovative to the point of revolution.⁵⁰ Called from within the group, they conserve social order, for they must hear what the masses hear. In keeping with their sectarian character, Mennonite Brethren, especially until recently, have been more prone to charismatic leadership than to the bureaucratic or rational type, or to that of traditional authority.⁵¹ As Max Weber states, "It is recognition on the part of those subject to authority which is decisive for the validity of charisma."⁵² This fact and the fact that "the corporate group which is subject to charismatic authority is based on an emotional form of communal relationship"⁵³ explain why charisma, usually thought of as a quality of an individual, is associated with the identity of a group. What then has

⁴⁹Hans Mol, Identity and the Sacred, pp. 44-45.

⁵⁰Ibid., p. 46.

⁵¹According to Max Weber, bureaucratic authority was illustrated by the priesthood of the Roman Catholic Church, traditional authority by the chiefs of tribal society, and charismatic authority by prophets, heroes, saviors, and shamans. M. Weber, The Theory of Social and Economic Organization, pp. 324-63.

⁵²Weber, ibid., p. 359.

⁵³Ibid., p. 360.

charisma done for the preservation of the Mennonite Brethren movement?

Some Facts of Canadian Mennonite Brethren Leadership

Is there a discrepancy between the Anabaptist vision of lay participation in the leadership roles of the church and the actual practice? A look at the empirical data reveals the following real facts. The Church Member Profile reflects a substantial involvement in lay or ordained offices. Table VII-5 shows that 58.2% (N=206) of Canadian Mennonite Brethren held positions of leadership (as minister, elder, council member, officer, Sunday school teacher, committee chairman, youth group officer, etcetera) in the three years prior to the survey. Moreover, of these 10.5% (N=37) were ordained as a minister or deacon. In excess of one-half of the membership is thus involved in leadership roles. Compared to this, Fichter reports that only 6% of Catholics carry leadership roles in the parish, and Campbell and Fukuyama report that 36% of the United Church of Christ members held an office or served on a board or

Table VII-5

Leadership Involvement in Local Churches

QUESTION AND RESPONSE	PERCENT OF RESPONSES FOR			
	MC (N=1202)	GC (N=614)	NAMB (N=712)	CMBC (N=359)
1. Do you presently hold, or have you held within the past three years, a position of leadership in your local congregation?				
YES	58	54	56	58.2
2. Were you ever ordained as a minister or deacon?				
YES	7	11	10	10.5

SOURCE: Church Member Profile, 1972.

committee in the previous three years.⁵⁴

Table VII-6 reflects the degree of professionalism which members desire in the ministry. Although more than one-half of the Canadian Mennonite Brethren sample believed that all members are ministers, about

Table VII-6

Lay or Professional Church Ministry

QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES	PERCENT OF RESPONSES FOR:			
	MC (N=1202)	GC (N=614)	NAMB (N=712)	CMBC (N=359)
1. A proper view of congregational organization and leadership is that <u>all members are ministers</u> and should share, as they are able, in the ministerial functions of the congregation.				
STRONGLY AGREE/AGREE	61	55	54	55.0
2. A church congregation cannot be complete unless there is an ordained minister to lead the congregation and perform the ministerial functions.				
STRONGLY DISAGREE/DISAGREE	26	31	36	34.6
3. How important is it, in your opinion, that the pastor in your congregation be on full-time salary rather than earning all or part of his income through other employment?				
OF LITTLE IMPORTANCE/QUITE UNIMPORTANT	23	11	12	14.8

SOURCE: Church Member Profile, 1972.

two-thirds agree that a church cannot be complete without an ordained minister. Most Canadian Mennonite Brethren (about 85%) still want a pastor with a full-time salary. The subsequent discussion will indicate whether or not these views, as the disparity of responses indicates, are

⁵⁴ Kauffman and Harder, AFCL, p. 187.

mutually exclusive, or if this reflects a current trend in the pattern of leadership.

Table VII-7 indicates the role of women in church leadership. Canadian Mennonite Brethren are more conservative than either of the other two Mennonite groups measured or than their American counterparts.

Table VII-7
Role of Women in the Church

QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES	PERCENT OF RESPONSES FOR:			
	MC (N=1202)	GC (N=614)	NAMB (N=712)	CMBC (N=359)
1. In the future, should larger numbers of qualified women be elected or appointed to church boards and committees at denominational, district, and congregational levels?				
YES	29	40	26	20.8
2. Should the policy on ordinations in your denomination be changed to allow for the ordination of women to the Christian ministry?				
YES	12	30	12	5.6
3. Do you believe that women in Canadian and American societies are being discriminated against and denied certain basic rights?				
YES	15	20	14	11.9

SOURCE: Church Member Profile, 1972.

Only one-fifth of the respondents would like larger numbers of qualified women to be elected, and only 5.6% (N=20) favor ordination of women to the ministry. While holding to such a discriminating view, they, at the same time, do not feel that women are discriminated against. Here there is a decided discrepancy between Mennonite Brethren belief and their own practice of giving women considerable leadership responsibility in the overseas missionary work. It is also not in keeping with the more radical

view of the early Anabaptists who allowed for considerable leadership among women.⁵⁵

Analysis of Leadership Patterns

With some strongly Anabaptist features, which emphasize lay leadership, and with some views discrepant to the Anabaptist vision, Canadian Mennonite Brethren leadership requires closer analysis. Does this somewhat inconsistent stance reflect change in leadership patterns, confusion in the role of leaders, or simply a disparity between the vision and practice? A closer look at the types of leadership, the problems of leadership, and the emerging patterns in leadership will help answer these questions.

Types of religious leadership. If more than one-half of the membership of Canadian Mennonite Brethren are involved in leadership roles in the local congregation, what types of leaders are these? The foregoing data suggest that this is not tantamount to saying that more than one-half the membership are prophets or priests. Neither do these leaders fit Max Weber's two categories of individual bearers of charisma—ethical or exemplary prophets.⁵⁶ Nor is Joachim Wach's more extensive classification of types of religious authority adequate for explaining Mennonite Brethren leadership.⁵⁷ From the perspective of organizational types, that is,

⁵⁵ Kauffman and Harder, AFCL, p. 194.

⁵⁶ Max Weber, The Sociology of Religion, p. 55.

⁵⁷ Wach speaks of the religious founder, reformer, prophet, seer, magician, diviner, saint, and priest. See Sociology of Religion (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1971), pp. 341-68.

spheres of authority defined by geographic, political or ecclesiastical boundaries, one may speak of Mennonite Brethren leadership in terms of congregational and conference levels. Congregational leadership has to do with the independent leadership of the local church, since Mennonite Brethren church polity recognizes congregational autonomy. The local congregation, however, is not always defined geographically but in terms of the members of a specific, local church. In a metropolitan area, therefore, the geographic distribution of the members of the different congregations overlaps considerably, since members are free to choose their own local church. Not only is membership within the local church clearly defined, but the sphere of authority of the leadership is restricted to the members of that respective church. Each local church of the 130 Mennonite Brethren churches in Canada has its body of leaders. Typical of such a group in a somewhat larger than average sized church is that of the River East Mennonite Brethren Church, Winnipeg, in which, of some 300 members, 70 are involved in local church boards, not including the many teachers and counsellors in the teaching agencies of the church on a given Sunday or mid-week.⁵⁸

Conference leadership varies with the type of conference—whether international (called General Conference), national, or provincial. While independent Mennonite Brethren conferences exist in numerous countries,⁵⁹ there is not an international conference of all the Mennonite Breth-

⁵⁸ See Annual Report of the River East M. B. Church, June 5, 6, 1976.

⁵⁹ As a result of its mission outreach, independent national conferences have been established in India and Japan in Asia; Austria and Germany in Europe; Zaire in Africa; Brazil, Colombia, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay,

ren churches,⁶⁰ except for the North American General Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches (including Canada and United States), first duly constituted in 1879. Leadership on this level is naturally restricted to Canada and United States. The Canadian Mennonite Brethren Conference (known until 1945 as the Northern District Conference of the Mennonite Brethren Church of North America) was separately organized in 1910, and since then has elected its own leaders and conducted its own sessions of business.⁶¹ Provincial conferences, each with its own executive officers and boards of leaders, were organized as follows: Alberta (1927), British Columbia (1936), Manitoba (1929), Ontario (1931), and Saskatchewan (prior to 1910, initially in two districts; Herbert and Rosthern; after 1946 as one conference).⁶² The extent of membership involvement, therefore, in conference leadership at the different levels is rather impressive. In 1975, 34 Canadians served in the General Conference executive and boards; 77 served in the Canadian Conference executive and boards, and several hundred served in provincial conferences.⁶³ To fill executive and board

and Uruguay in Latin America. With the exception of the church at Karaganda, the Mennonite Brethren churches in Soviet Union belong to the Baptist union.

⁶⁰ The existing affiliation of these independent churches is via the Board of Missions and Services of the General Conference of M. B. Churches.

⁶¹ It was customary from the outset to invite representatives from the General Conference of North America, especially to communicate their concerns about the joint program of missions, publications, and education.

⁶² The dates are based on the first record of official minutes for the respective provincial conferences. In the case of British Columbia, it is the date of the application for its first constitution, November 24, 1938.

⁶³ In Ontario alone, 93 members served in the provincial conference

or committee positions only in the local churches and conference structures requires widespread involvement of the individual member in such leadership positions of the organizational type.

From the perspective of function, one could view at least three separate types: first, those, as above, who are involved in administrative or policy-making bodies; second, those, more conspicuously, who provide leadership through the use of the pulpit--pastors, Bible expositors, evangelists, and missionaries; and third, those, usually with less personal charisma, who influence membership as scholars, educators, and writers. The first of these is being dealt with on a Canadian Conference level only, and, in fact, only the executive officers are analysed to examine the degree of continuity.⁶⁴ During the first fifteen years, from 1910 to 1924, only three persons served in the position of moderator: David Dyck for ten years; H. S. Voth for four years; and Heinrich Neufeld for one year.⁶⁵ During the next twenty-three years (1925-1947), only three leaders served: H. S. Voth, fifteen years; A. H. Unruh, five years; and William Bestvater, three years. Thus for the first forty-eight years of the Canadian Conference, there were but five moderators. During the next twenty-eight years (1948-1975), nine separate moderators served, the

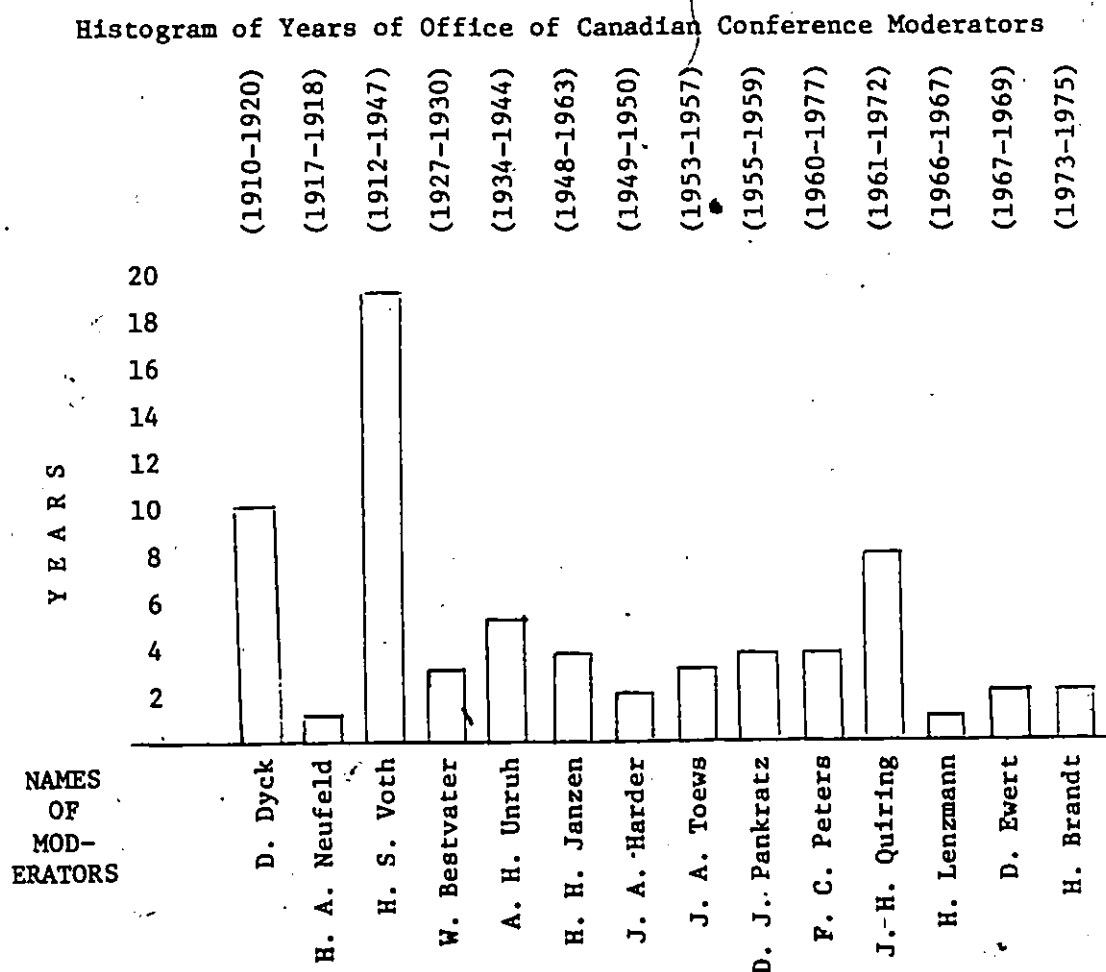
executive and boards (not including the pastors of the sixteen churches which are ex-officio members in the Board of Spiritual and Social Concerns). See respective year books: GCYB, 1975, pp. 218-221; YB, 1975, pp. 149-152; and Ontario Conference YB, 1975, pp. 79-86:

⁶⁴ One could also list businessmen, lawyers, doctors, administrators, farmers, and other professionals who have given much time and greatly influenced the Conference through their leadership gifts.

⁶⁵ See respective yearbooks.

longest among these being: J. H. Quiring, eight years; H. H. Janzen, four years; D. J. Pankratz, four years; and J. A. Toews, three years. Figure VII-1 depicts the continuity in leadership more graphically.⁶⁶

Figure VII-1



SOURCE: Canadian Conference Yearbooks, 1910-1975.

During the first half of the century, leaders tended to hold offi-

⁶⁶ The leaders are listed in order of the year of their first term in office; the dates given indicate the time-span between their first and last year in office.

ces for longer periods. It may be that during this time moderators were known more for their charisma, while in more recent years the membership refused to recognize such charisma in view of the multiple involvement in leadership roles. During the sixty-five years, 1910-1975, twenty-four different assistant moderators served. The longest term was six years, served by B. Janz between 1910 and 1915; then H. A. Neufeld for five years between 1916 and 1922; and D. J. Pankratz for five years between 1955 and 1965. Of the twenty-four assistant moderators, eleven served as moderators, or, to view it conversely, of the fourteen moderators eleven had also been assistant moderators. No doubt one position served as a stepping stone for the next. During these sixty-five years, there were eighteen different secretaries, those serving longest in office being: H. Regehr, seventeen years (between 1932 and 1955); W. J. Bestvater, twelve years (between 1914 and 1925); and J. K. Duerksen, nine years (between 1956 and 1964). Only three secretaries became assistant moderators, and only two became moderators. Since there was little overlapping between secretaries and moderators, the secretarial duties obviously required less charismatic persons, but perhaps more scholarly types. Secretaries, until quite recently, were inclined to serve for long periods.

Secondly, from the functional perspective, are the pulpiteers. Most obvious are the pastors, a number of whom have served local churches in excess of ten years.⁶⁷ Among these are I. W. Redekop, Elmwood M. B.

⁶⁷ In addition, many lay leaders could be mentioned who gave their services as ministers and leaders largely without remuneration: J. A. Harder of Yarrow, B.C.; D. D. Derksen of Boissevain, Manitoba; D. J. Pankratz of Coaldale, Alberta; and J. Thiessen of Vancouver are but a few of the more prominent.

Church, Winnipeg; H. Penner, Scott Street M. B. Church, St. Catharines; J. G. Baerg, Virgil M. B. Church, Virgil (Ontario); D. B. Wiens, Culloden Avenue M. B. Church, Vancouver; and H. Lenzmann, Clearbrook M. B. Church, Clearbrook, B.C. More frequent, however is the short-term service of less than ten years. In addition to pastors, whose leadership is mainly on the local level, are the itinerant Bible expositors, serving the whole Conference. Prominent among these were J. F. Reimer (1924-1948), A. H. Unruh (1925-1961), and, more recently, D. Ewert (1953-1973). Historian J. A. Toews describes two separate eras for leadership in evangelism.⁶⁸ The era of multiple lay evangelists (1910-1954) included C. N. Hiebert and H. S. Rempel, who served bilingually as pioneer evangelists; immigrants such as A. Nachtigal, H. H. Goosen, and C. C. Peters, who evangelized in German; H. H. Janzen, Abraham Huebert, and D. B. Wiens, who ministered in Russian and German; and G. W. Peters, F. C. Peters, J. H. Epp, G. D. Huebert, J. A. Toews, A. P. Regier, B. W. Sawatsky, J. F. Redekop, P. R. Toews and others, who served bilingually in German and English. The era of Conference evangelists (1954-1972) included H. H. Epp (1959-1964), J. J. Toews (1966-1969), and Rudy Boschman (1969-1972). Overseas missionaries who ministered to Canadian churches through the years were N. N. Hiebert, F. J. Wiens, J. N. C. Hiebert, J. A. Wiebe, P. V. Balzer, J. H. Lohrenz, A. A. Unruh, J. J. Dick, and Henry Bartsch--all but the last three being American. In recent years a whole new generation of missionaries has become known, but today's missionaries carry a low profile compared to those of an earlier generation.

⁶⁸ Toews, HMBC, pp. 315-319.

Among the third group of leaders, characterized by their distinct function, are the educators, authors, and scholars. Influential among the earlier teachers in private high schools have been F. C. Thiessen and I. J. Dyck of Clearbrook, J. H. Friesen and C. D. Toews of Yarrow, H. B. Thiessen and D. H. Neumann of Niagara, G. H. Peters and D. K. Duerksen of Winnipeg, and Peter Bargen and Jacob Isaak of Coaldale. Prominent among Bible school teachers were A. H. Unruh, J. G. Wiens, A. A. Kroeker and H. R. Baerg of Winkler; J. B. Toews, G. W. Peters, J. H. Epp and C. Braun of Hepburn; A. Schierling, J. A. Toews, Sr., B. W. Sawatsky, and A. P. Regier of Coaldale; P. D. Loewen, J. A. Harder, A. Nachtigal, and G. H. Sukkau of Yarrow; and J. F. Redekop, H. H. Nickel, A. H. Wieler, and P. R. Toews of Clearbrook. To single out a few is but to omit the many who could also be listed. In higher theological education, such influential teachers served at Mennonite Brethren Bible College as A. H. Unruh, J. H. Quiring, J. A. Toews, H. H. Janzen, D. Ewert, F. C. Peters, and V. Adrian. Many of the above teachers wrote extensively in periodicals and books.⁶⁹

⁶⁹ To be listed among these are A. H. Unruh, who published many of his sermons, contributed articles to Zeugnis der Schrift (1925-1929), edited Die Antwort for two years, contributed some thirty articles to The Voice (1953-1958), wrote some 8000 pages of Sunday school lessons, and wrote an 850-page history of the Mennonite Brethren Church; G. W. Peters, who has written extensively in mission periodicals and written Saturation Evangelism, Theology of Mission, and Revival in Timor; J. A. Toews, who has contributed articles to Konferenz-Jugendblatt, Mennonite Observer, Mennonite Brethren Herald, and some twenty articles in The Voice, and authored True Non-resistance through Christ, Alternative Service in Canada during World War II, and The History of the Mennonite Brethren Church; H. H. Janzen, who published many of his sermons in Mennonite Brethren publications, contributed articles in Voice, and wrote popular expositions on apocalyptic books of the Bible; D. Ewert, who has contributed some twenty articles in the Voice, served as its editor for ten years, and is a frequent contributor of exegetical sermons in the Mennonite Brethren Herald; and F. C. Peters, who is a frequent contributor to church periodicals, the Voice and Mennonite Brethren Herald.

Then there are the editors of church periodicals: H. Neufeld, J. F. Klassen, Erich Ratzlaff of the Mennonitische Rundschau; Leslie Stobbe and G. D. Huebert of the Mennonite Observer; and Rudy Wiebe, Peter Klassen, and Harold Jantz of the Mennonite Brethren Herald. In addition, there is a body of scholars, writing in secular and religious journals, who influence the church: J. H. Redekop (political science), John B. Toews (history), Leonard Siemens (sociology), Harry Loewen (German literature), and Vern Ratzlaff (ethics). Thus, for a small denomination of some 19,000 both leadership potential and leadership participation is, indeed, extensive at all levels, local and conference, and in different functional spheres--managerial, proclamatory, and scholarly.

Surveying the last half century of Canadian Mennonite Brethren history, one could isolate the following to be among the most influential leaders, for they exercised multiple gifts of leadership at multiple levels--local, provincial, Canadian, and General Conference levels. Presenting the most charismatic vignettes are H. S. Voth, in administrative and pastoral leadership; A. H. Unruh, in preaching, teaching, and writing;⁷⁰

⁷⁰ While H. S. Voth is listed because of his many years as chosen moderator of the Canadian Conference, A. H. Unruh is known for the theological leadership given to the Conference as demonstrated in his sermons and writing. Paying tribute to the late Unruh, D. Ewert makes the following assessment: "Ueber ein halbes Jahrhundert lang ist die Bruedergemeinde durch die Predigt und Lehrarbeit unseres lieben Vaters in Christo, wie mit einem Himmelstau, getraenkt worden. Ueber die Haelfte des hundertjaehrigen Werdens und Bestehens der Bruedergemeinde hat er miterlebt. Sein Andenken bleibt im Segen" (See "In Memoriam: A. H. Unruh, D. D. 1878-1961", Voice, X (Jan.-Feb., 1961), 3. Similarly, J. A. Toews assesses, "One is almost tempted to refer to the period of the thirties, forties, and fifties as the 'Unruh Era'" (See "A. H. Unruh--Christian Educator and Practical Theologian", MBH, VII, Dec. 27, 1968, pp. 7-9, 19). And Herbert Giesbrecht refers to Unruh as a "man for all seasons": "Unruh was a man who could clearly discern cultural and religious trends and speak powerfully to the

B. B. Janz, in church statesmanship, international diplomacy, and preaching;⁷¹ and J. A. Harder in lay pastoral leadership and Conference work.⁷²

Less charismatic but perhaps more influential because of their educational contributions are such leaders in recent times as J. A. Toews, in teaching, preaching, and writing; J. H. Quiring, in teaching, administration, and pastoral ministries; F. C. Peters, in administration, teaching, and preaching; and D. Ewert, in teaching, preaching, and writing. Such extensive and effective leadership has significantly contributed to welding together the Canadian Mennonite Brethren identity in times of growth and change.

needs of his people within that context" (MBH, XIV, Sept. 19, 1975), pp. 4-6).

⁷¹Paying tribute to Janz's statesmanship, historian J. A. Toews comments, "Fuer die sturmbewegte Zeit zwischen zwei grossen Weltkriegen-- fuer die Zeit der Auswanderung und der Einwanderung--schenkte Gott uns neben andern wertigen Knechten auch den Lehrer, Prediger und Fuehrer, B. B. Janz" (See "Im Memorium: B. B. Janz (1877-1964)", Voice, XII, Nov.-Dec., 1964, 4-8). The impact of his leadership qualities is well articulated by editor H. Jantz: "We have many Brethren who at some time have felt the force of this man's personality. He was not frivolous. He was a deliberate man, slow in speech, holding strong convictions, and also a man of vision. Because of his determined convictions, people who knew him or worked with him occasionally found him entirely unyielding. But he displayed an incorruptibility that many of us could emulate" (See MBH, III, Oct. 23, 1964, p. 3).

⁷²Harder is listed because of his particular contribution to one community as a lay pastor. Assessing his charismatic role, Hugo Jantz writes, "Many of those who were members of the Yarrow church during the seventeen years of his leadership would probably say that he ruled with an iron hand. To most of the women in the church his declarations had the ring of papal authority.... Such was the charisma of his personality, however, that he could easily sway the entire church in the face of a decision during business sessions. He was a man of extremely strong character and convictions, and he knew and was able to speak his mind so well that not another person in the congregation was a match for him. But he was just as quick and just as willing to lead the church in repentance as in judgment and decision" (See "John A. Harder: Valiant for the Truth", MBH, VIII, Jan. 24, 1969, pp. 6-8).

Problems in leadership. Despite the extensive lay participation, as well as strong exercise of professional leadership by gifted individuals, problems in church leadership have been detected and continue to the present. First among these is the tendency toward elitism. The above discussion of types of leadership indicates the extensive possibilities for involvement of members in leadership roles. Nonetheless, as Henry Regehr has shown in an analysis of leaders in both the General Conference (1945-72) and Canadian Conference (1956-73), the bulk of offices are held by a relatively small group of individuals.⁷³ Regehr, however, is addressing himself to the first functional type indicated above, that is, Conference leadership, and it was noted in the above discussion that there is greater mobility in Conference leadership in recent decades than in earlier times. A long-time pastor, former college teacher and president, J. H. Quiring, raised the question, "Do we create an elite among our ministers?" His rhetorical question has the following reply:

If there is an "elite" of ministers within our brotherhood it has been unconsciously created by a public that is not in the race for leadership, but that wants to be served well and is willing to give unqualified recognition to those who meet their needs.⁷⁴

Such elitism, then, is innate to the Anabaptist view of the priesthood of

⁷³ Henry Regehr, "Patterns of Leadership in the M. B. Conference", Direction, I (Oct., 1972), 112-121. Regehr argues that in the Canadian Conference executive, for the time under study, the two top positions have been shared among only ten people. The Canadian contribution to General Conference executive leadership has come out of this group of ten. A similar occurrence is discovered in a study of who gets elected to the Board of Reference and Counsel. There is a strong tendency to re-elect, rather than to elect new members.

⁷⁴ J. H. Quiring, "Do We Create an Elite among Our Ministers?" Voice, XIII (Sept.-Oct., 1972), 6.

all believers, since leadership positions and recognition are not hierarchically determined by a bishop or pope, but, in keeping with Weber's notion, the membership determines the recognition of charisma among the many who exercise leadership. Canadian Mennonite Brethren even today, therefore, continue to be welded together by such charisma.

The second problem relates to the role of the professional pastor among Canadian Mennonite Brethren. This is a recent problem, because until mid-century there were few, if any, full-time, salaried pastors. Most churches had several lay ministers, one of whom was chosen to be "leader". In the last two to three decades, almost all churches have secured salaried pastors. In recent years, several strong reactions have been noted. J. H. Quiring defines four areas of frustration in the minister's life: the excessive demands, the lack of recognition, the personal limitations, and the hatred of the world. The first two of these indicate how the group validates charisma. Quiring explains,

Why all these expectations? Is it because the people are so impressed with the ability and versatility of their minister that they feel that no one else can do the work as well? Is it because the members have become indifferent and lazy and find this an acceptable way of shirking their responsibility? Or may it be because the minister has trained his congregation to expect this of him? In his youthful zeal and abounding energy he has insisted on leading all meetings, preaching all sermons, making all visitations, attending all committee meetings, and filling his schedule with an unending round of activities. And the church simply acquiesced. They let him do it. Now they expect it from him.⁷⁵

Waldo Hiebert, long time Mennonite Brethren pastor in Kansas and California and currently Professor of Practical Theology at the Mennonite Breth-

⁷⁵ J. H. Quiring, "Overcoming Frustration in a Minister's Life", Voice, XII (Nov.-Dec., 1963), 1-3.

ren seminary in Fresno, argues that church leadership is in trouble because of its unholy posture of professionalism, its many demands upon the ministry today, and because of what leadership does to the personality of the leader. He explains the first dilemma as follows:

He is expected to be "just a brother" but is also expected to have "expertise." He is to deny the division between clergy and laity, yet he is to perform the duties of a special class called clergy. We have created this dilemma ourselves. On the one hand we deny the clergy-laity division as being unscriptural (which it is!), and on the other hand we expect our pastors to be trained in a fully accredited graduate seminary!

So the pastor lives with these ambiguities. He is to lead, yet he is to have laymen lead also. He is to minister, yet he is to encourage the people of the church to minister. He is to preach, yet he is also to encourage others to minister the word. What shall he do? He is in trouble. After all, to be a Mennonite Brethren (Anabaptist) pastor is something very different than being a Lutheran "Pfarrer," different than being a Catholic priest, even different than being a Baptist or Presbyterian minister.⁷⁶

Again, the problem arises because of the tension between adapting to an educated urbanized, increasingly secularized, contemporary church setting, and simultaneously adhering to the charismatic type of leadership of the Anabaptist model. Little wonder that this tension is reflected in the empirical data, where 55% believe all members are ministers, yet 65% want an ordained minister for the congregation to be complete. Related problems, not elaborated here, are the ambiguity about the meaning of ordination, and the shortage of pastors.

A third problem reflected in the empirical data has to do with

⁷⁶Waldo Hiebert, "Church Leadership in Trouble", MBH, XIV (Sept. 19, 1975), pp. 2-3. See also, John Regehr, "The Call to the Ministry", a study paper presented to the 1976 Canadian Conference at Winnipeg, available in MBEC archives.

the role of women in church leadership. For most Mennonite Brethren this has posed no problem, since women were not ordained. Moreover, in the Church Member Profile only 6% wanted a change, and only 21% wanted greater representation on church boards and committees at local and conference levels. Contrariwise, since the turn of the century women have been commissioned to serve in overseas missionary work--admittedly not as pastors or preachers--and have assumed much responsibility as leaders in administrative, teaching, and advisory capacities. Increasingly in recent years church spokesmen have voiced the need for greater involvement of women. In 1973 two Mennonite Brethren biblical scholars (both studying at the University of Toronto) published a statement on "The Role of Women in the Church", which gave women the same privileges as men to exercise their gifts of leadership in the church.⁷⁷ Subsequently, a number of Mennonite Brethren women have advocated a liberation of women.⁷⁸ In 1974, at the Canadian Conference in Vancouver, New Testament scholar, David Ewert, presented a moderate view in which he considerably liberalized the traditional Mennonite Brethren stance, while yet not advocating ordination

⁷⁷ Allen R. Guenther and Herb Swartz, "The Role of Women in the Church", MBH, XII (May 4, 1973), pp. 4-9. This article generated much discussion. See letters to the editor in MBH, May 4, p. 27; May 18, p. 28; June 1, p. 3; June 15, pp. 8-10; June 29, p. 9; July 13, pp. 6-7; Aug. 3, pp. 11-13. In response, D. B. Wiens, Vancouver pastor, upheld the traditional view in "Effeminating Man--Masculinizing Woman", MBH, XII (June 15, 1973), pp. 12-13.

⁷⁸ Katie Funk Wiebe, "The Woman Question", MBH, XII (May 4, 1973), p. 10; "A Giant Leap for Mankind", MBH, XII (Oct. 5, 1973), p. 27; "Color Me a Person", MBH, XII (Dec. 28, 1973), pp. 2-5; Marie K. Wiens, "Full Church Citizenship for Women", MBH, XII (May 4, 1973), p. 18; Hedy Martens, "God's Word: To Women as to Men", Direction, V (Jan., 1976), 11-26. See also the opposite view by Helen Bergmann, "Brethren, Take the Lead", MBH, XII (June 15, 1975), p. 26.

of women.⁷⁹ The 1975 Conference session responded to this study paper by taking the following position:

Be it therefore resolved:

1. That the Canadian Conference of M. B. Churches go on record as not favoring the ordination of women for the preaching and pastoral ministry nor their election to Boards and offices whose work is of the nature of eldership, such as the Board of Spiritual and Social Concerns, and the Board of Reference and Counsel or its equivalent.
2. That the Canadian Conference declare women eligible to be elected as delegates to conferences and to church and conference boards and committees other than those referred to in recommendation #1.⁸⁰

Carried by a vote of 339 to 20, this resolution indicates a modified, although not completely liberalized position of the involvement of women in the church. Here is a case where charisma has still not been validated by the group.

Emerging pattern of leadership. In summary form, the pattern of leadership which appears to be emerging is the following:

1. Congregational or lay involvement in leadership continues to be prominent. There has been growth from a simple organizational structure with a few strong leaders to a complex structure and extensive participation of members in leadership. Organizational bureaucracy has not resulted in hierarchical authority. Charismatic authority has safeguarded the group identity.

2. Professional pastoral leadership has come to stay. The tension resulting from the shift of lay leadership to the one-pastor system

⁷⁹David Ewert, "The Christian Woman in the Church and the Conference", YB, 1974, pp. 30-43.

⁸⁰YB, 1975, p. 106.

has brought a corrective which insists upon team or multiple leadership. The pastor does not assume unlimited authority, nor is he alone responsible for the work of ministry; instead, he leads in a team ministry. Charisma continues to be validated by the group, rather than traditional authority assumed by inheritance or bureaucratic authority assigned by an arch-ecclesiastic.

3. Women are increasingly recognized as equal in the bestowal of gifts and the exercise of the gifts. Ordination of women, however, is not an option. Charismatic leadership by women is limited only because the group has not validated and recognized such charisma.

4. Regionalism is increasingly becoming dominant. Few individuals on a national level are recognized for their administrative, theological, or pastoral insights. A single individual does not assume a moderating position for long. Mobility in leadership reflects a charisma which is brittle, albeit necessary for group identity on a regional level.

5. The first generation of church leaders following the immigration of the mid-twenties has almost wholly passed from the scene. The third generation is entering the ranks. The charisma of the second generation, somewhat beclouded at times, resurfaces sufficiently to assure the brotherhood that the Anabaptist vision of charismatic leadership still prevails, however blighted.

In conclusion, then, the church of 1975 is still firmly rooted in the brotherhood concept. Yet, decisive and effective leadership is demanded, while cautiously shared. As in time past, so today group identity is consolidated through charisma, despite the threats which jeopardize the continuity of the group.

Summary of Chapter Seven

For a religious movement to persist, identities will need to be consolidated both on a personal and social level. In this sense, conversion is to the individual identity what charisma is to the group--both mechanisms leading to identity formation. Canadian Mennonite Brethren consider conversion and personal evangelism among their continuing distinctives. Empirical evidence confirms not only theoretical belief in, but actual experience of, such conversion, the most frequent occasion being the public church meeting or a personal invitation. Measures of growth in spiritual life through sanctification and devotionism, according to the Church Member Profile, likewise rank the Mennonite Brethren slightly above other Mennonite groups. Less prominent, although still in excess of other Mennonites measured, is their involvement in personal evangelism. To account for such continued vitality, one must note the place of conversion in the Mennonite Brethren church membership requirement, in theology, and in preaching, despite the practical inconsistency of using essentially an adult conversion model, designed for out-group members, and applying it to children of believers. The resulting neglect in nurture is partly compensated for by emphasizing the cultivation of devotional, pious habits. Inhibitions about sharing their Christian experience, on account of the ethnicity of the first and second generation immigrants, have largely been overcome by the present generation, although loss of religious vitality through routinization of charisma still hampers the witness. To overcome such formalism, revivalism is encouraged and sporadically occurs in local churches and communities and almost

routinely in Christian high schools. Conversion and its correlatives continue to be most meaningful means of consolidating a fragile identity on a personal level.

On a group level, that is, on a national denominational level, it is charisma which achieves such consolidation of identity. Weber's view that those subject to authority must validate charisma by recognizing it has been shown to be the case among Canadian Mennonite Brethren. Empirical data from the Church Member Profile indicate that there is in excess of fifty percent congregational involvement in leadership, yet there is a continued demand for ordained, salaried pastors. Women, however, are generally not wanted in positions of leadership. A more intensive analysis of leadership patterns shows two distinct types of leaders from an organizational perspective, congregational and conference, the latter being provincial, national, or General Conference. From the functional perspective one can isolate managerial, proclamatory, and scholarly types. Each level has its own unique charisma. The most obvious problems--the tendency toward elitism, the role of the professional pastor, and the role of women--result from societal change and differentiation which impinge upon the Anabaptist notion of the priesthood of all believers. The resulting emerging pattern is one which honors congregational involvement, professional leadership, increased participation of women, and decentralization of authority. Charisma has enabled the brotherhood notion of leadership to prevail, since those subject to authority--the members--recognize that type of leadership which sacralizes their identity.

VIII

FACILITATING SOCIALIZATION THROUGH CHURCH PARTICIPATION AND FORMAL EDUCATION

Those who have strong convictions about being Christian and being evangelical Anabaptists, and, even more specifically, being Mennonite Brethren, want to ensure the retention of their sectarian stance beyond their own generation.¹ Whether the process of perpetuating their values is inadvertent and informal or deliberate and through formal instruction, it is the process of socialization which accounts for the transmission of their heritage. This learning process of socialization is defined by Talcott Parsons as "the acquisition of the requisite orientations for satisfactory functioning in a role"² and by Peter and Brigitte Berger as "the process through which an individual learns to be a member of society".³ Applying the socialization to being Mennonite Brethren, one has in mind those orientations which specifically prepare a younger generation to embrace those beliefs and practices which characterize Mennonite Brethren. As Gertrude Selznick points out, two complementary processes seem to be at work: the transmission of social and cultural heritage, and

¹ See Peter F. Barga, "Why I am a Mennonite?" MO, I (July 3 and Aug. 3, 1956). Then in Ph. D. studies, as former principal of Alberta Mennonite High School, Barga stated, "It is natural I will train my children in the faith."

² Talcott Parsons, The Social System (Glencoe: The Free Press, 1950), p. 205.

³ Berger and Berger, Sociology: A Biographical Approach, p. 55.

the development of personality.⁴

The following discussion of socialization of Canadian Mennonite Brethren values is particularly concerned with the first of Selznick's two processes: the transmission of a religious heritage (but one aspect of the social and cultural heritage). The aims of such socialization, according to Selznick, include the inculcation of disciplines, the instillation of aspirations (and restriction of the same), the acquisition of identity, the teaching of social roles, and learning of skills.⁵ No doubt, much of the socialization occurs within the family and through the informal contacts with members of the closely-knit group. This chapter, in particular, examines that facilitation of socialization which occurs outside the family setting and through deliberately, although routinely, structured occasions: the weekly participation in church activities, and the educational programs in parochial schools.

1. Weekly Church Participation

What transpires from week to week in the local church is largely determinative of the permanency of the religious movement. The activities of the average Canadian Mennonite Brethren Church will resemble much those of a typical evangelical sectarian group. Again, it may be well to examine the specifics of such involvement before assessing its meaning for the continuity of the movement.

⁴ Leonard Broom and Philip Selznick, Sociology: A Text with Adapted Readings (N. Y.: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1973), p. 91.

⁵ Ibid., pp. 94-95.

Measures of Participation

On a given Sunday morning almost any Canadian Mennonite Brethren local church will provide evidence of vitality. The cursory notice of the many cars which fill the parking lots and the full pews inside the building can be substantiated with the following data which provide more accurate measures of participation.

Associationalism. Table VIII-1 indicates measures of associationalism, that is, the frequency of attendance at church meetings and the degree of actual involvement according to the Church Member Profile. Church attendance is simply taken for granted as 98.2% (N=293) of the respondents indicate, if one combines the responses "almost every week" and "once a week or more". This high attendance habit exceeds the United States Mennonite Brethren and that of other Mennonite groups measured. Compared to other Canadian denominations, the Mennonite Brethren exceed considerably the larger Protestant churches and even the Roman Catholic. Table VIII-2 supplies this information, the word "regular" suggesting at least twice a month, usually weekly.⁶ In yet another survey, Stark and Glock reported the following percentage for those who responded "nearly weekly or better" attendance: Sects, 93; Southern Baptists, 84; Roman Catholics, 80; Presbyterian, 58; Episcopalian, 56; and Congregational, 45.⁷ Again, Canadian Mennonite Brethren exceed the highest of these

⁶Hans Mol, "Some Major Correlates of Churchgoing in Canada", McMaster University, March 1, 1974, p. 3. The data used by Dr. Mol were based on the 1965 Canadian National Election Study. The M. B. data come from the Church Member Profile.

⁷Stark and Glock, American Piety, p. 84.

Table VIII-1
Measures of Associationalism

QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION FOR			
	MC (N=1202)	GC (N=614)	NAMB (N=712)	CMBC (N=359)
1. On the average, how often have you attended church worship services (on Sunday morning, evening, and/or other days) during the past two years?				
LESS THAN ONCE A MONTH	2	6	1	0.6
ONCE OR TWICE A MONTH	4	8	2	1.1
ALMOST EVERY WEEK	23	28	17	15.5
ONCE A WEEK OR MORE	71	58	80	82.7
2. How frequently do you attend Sunday School?				
MOST SUNDAYS	11	12	12	8.4
EVERY SUNDAY POSSIBLE	76	54	67	63.8
3. How regularly do you attend any youth or adult meetings held on days other than Sunday; that are related to your local congregation?				
NEVER/SELDOM	36	45	27	25.7
OCCASIONALLY	28	26	30	31.8
REGULARLY	36	28	43	42.5
4. Within the <u>past ten years</u> , how frequently have you served as a Sunday School teacher or department leader?				
NEVER	-	-	40	38.7
A FEW TIMES, OR AS SUBSTITUTE	-	-	13	12.1
SERVED REGULARLY FOR LESS THAN ONE YEAR			8	8.5
SERVED REGULARLY FOR ONE TO FIVE YEARS			27	28.2
SERVED REGULARLY FOR ALL OR MOST OF THE PAST TEN YEARS			12	12.4
5. Do you presently hold, or have you held within the past three years, a position of leadership in your local congregation?				
YES	58	54	56	58.2

SOURCE: Church Member Profile, 1972.

American figures, which themselves appear so much higher than Mol's findings for Canada. Sunday school attendance for most Sundays or every Sunday possible is likewise high (72.2%; N=257), but not as high as the North American Mennonite Brethren response (79%). American Mennonite Brethren appear to attend Sunday school more regularly than Canadian.

Table VIII-2
Church Attendance by Denomination

RESPONSE	P E R C E N T D I S T R I B U T I O N F O R :					
	MENN.BR. (N=358)	FR.CATH. (N=619)	ENG.CATH. (N=283)	PRESBYT. (N=103)	UNITED CH. (N=474)	ANGLICAN (N=245)
REGULAR	98.2	87.8	68.9	24.3	22.7	19.2
IRREGULAR	1.7	12.2	13.1	75.7	77.3	80.8

SOURCE: Canadian National Election Study, 1965, and Church Member Profile, 1972.

Attendance on days other than Sunday likewise is high (42.5%; N=152).

Regular participation in Sunday school teaching in excess of one year for the ten-year period prior to the survey was 40.6% (N=144), 28.2% serving regularly one to five years and 12.4% serving regularly for most of the ten years. One is not surprised, then, to note the point earlier made that 58.2% (N=206) have held a position of leadership in the local church in the three years prior to the survey. Mennonite Brethren, thus, have exceptionally high responses in the measures of associationalism.

Attitudes to participation. Over against the practice of attending and participating are the measures of attitude depicted in Table VIII-3.

Table VIII-3
Measures of Attitude to Church Participation

QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES	PERCENT DISTRIBUTION FOR	
	NAMB (N=712)	CMBC (N=359)
1. How much spiritual inspiration and strengthening do you feel you get from a typical Sunday morning worship service in your congregation?		
VERY MUCH/QUITE A LOT	67	67.1
SOME	26	27.5
VERY LITTLE/NONE AT ALL	7	5.4
2. How much boredom and disinterest do you experience in a typical Sunday morning worship service at your church?		
VERY MUCH/QUITE A LOT	8	5.0
SOME	27	27.0
VERY LITTLE/NONE AT ALL	65	67.9
3. Which statement best expresses your situation and feeling about Sunday school at your church?		
WOULD NOT WANT TO MISS ANY	46	46.7
NO REGRETS IF OCCASIONALLY ABSENT	38	34.9
ATTEND BECAUSE IT IS EXPECTED OR REQUIRED	5	4.0
DISLIKE IT, AND SO SKIP WHENEVER CAN	1	1.2
DON'T ATTEND	11	13.3
4. To what extent are you interested in serving your home congregation in Sunday school teaching, church project leadership, or other responsibilities for which you have abilities?		
STRONGLY INTERESTED/INTERESTED	76	79.6
SOME INTEREST	16	11.5
A LITTLE INTEREST/NO INTEREST	10	9.0
5. Which of the following statements comes closest to your reason for participation in the life of the church?		
I <u>REALLY WANT</u> TO PARTICIPATE AND ENJOY IT	76	80.5
I FEEL I <u>OUGHT</u> TO PARTICIPATE, NOT ALWAYS ENJOY	22	19.3
I FEEL I <u>HAVE</u> TO PARTICIPATE, BECAUSE EXPECTATION	2	0.3

SOURCE: Church Member Profile, 1972.

Just over two-thirds (N=239) derive very much or quite a lot of inspiration and strength, and another 27.5% (N=98) derive some--these two categories suggesting that for 94.6% (N=337) of Canadian Mennonite Brethren such attendance has considerable merit. By the same token, almost the opposite responses are elicited to the degree of boredom and disinterest. Similarly, Sunday school shows a high level of interest, 46.7% (N=162) not wanting to miss any and 34.9% (N=121) having no regrets if occasionally absent. Thus, for 81.6% (N=282) it appears to have considerable meaning, even if not as meaningful as the worship service. It would seem that larger numbers, 79.6% (N=284), are interested or strongly interested in serving in the home congregation than in fact do participate (cf. Table VIII-1). Either there is a discrepancy between one's stated intent and actual practice or the Canadian Mennonite Brethren Church has failed to mobilize its human resources. Finally, the question on voluntarism suggests that 80.5% (N=284) really want to participate and enjoy it. Only 19.3% (N=68) felt they ought to participate, although they did not always enjoy it. Canadians demonstrate a higher degree of voluntarism than their American brethren. Only one respondent felt he participated because of pressure or the expectation of it. The overwhelmingly prevalent attitude to church participation, both in attendance and in service, is positive--providing inspiration, enjoyment, and voluntary participation.

Meaning of Such Participation

How then, can one account for the high degree of church participation among Canadian Mennonite Brethren? It is not sufficient simply to reply that one generation is intent upon socializing the next. This also

is true, but more immediate and overt is the meaning that such participation provides for the members and their families. Man needs ritual, he wants religious knowledge, he craves for fellowship, and must channel his enthusiasm in service. Neither is the meaning without its tensions. The validity of the meaning and the redemptive factor of the tension generated in the struggle for meaning contribute toward the continued participation and inadvertently enhance the socialization process. Such participation achieves at least four functions.

It enables worship. Religious man needs ritual, for rites articulate and reiterate a system of meaning.⁸ Among religious rites are the private and informal, such as the devotional exercises referred to in chapter seven,⁹ as well as the formal and public. For Mennonite Brethren, the Sunday worship service is such a formal, public gathering which becomes a collective reaffirmation of the meaning and sacredness of religion. As Stark and Glock suggest, it helps people feel religious.¹⁰ Drawing attention to the sociological and psychological by-products of ritual does not deny the subordinate role of ritual to theology, for it is only in ideology that ritual finds its meaning and legitimation. In practice, however, the sociological and psychological components are important because of the tangible aspects and expressive nature of such ritual.

The worship service for Mennonite Brethren was never meant to be mere ritual. Contrary to the services of the Mennonite church from which

⁸ Mol, Identity and the Sacred, p. 233.

⁹ Supra, pp. 235-36.

¹⁰ Stark and Glock, American Piety, p. 82.

the Mennonite Brethren seceded, their public worship was characterized by informality and spontaneity.¹¹ Despite the rejection of liturgical elements (including the reading of prayers), certain features of public worship reoccurred. Prominent among these were singing, spontaneous prayer, and preaching. From the outset, congregational singing was always a vital part of the worship services,¹² and hymnals helped perpetuate the musical heritage. The first German hymnal used by Mennonite Brethren in Russia was T. Koebner's Glaubensstimme, a German Baptist publication.¹³ The 1920 immigration from Russia brought with it the Drei-Band, consisting of three separate collections of non-Mennonite Brethren origin, called Heimatklaenge-Glaubensstimme-Frohe Botschaft. Because the Drei-Band contained no musical notation, it was eventually superseded by the German hymnal, Evangeliums-Lieder 1 und 2 (1897), which, compiled by Walter Rauschenbusch and Ira D. Sankey, the Kanaedier and their American brethren had used. In 1952, the Canadian Mennonite Brethren Conference published their own Gesangbuch to perpetuate the Kernlieder (religious folk-songs), which were part of the Mennonite Brethren heritage, and incorporated many of the Evangeliums-Lieder. At the same time in the United States, a Mennonite Brethren Church Hymnal, consisting largely of gospel songs, was published in 1953. The change to English in worship services led to a translation of the Gesangbuch, but the new Hymn Book (1960)

¹¹ J. A. Toews, HMBC, pp. 57-58.

¹² Jacob P. Bekker, Origins, pp. 90-94.

¹³ Paul W. Wohlgenuth, "Singing the New Song", chapter 15 in J. A. Toews, HMBC, p. 241.

proved to be short-lived.¹⁴ In June, 1971, the Worship Hymnal, joint project of United States and Canadian Mennonite Brethren churches, was published. Retaining its denominational collection of hymns, gospel songs, translations of Kernlieder, and original contributions by Mennonite Brethren, it also has a broader appeal as the following critique from the Hymn Society of America indicates:

Here is a well-organized, excellently printed and comprehensively-compiled hymnal "for everyone." Though it is produced by one of the smaller denominations on the American continent, it is a hymnal that can be used advantageously by practically any church. It has an excellent selection of both hymns and "worship aids" for every Christian.¹⁵

And so congregational singing has further been memorialized in the Mennonite Brethren church. Worship has also been facilitated through choirs,¹⁶ musical instruments, and singing by small male, female, or mixed groups. Especially choir singing received the attention of church musicians, as indicated in the annual reports.¹⁷

¹⁴ Dissatisfaction was expressed by the General Conference Hymnbook Committee. YB, 1963, p. 12.

¹⁵ The Hymn, XXIII (Jan., 197), p. 30, cited by P. Wohlgenuth, ibid., p. 247.

¹⁶ In an editorial on the responsibility of choir members, Leslie Stobbe exhorted, "As Mennonites we have long realized the value of a choir's singing in the church's ministry. Many of our pastors recognize that choir singing can 'preach' a message just as effectively as a sermon--if the choir sings with the same consecration as the minister preaches and if the words of the songs can be understood." See MO, IV (Jan. 24, 1958), p. 2.

¹⁷ See reports on Dirigentenkurses (choir conductors' course) on a national level in annual Conference yearbooks. YB, 1958, p. 101-105. The 1957 session in Winnipeg registered 46 conductors from Ontario (6), Manitoba (16), Saskatchewan (5), Alberta (7), and B. C. (12). See also, YB, 1956, pp. 116-120; YB, 1960, pp. 99-102.

More representative of the spontaneous nature of Mennonite Brethren worship services were the public prayers offered by both men and women in the audience. These Gebetstunden for many years constituted a regular part of the worship service. Today they are less frequent, but spontaneous prayers may still be offered by way of introduction, for the offertory, or as a separate part of a Sunday morning worship service. Few prayers are written beforehand and read, although this practice is now growing in frequency. Difficult to document, such spontaneous prayer is inferred in the Confession of Faith, following the discussion of the "perceptible means of grace".

Prayer accompanies all these divinely ordained means and all acts of the spiritual life of every Christian and ceaseth not in the entire congregation of God....¹⁸

As A. E. Janzen maintains, "Spontaneous, unrehearsed prayer was initially and is today one of the distinctives of the Mennonite Brethren."¹⁹

Most prominent, however, in Mennonite Brethren worship is the sermon, as the central place of the pulpit in church architecture indicates. The pulpit was not to draw attention to the preacher, but to the Word. Typical of such preaching during the first half of the century is the collection in 1953 by Dr. G. D. Huebert of 315 sermon outlines by some 62 preachers, mostly Canadian Mennonite Brethren (the exceptions are those of American Mennonite Brethren who frequently preached in Canada).²⁰

¹⁸ Confession of Faith, 1902, p. 17.

¹⁹ A. E. Janzen, M. B. Distinctives, p. 15.

²⁰ Dr. Huebert, now retired in Winnipeg, was personally consulted about how he gathered these sermons. The most prominent Mennonite Brethren preachers were contacted over a period of several years, and they

Most sermons submitted could be defined as textual (where the development of the sermon is based on the actual text) rather than topical. Some of the outlines are heavily buttressed with additional Scripture texts. Of the 315 sermons, 108 have Old Testament texts, the most prominent being Psalms (28 sermons), Genesis (16), Isaiah (15), Proverbs (6), Exodus (5), and Joshua (5). Of the 207 New Testament texts, the most prominent were John (37), Luke (33), Matthew (32), Hebrews (25), Acts (18), Romans (16), I Corinthians (11), and Revelation (11). The themes which these sermons reflect are a further interesting commentary of Mennonite Brethren preaching. Of the 315 sermons selected, 60 had to do with conversion and salvation themes, 60 were exhortations on Christian conduct and life-style ("Wandel, Warnung, und Ermahnung"), 56 related to Jesus Christ, 48 concerned the church and the believers, 34 were mission and service oriented, 31 were sermons relating to trials and comfort, 30 focused on God and the Holy Spirit, 24 exhorted to faith and trust, and only 15 spoke of love and grace. Smaller numbers of sermons for special occasions were also included. It may be fair, therefore, to characterize Mennonite preaching until about 1950 as simple, biblical preaching centred on New Testament themes relating to salvation by Jesus Christ, the New Testament church, and the life of the believer. Rather than being profoundly theological, the sermons appear to be more practically oriented. Exceptions to the average Sunday morning sermons were the expository messages by such men as J. W. Reimer and A. H. Unruh, the latter being lauded as "expository

were requested to submit their most meaningful sermons in terms of audience response ("those which had been the greatest blessing"). See G. D. Huebert, Botschafter an Christi Statt (Winnipeg: The Christian Press, 1953).

preacher without peer".²¹ One glimpse from his biographer depicts Unruh's preaching as follows:

Unruh wanted his sermons to build up the congregation; for that reason they had to have content. For him they had to be instructive and informative. But that does not mean his sermons were stuffy, for his interpretations of the Scriptures usually turned into a strong appeal directed at the hearts of his listeners. At times he cut deeply into people's consciences; then again, he would put the balm of Gilead on troubled souls. In every sermon there were bound to be several crescendoes, which made the listener's spine tingle.... And yet he warned preachers against appealing to the nervous system of the hearers. Much rather should they seek to touch their conscience. When Professor Lindemann of Moscow University (later of Simferopol) heard Unruh preach on one occasion, he was so overwhelmed with his oratory that he expressed his great admiration for Unruh's gift of speech. Unruh responded humbly, "I hope you are also impressed with my Saviour."²²

To verify the pulpiteering of recent times, the 56 published sermons in the Mennonitische Rundschau of 1975 were examined.²³ Of these, 13 had Old Testament texts, the highest number being for Psalms and Isaiah. Of the 43 New Testament texts, the highest frequencies were as follows: John (7), Matthew (7), I Thessalonians (6),²⁴ I Peter (5), Colossians (4). Thematically, in keeping with the categories devised by G. D.

²¹ Supra, p. 155. For a biographical account of Unruh, see D. Ewert, Stalwart for the Truth, pp. 119-125, which deals with his preaching. For an assessment of Unruh's view of the place of the pulpit in worship services, see A. H. Unruh, "Der Einfluss der Kanzel auf die Gemeinde", Voice, VII (Jan.-Feb., 1938), 13-19.

²² D. Ewert, Stalwart for the Truth, pp. 122-123.

²³ It should be noted that these are not wholly representative. Some of these were preached as a part of a series at a Bible conference. Most of them were preached in churches in recent times. The audience, moreover, is the older, German-speaking membership.

²⁴ Both I Thessalonians and I Peter were part of a series at a Bible conference.

Huebert in Botschafter an Christi Statt, 12 represented salvation themes, 10 related to Jesus Christ, 9 concerned the Christian's conduct 6 had to do with the church, and 5 concerned God and/or the Holy Spirit. Thus, the choice of texts and the themes are much the same as the preaching of the pre-mid-century. More representative of current preaching are the occasional sermons published in the Voice and Direction. These sermons, usually prepared by biblical scholars, are expository, scholarly, and touch contemporary issues of church and society.²⁵ Written and preached by teachers at Mennonite Brethren Bible College, these sermons become the models for the preaching by their students in local churches on Sunday mornings.

Whether referring to singing, praying or preaching, the tension between routinization and spontaneity is becoming increasingly apparent. In congregational and choir singing, the tension becomes evident in the difficulty of choosing a hymn on the continuum, with a gospel song by Sankey at one extreme and an anthem by Bach at the other, or in finding the appropriate accompaniment by guitar, piano, or organ. All forms find their expression in today's Mennonite Brethren Church. Increasingly prayers are read from the Worship Aids of the hymnal or written before-

²⁵Typical of such sermonizing are the following: F. C. Peters, "Preaching in a Decade of Destiny", Voice, X (July-Aug., 1961), 18-20; D. Ewert, "Predige das Wort", Voice, XII (May-June, 1963), 13-16; J. H. Quiring, "On the Necessity of Love", Voice, XIII (Jan.-Feb., 1964), 14-17; J. A. Toews, "Die Herrschaft Christi im Persönlichen Leben", XIII (Sept.-Oct., 1964), 16-20; H. Voth, "Der Pharisaeer u. der Zoellner", XIV (July-Aug., 1966), 18-21; H. Giesbrecht, "Let My People Go", XVI (July-Oct., 1967), 22-28; V. Ratzlaff, "The Church in Society", XVII (Jan.-Feb., 1968), 18-20; J. Regehr, "The Preaching Lab", Voice, XVIII (June, 1969) to XX (Oct., 1971); and Direction, I (Jan., 1972) to IV (July, 1975).

hand by the worship leader. At the same time, conversational prayer (where sentence prayers are alternately uttered) and casual, spontaneous "talk" with God is characteristic of the small Bible study groups and occasional worship service. Sermons, once extemporaneous or memorized, are mostly written out and not infrequently read. With increasing diversity of taste and vocational and educational background, today's church members make demands for both the spontaneous and informal as well as for the liturgical and formal. It appears the most viable worship practice is to attain a balance in which the tension between the casual and the structured is preserved.

It provides instruction. Religious man also wants to be taught, for knowledge legitimates his rites and gives substance and meaning to the tenets of his faith. Related to belief, religious knowledge does not necessarily produce belief, for belief can exist on the basis of very little knowledge.²⁶ Nonetheless, knowledge of its history, traditions, and scriptures helps to preserve belief and perpetuate a religious movement. No doubt, the single most effective teaching agency in the Canadian Mennonite Brethren Church has been the Sunday school, as J. A. Toews intimates,

The significance of the Sunday school for the growth (and even survival!) of the Mennonite Brethren Church can hardly be overestimated. The Sunday school of today is the basis for the church of tomorrow, since more than 80 percent of Mennonite Brethren church members come from the ranks of the Sunday school.²⁷

In 1955, editor Leslie Stobbe viewed Sunday school as a bulwark against

²⁶ Stark and Glock, American Piety, p. 16.

²⁷ J. A. Toews, HMBC, pp. 226-227.

encroaching secularism and materialism. He exhorted,

We thank God for our Sunday Schools and their ever-increasing effectiveness. They constitute a bulwark against the encroaching secularism and materialism.... The Sunday School needs our support. We must pray for it, attend it, and prayerfully teach in it when that responsibility is ours. Bitter experience proves that where the Sunday School fails, Satan gains a resounding victory with unbelievably tragic results.²⁸

In Russia, Sunday schools were introduced into the Mennonite Brethren churches by German Baptist minister, August Liebig.²⁹ These Sunday schools were regarded as institutions for children and conducted in the afternoons, especially to keep boys out of mischief.³⁰ Prior to 1925 in Canada, Sunday schools were conducted in most churches.³¹ To demonstrate the growth of the Sunday schools as well as youth work, Table

²⁸ Leslie Stobbe, "A Bulwark against Secularism", MO, I (Oct. 19, 1955), p. 2. A similar assessment was given by H. Regehr in "Gesundes Wachstum in den S. S.-Schulen der Kanadischen M. B.-Konferenz", Voice, II (May-June, 1953), 12-14. Regehr states, "Wie waere es um unser morales und soziales Leben bestellt wenn wir die S.-Schule nicht haetten? Wie flach und gleichgiltig! Wie wenig Respekt vor Gott und Gottes Wort! Wie wuerde die Suende unter der Jugend so scharf um sich greifen! Wie wenig Bekehrungen! Wie klein die Gemeinden!"

²⁹ J. A. Toews, HMBC, p. 217.

³⁰ I. W. Redekopp, "Der Wert der Sonntagschule in unsern Gemeinden", K-J, XI (Jan.-Feb., 1956), pp. 5, 6, 14. Redekopp states, "Es war kein Widerstand, weil die Sonntagschulen eben die Kinder, besonders die Knaben, beschaeftigten und sie von Unfugtreiben abhielten."

³¹ The 1924 Yearbook registers 1637 Sunday school students, with 144 classes in 20 churches (YB, 1974, p. 38). In 1924, there were a total of 22 churches, 18 in Saskatchewan and 4 in Manitoba. Prior to that in 1916 concern was expressed over the failure of adults to attend (YB, 1916, p. 16). In 1917 the Conference secretary was delegated to do a survey of all Sunday schools and report at the next Conference (YB, 1917, p. 28); however, no such report is published in subsequent yearbooks. In 1918 a report was given of Sunday school institutes in the several districts, and these were further recommended (YB, 1918, p. 27).

VIII-4 summarizes the information at five-year intervals. Until 1969 there was continuous increase, the Sunday school enrolment having exceeded the membership. A sharp decline occurred between 1970 and 1972 (the total enrolment dropping from 19,084 to 15,645).³² No doubt, the smaller

Table VIII-4

Five-yearly Growth of Churches, Sunday Schools, and Youth Programs

YEAR AND PAGE NO.	CHUR- CHES	MEMBER- SHIP	NO. OF S.S.	NO. OF CLASSES	TOTAL STUDENTS	COLLEC- TION	YOUTH GROUPS	YOUTH ATTEND.
1924 (37,38)	22	1,797	20	144	1,637	\$1,686.58	18	883
1929 (36-38)	32	3,143	32	210	2,320	2,258.53	26	960
1934 (22)	54	5,195	54	294	3,895	1,488.82	43	3006
1939 (37-38)	65	6,421	61	414	5,408	2,650.16	52	3852
1944 (46)	67	6,866	59	476	5,581	7,283.42	54	3984
1949 (41)	82	10,313	59	612*	7,905	21,034.00	--	--
1954 (100)	79	12,206	79	879	11,371	42,838.81	67	--
1959 (136)	82	13,946	82	1297	14,180	70,527.00	56	--
1964 (128)	108	15,145	108	1539	16,496	98,562.00	47	--
1969 (154)	124	16,660	124	1982	19,986	121,453.00	--	--
1974 (111)	115	18,459	115	2281	16,112	--	--	--

SOURCE: YB, 1924 to 1974.

*Teachers with assistants.

³²See YB, 1970, p. 132, and YB, 1972, p. 10. The 1973 yearbook gives an enrolment of 18,486 (p. 99).

families contributed to the decline, as Table VIII-5 indicates, since adult attendance has, in fact, increased in the last decade, while the cradle department indicates a 30.7% decrease. In keeping with this trend, the nursery, beginner, primary, and junior departments showed an increase between 1964 and 1969, but all a marked decrease between 1969 and 1974. Only the young teens, senior teens and adults have shown a continuous increase throughout.

Despite the fluctuation in the total enrolment pattern in recent

Table VIII-5

Analysis of Enrolment in Sunday Schools according to Classes

CLASS	ATTENDANCE FOR RESPECTIVE YEARS:					
	1949	1954	1959	1964	1969	1974
CRADLE ROLL	62	433	468	628	604	436
NURSERY	—*	---	817	1,0346	1,162	853
BEGINNER	845	1,172	1,485	1,725	1,827	1,261
PRIMARY	1,120	1,450	1,754	2,508	3,000	1,900
JUNIOR	1,246	1,535	1,701	2,082	2,694	2,213
YOUNG TEENS	1,040	1,358	1,559	1,642	2,013	2,074
SR. TEENS	800	987	1,095	1,257	1,406	1,589
COLLEGE/CAREER	1,002	1,320	1,252	1,108	1,189	967
ADULTS	1,790	3,116	4,049	4,509	5,431	5,581
TOTAL AVERAGE	7,905	11,371	14,180	16,496	19,326	16,112

SOURCE: YB, 1949 to 1974.

*In 1949 and 1954, no separate enrolment was given for nursery. Instead, the divisions were simply ages 1-3 and 4-5 (Beginners).

years, Sunday school by no means belongs to the era of the past for Canadian Mennonite Brethren. Since before 1925, Sunday school statistics and occasional expressions of concern were brought to the attention of the national Conference.³³ Since then annual reports have been submitted to the Conference.³⁴ With the reorganization of the Conference structure in 1967, the Sunday School Committee was subsumed under the Board of Christian Education, which, in turn, appointed a Sunday School Commission to attend to perennial concerns. In 1964 an executive secretary for Sunday school and youth was appointed on a part-time basis, and in 1967 a full-time executive secretary was appointed to promote Christian education. In addition, Sunday school conventions, including educational workshops, were conducted on a national basis. The first occurred at Herbert, Saskatchewan, in 1957 with 35 attending from outside the province of Saskatchewan.³⁵ Subsequent national conventions were conducted at Gem, Alberta, in 1958; at Hepburn, Saskatchewan, in 1959 (with 395 registrants);³⁶ Winnipeg, Manitoba, in 1960; Clearbrook, B.C., in 1964; Saskatoon, in 1969; Winnipeg in 1973; and St. Catharines in 1976. To further promote the Sunday school work, the Sunday School Instructor was published from 1952 to 1962,³⁷ and Service Training Program, a leadership

³³See YB, 1916, p. 16; YB, 1917, p. 28; YB, 1918, pp. 27-28, YB, 1923, p. 38.

³⁴YB, 1938, p. 23.

³⁵MO, "First National Sunday School Convention", II (May 10, 1957), p. 12. See also The Sunday School Instructor, VI (May-June, 1957), pp. 23-24 (in archives of MBBC).

³⁶See YB, 1959, p. 88.

³⁷Editors of the Instructor were I. W. Redekopp and Nettie Kroeker. See MBBC archives.

training program with some 50 individual courses, was introduced on a U.S.-Canada level in 1966.³⁸ Thus, in recent decades aggressive efforts have been put forth to promote Sunday school work.

Such intensive socialization is not without its tensions. Recurring problems mentioned in annual reports include: the language problem³⁹ (transition from German to English), inadequate curriculum,⁴⁰ lack of trained teachers, and the disparity between knowledge and practice.⁴¹ The last mentioned problem becomes especially apparent in Kauffman and Harder's Church Member Profile. While Sunday school participation showed a positive correlation with Bible knowledge, spiritual maturity and moral-

³⁸ The revised course in 1975 had over 100 courses. See GCYB, 1975, p. 54. By 1970, 60 Canadian churches had enrolled and 531 students completed one or more courses. See YB, 1970, p. 113.

³⁹ For example, the YB, 1939, pp. 45-46, lists the following problems (based upon a survey of Sunday school): inadequate translation of lessons, language (viewed as the greatest problem since students understood German, but could not adequately complete the weekly exercise in German), unaccustomed to studying (for too long Sunday school was entertainment), lack of materials for lower levels, and preparation on part of teachers. See also YB, 1957, p. 54.

⁴⁰ The theological, methodological, and practical reasons which governed the selection and use of Sunday school material comprise an interesting, if extensive, survey in itself. The following have been used (through translations and modifications or "imprints"): Scripture Press, All Bible Graded Lessons, 1938-1959 (see YB, 1938, pp. 23, 24); M. B. Graded Sunday School Series (an inter-Mennonite material with an M. B. imprint), 1959-1966 (see YB, 1957, pp. 52-57); Scripture Press with M. B. imprint, 1966-1967 (see YB, 1966, p. 10); subsequently various materials--Scripture Press, Gospel Light, David C. Cook. For a reconsideration of inter-Mennonite materials, see YB, 1973, p. 43.

⁴¹ For an analysis of the problems in the teaching ministry in the local church, see P. M. Hamm, "The Crisis in the Teaching Ministry of the Local Church", YB, 1971, pp. 26-36.

ity,⁴² Mennonite Brethren, who ranked highest among the Mennonite groups in variables of faith, ranked among the lowest in variables of ethics (not personal morality, but social ethics). Thus, socialization at the cognitive level appears to be more successful than at the practical level.

It allows for fellowship. Among the teaching agencies of the local congregation are those which accommodate the socializing penchant along with the socialization function. While their alleged intent is to meet for devotional and instructive purposes, such church groups as ladies societies,⁴³ often called mission circles, and youth groups also achieve the need for fellowship. The youth groups are singled out to illustrate this form of socialization. Table VIII-4 indicates the number of youth groups through the years and the average attendance where this figure was submitted in annual statistical reports. In addition, one could include the participation in choirs. For example, in 1959, there were 66 major church choirs with 1901 singers and an additional 18 youth choirs with 471 singers. And 1974 lists 91 church choirs and 16 youth choirs, in addition to 46 children's, 9 girls, 25 male, and 19 ladies choirs.⁴⁴ How then can one account for such extensive participation of youth in Canadian Mennonite Brethren churches?

Throughout their history, Canadian Mennonite Brethren have organized church activities which include the youth. Until mid-century, the

⁴² Kauffman and Harder, AFCL, pp. 207-210, 302.

⁴³ The 1975 YB lists 104 organized women's societies (YB, 1975, p. 112).

⁴⁴ YB, 1974, p. 112; YB, 1959, p. 137.

monthly Jugendverein involved mainly the youth in sponsoring a worship program (including music, drama, poetry, sermon and children's features) to which the whole community was invited. More recently, youth meetings with their own adult sponsors have been separately conducted. In 1945, a national Youth Committee was organized to coordinate the new, aggressive efforts to socialize youth. In the first youth report to the Canadian Conference, H. F. Klassen expresses the following concern:

A new world order (or disorder) and new philosophies of life confront our young people. The latter, on the other hand, have more education and more contacts with the outside (non-Mennonite) world than the previous generation. If left to themselves, young people lack the spiritual discipline that could save them from unnecessary pitfalls. That so many young men went into the military, that so many young men and women come to the cities where they are reluctant to identify themselves as Mennonites we are compelled to admit as tragic facts. This calls for repentance for our past failures and the resolve to make better provisions for the future. We must begin now to think of the possibility of another war and teach our children. Our Sunday school, youth fellowships, youth instruction, youth literature, etc., must all be governed by one sacred, overruling purpose: To lead our youth to Jesus Christ as the only Saviour, to deepen their religious life, to assist them to perform better Christian service in their own churches, and to win them for the work of the kingdom of God in the whole world.⁴⁵

From 1944 to 1957 a separate youth publication, Konferenz-Jugendblatt, was published, and the Youthworker, a guide for youth sponsors, has been published from 1962 to the present. In addition, a special youth tabloid has been sponsored on a broader inter-Mennonite basis (e. g. With, 1968-1969) or on a North American Mennonite Brethren basis (e. g. Bridge, 1969-1975, and Sunkist, 1975-). In recent years, special national youth meetings have been conducted at the Banff School of Fine Arts with a pro-

⁴⁵YB, 1945, p. 104. Translation by J. A. Toews, HMBC, p. 233.

gram comprised of devotional, instructional, athletic, and entertainment features.⁴⁶ Finally, the sermons, published articles, and booklets specifically directed to youth have been instrumental in retaining the youth in church activities.⁴⁷ In the varied activities of the youth in the local church, provincial or national levels, the tension continues between the human need for socializing and the church's prescription for socialization. In the church setting, the balance finds expression in fellowship, and it is this fellowship which contributes to the continuity of the religious movement.

It motivates outreach. While the socializing agencies are primarily designed to unite and retain the church family, that is, the in-group, several of the agencies incorporate the evangelistic concern of the conversionist sect. Annually, it is the vacation Bible school and camp programs which include this evangelistic concern for the out-group. In 1975, for example, enrolment in vacation Bible schools was 4,544 for

⁴⁶ Attendance at Banff '71 was c. 770 with representatives from Nova Scotia (3), Quebec (1), Ontario (85), Manitoba (225), Saskatchewan (125), Alberta (65), and B. C. (250); and U. S. A. (17). See MBH, "It Happened at Banff '71", XI (Jan. 23, 1972), pp. 2-5, 24. At Banff '74 there were 866 young people representing the churches as follows: B. C. (278), Manitoba (236), Ontario (132), Alberta (78), Quebec (1), U. S. A. (9). Of these 434 were in grades 11 to 13, 159 in careers, 157 in Bible schools, and 98 in colleges or universities. See MBH, "God Spoke at Banff '74", XIV (Jan. 24, 1975), pp. 2-5.

⁴⁷ See F. C. Peters, Your Church and You (Hillsboro, Kansas: M. B. Publishing House, n. d.); H. F. Klassen, "Wie koennen wir etwas fuer die Jugend tun?", K-J, I (May 31, 1944), pp. 2-4; A. H. Unruh, "Die positive Beeinflussung der Jugend in den M. B.-Gemeinden Kanadas", K-J, VII (Feb., 1950, pp. 2-6; and April, 1950, pp. 2-7); J. A. Toews, "Wie erhalten wir unsern Gemeinden ihre Jugend?", Voice, III (Jan.-Feb., 1954), 15-18; H. H. Janzen, "Geistesstroemungen, welche fuer unsere Jugend heute eine Gefahr bilden", YB, 1954, p. 115.

the five provinces with a staff of 781.⁴⁸ The 1965 statistical report lists 37 mission Sunday schools, 67 vacation Bible schools conducted in churches, 105 outside the church, and 111 Bible camps,⁴⁹ and the 1955 report lists 43 mission Sunday schools, 16 vacation Bible schools in churches, and 16 outside churches, and 57 summer camps.⁵⁰

While the mission Sunday schools have decreased in number,⁵¹ two new teaching and outreach agencies were aggressively incorporated into the socialization program of the church, Pioneer Girls and Christian Service Brigade. Initially simply organized as boys clubs and girls clubs, the growth in these programs has been remarkable. First listed for 1965, the Year Book notes 58 girls and 56 boys clubs,⁵² and the 1975 record indicates 3095 enrolled in Pioneer Girls with a staff of 709, and 2389 enrolled in Christian Service Brigade with a staff of 586.⁵³ This quasi-educational program greatly facilitates the congregation's influence in a given community, mobilizing both youth and adults to staff the program and inviting new recruits for Sunday school and the church program generally. The tension it generates is that between conservation of the in-group children and evangelization of the out-group. Again, both are required

⁴⁸YB, 1975, pp. 110-111.

⁴⁹YB, 1965, p. 164.

⁵⁰YB, 1955, p. 136.

⁵¹The 1970 Year Book lists only 8 for Canada (YB, 1970, p. 132), and the 1975 Year Book does not enter this category.

⁵²YB, 1966, p. 140.

⁵³YB, 1975, pp. 110-111.

for a continued, viable program. Church participation, then, achieves four of the primary goals of any local Christian congregation--worship, teaching, fellowship, and evangelism--all in the deliberate attempt at socialization.

2. Formal Instruction in Educational Institutions

The structured socialization which occurs for longer periods, possibly several months to several years at a time, encompasses four types of private institutions--Bible schools, high schools, Bible college and college of arts, and seminary. Numerous Canadian Mennonite Brethren have attended such private schools of other denominational or interdenominational agencies. The present discussion, however, is limited to the influence of Canadian Mennonite Brethren institutions, although recognition must be given to the substantive contributions of other schools.

The Church Member Profile Data

A look at the present facts will highlight the importance of such parochial training. It is significant that 59.1% (N=211) of the Canadian Mennonite Brethren respondents attended a Mennonite school.⁵⁴ This is higher than any of the groups measured in the Church Member Profile data. Table VIII-6 indicates the large proportion of Canadian Mennonite Brethren who have attended Christian high schools (25.8%) or Bible schools or institutes (the latter "institutes" being a more recent designation for

⁵⁴ It must be noted that the question broadens its choice to "Mennonite or Brethren in Christ denomination"; hence, more than Mennonite Brethren schools.

Table VIII-6
Percentage Attendance at Mennonite Schools

TYPE OF SCHOOL	PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION FOR			
	MC (N=1202)	GC (N=614)	NAMB (N=712)	CMBC (N=359)
ELEMENTARY	10	6	7	6.4
SECONDARY	20	14	19	25.8
WINTER BIBLE SCHOOL	12	6	15	24.6
BIBLE INSTITUTE	2	4	10	15.1
COLLEGE	17	24	16	7.8
SEMINARY (GRADUATE LEVEL)	2	5	2	1.4
DID NOT ATTEND CHURCH SCHOOL	56	56	48	40.6

SOURCE: Church Member Profile, 1972.

"Bible school", perhaps somewhat up-graded and with longer terms), which together constitute 39.7% (N=142). Kauffman and Harder observe that, taken as a whole, the proportion coming under the influence of one or more of these schools is increasing, since among respondents aged 20-29, 53% attended such schools, compared to only 39% for those aged 50 or over.⁵⁵ Moreover, Table VIII-7 shows the support that Mennonite groups give to church colleges.

While approximately one-half of Mennonite Brethren (and only 48.4% of Canadian Mennonite Brethren) are convinced that the benefits derived from the church colleges justify their cost, yet about 70% (and 69.4% of Canadians) of Mennonite Brethren disagree that schools should be closed, and 59% (73.6% of Canadians) still believe that every young person

⁵⁵ Kauffman and Harder, AFCL, p. 230.

Table VIII-7
Support of Church Colleges

QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION FOR			
	MC (N=1202)	GC (N=614)	NAMB (N=712)	CMBC (N=359)
1. Do you think the benefits derived from our present church colleges justify the costs of maintaining them?				
YES	47	40	50	48.4
NO	8	14	11	12.0
UNCERTAIN	45	46	39	34.6
2. In general, every Mennonite young person who goes to a school beyond high school should take at least one year of study in a Mennonite college or Bible institute.				
YES	49	46	59	73.6
NO	24	17	15	8.2
UNCERTAIN	27	37	26	18.2
3. In view of the increasing gap between costs of an education at church colleges and the lower costs of education at tax-supported universities, we should gradually close out our church related colleges in the years ahead.				
AGREE	4	5	4	4.8
UNCERTAIN	28	31	26	25.8
DISAGREE	68	64	70	69.9

SOURCE: Church Member Profile, 1972.

should take at least one year of study in a Mennonite college or Bible institute. This disparity needs explanation. Unfortunately the questionnaire, designed predominantly for an American respondent, did not pose a similar question for Bible institutes as they did for church colleges in the first question of Table VIII-7 above. Generally, Canadian Mennonite Brethren readily support a Bible institute, as the discussion below indicates, while they have second thoughts about a church college. It is not

surprising, then, that the second question finds a more favorable response than the first. It is difficult to justify the disparity between the first and the last questions posed, except to suggest that it takes more courage to vote in favor of closing a church-related school than in continuing to support it. It appears that a religious group is reluctant to change the status quo. Institutions have become sacralized, and, although one is dubious about the benefits, one is hesitant because of vested interest to close them.

A Brief Survey of Canadian Mennonite Brethren Educational Institutions

In 1925 the Mennonite Brethren of Canada already had begun their own unique program of parochial education. It was not simply a carryover of what the American Mennonite Brethren church had developed in the previous half century. Two separate influences constituted the most formative forces in the development of the Canadian Mennonite Brethren education. On the one hand, the Kanaedier had early recognized their own need for religious instruction. In 1911 a committee was appointed to investigate the possibility of establishing a German school with Biblical instruction.⁵⁶ The recommendation in the following year addressed itself to three matters: 1) while encouraging attendance at public schools, in keeping with legal requirements, provision be made to give instruction in German (or, where the English school is closed, to begin a German private

⁵⁶YB, 1911, p. 14, "... So wurde Beschlossen, ein Komitee zu ernennen, welches diese Angelegenheit untersuchen soll, um Mittel und Wege zu finden, dass wir die deutsche Schule mit biblischen unterricht mehr pflegen und unsrer Jueni ermoeöglichen koennen."

school);⁵⁷ 2) to begin two three-year Bible schools of four months each in Herbert and Rosthern districts with instruction in German medium in the subjects of language, Bible history, Bible geography, church history, and world history; 3) as soon as a sound financial basis was attained for Bible schools, to begin a normal school in English medium.⁵⁸ The unanimous decision to begin two Bible schools resulted, however, in only one school in Herbert begun in 1913. In the same year, Tabor College (a Mennonite Brethren liberal arts college in Hillsboro, Kansas) appealed for support. Conference support was not immediately promised but private sponsorship was encouraged, and after several years a subsidy was granted to support the Bible department at Tabor College.⁵⁹ In 1920 another committee was delegated to concern itself with instruction in German and religion in the public school system, and a yearly report was requested in 1921.⁶⁰ Attention was drawn to private Mennonite high schools at Rosthern in 1922 and at Gretna in 1927, and in 1926 a decision was reached to cooperate with other Mennonites in fulfilling the needs to provide in-

⁵⁷ It was reported in the subsequent year that, while instruction in German and religion was not legally possible, one-half hour daily instruction would be permitted by the school board, provided the instruction in English did not suffer (YB, 1913, pp. 37-38).

⁵⁸ YB, 1912, pp. 14, 15. "Den englischen Normalkursus unter unserer Leitung zu haben, erachten wir fuer hoechst notwendig, finden es aber der grossen Unkosten halber vorlaeufig fuer unausfuehrbar."

⁵⁹ YB, 1913, p. 37. See also, YB, 1917, p. 27; YB, 1918, pp. 26, 27; YB, 1919, pp. 27, 28. The subsidy continued annually until 1928. See YB, 1929, p. 95; and in 1929 the decision was reached to subsidize Tabor College at \$1.50 per family for another three years (YB, 1929, p. 69).

⁶⁰ YB, 1920, p. 28. See also, YB, 1921, p. 28.

struction in religion and German.⁶¹

On the other hand, the Russlaender brought with them the strong tradition of instruction of German and religion as part of their elementary and high school training, since all schools in the Mennonite colonies of Russia (from 1869 to 1920) were under the supervision of the Mennonite Board of Education in Molotschna.⁶² At the same time, the Tschongraw Bible School, established in Crimea, Russia, in 1918, under the leadership of J. G. Wiens (trained at the Baptist seminary in Hamburg, Germany), was transferred to Winkler in 1925 together with its teachers, A. H. Unruh, G. Reimer, and later its founder, J. G. Wiens. Both the Kanadier and Russlaender, thus, contributed to the development of Canadian Mennonite Brethren schools.

The Bible schools. The first Bible school of the Canadian Mennonite Brethren Church (founded in 1913 in Herbert, Saskatchewan) was largely patterned after the school of its early teacher, William Bestvater, who had been trained at Moody Bible Institute. The Winkler Bible School was a model of the Tschongraw, the curriculum of which was patterned on similar subjects taught at the Baptist seminary in Hamburg, where its founder had been trained. In time, 21 separate Bible schools were operated by the Canadian Mennonite Brethren, the largest number during 1942 when 15 were in existence, with an aggregate enrolment of some 400.⁶³ The fol-

⁶¹YB, 1922, p. 36; and YB, 1927, p. 35; see also YB, 1926, p. 32.

⁶²At the same time, schools were increasingly brought under Russian control. See F. C. Peters, "Education Among the Mennonites in Russia", Voice, VII (Sept.-Oct., 1958), 5, 6.

⁶³A. J. Klassen, The Bible School Story: Fifty Years of Mennonite

lowing list indicates the location and duration of these schools:⁶⁴

Saskatchewan:

Herbert (1913-1957)
Hepburn (1927-)
Dalmeny (1928-1954)
Aberdeen (1934-1936)

British Columbia:

Yarrow (1930-1955)
Clearbrook (1936-)
Greendale (1938-1943)
Black Creek (1942-1945)
East Chilliwack (1947-1959)

Manitoba:

Winkler (1925-)
Winnipeg (1929-1942)
Steinbach (1932-no longer M.B.)

Ontario:

Virgil (1938-41, 1942-45)
Vineland (1939-1940)
Niagara-on-the-Lake (1945-55)

Alberta:

Coaldale (1929-1965)
Gem (1932-1946)
La. Glace (1933-1946)
Crowfoot (1936-1937)
Vauxhall (1937-39, 1942-43)

Kitchener (1955-1960)

By 1975 a number of the schools had been consolidated, so that there were only three Bible schools with an aggregate enrolment of 564.⁶⁵ While facilities have been modernized; teaching faculty has up-graded its credentials, and curriculum has undergone modifications, the objectives of the schools have remained essentially the same. Initially, the intent was to supply churches with members who were thoroughly trained in Biblical understanding, from whom the churches could then select its work-

Brethren Bible Schools in Canada (no publisher and no date given, c. 1964), p. 6.

⁶⁴ Klassen, *ibid.* See also, John G. Doerksen, "History of Education of the Mennonite Brethren of Canada", M. Ed. thesis at U. of Manitoba, 1963.

⁶⁵ This figure was obtained from the statistical record of enrolment in Mennonite schools, published by Mennonite Reporter, IV (October 14, 1974), p. 9. This increased from 429 in 1960. See YB, 1966, p. 120. Of these schools, Columbia Bible Institute, Clearbrook, B. C., has since 1970 been jointly sponsored by the M. B. churches of B. C. and the General Conference Mennonite Church of B. C.

ers.⁶⁶ Representative of the continuing purpose of these schools is the terse statement of objective indicated of the Coaldale Bible School in 1955:

1. To teach and instruct young people in the great fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith;
2. To develop Christian character and promote spiritual growth through the study of the Scriptures, devotional exercises, and various Christian activities;
3. To train and prepare young people for various fields of Christian service. Special consideration is given to Sunday School training.⁶⁷

Bible knowledge, spiritual growth and commitment, and Christian service continue to characterize the objectives of these schools.⁶⁸

Assessing the worth of such a lay Bible training, three commentaries of 1924, 1945, and 1967, respectively, summarize its contribution. Concerning the Herbert Bible School in 1924, a reporter on the closing program remarked,

He who studies at this school with all diligence and to his heart's content acquires a solid basis in redemptive truths and could later become a capable worker as school teacher or preacher in the Lord's vineyard.⁶⁹

⁶⁶ A. H. Unruh, "Ein geschichtlicher Ueberblick der Bibelschulen der M. B. Gemeinden", in K-J, XI (Nov.-Dec., 1955), p. 7, states the purpose as follows: "Der Grundgedanke bei der Eroeffnung dieser Schulen war, dasz man den Gemeinden Gemeindeglieder mit guter Bibelerkenntnis heranzubilden wollte, aus denen dann entsprechende Arbeiter gewaehlt werden koennten."

⁶⁷ K-J, "The Coaldale Bible School", XI (Nov.-Dec., 1955), p. 15.

⁶⁸ G. Konrad, "Education and the Mission of the Church", in A. J. Klassen, The Church in Mission, p. 211 (Fresno: Board of Christian Literature, 1967).

⁶⁹ J. J. Toews, "Korrespondenzen—Herbert, Sask.", MR, XCVII (April 9, 1924), p. 4.

In 1945, G. D. Pries reported to the Canadian Conference at Yarrow,

... As long as our people will have good Bible schools, we will be able to preserve the separateness entrusted to us by God, and the succeeding generation will be able to rest secure on the shoulders of the former and be capable in the same spirit to meet its obligations.⁷⁰

In 1967 editor Harold Jantz assessed their worth in these words:

... It is impossible to over-emphasize the importance of several years of Bible study for our young people.

A Bible school or college is a place where the Bible forms the core of the curriculum.... A Bible school is one place where the Bible is taken very seriously, where it is studied to ascertain what is [sic] has to say to God's people today....

Bible institutions are also an experiment in fellowship.... Many Bible school students can testify to the impact of other students' lives on their own as they engaged in intense sharing and refreshing discussion of newly gained biblical insights....

One of the greatest contributions of the Bible schools and College have [sic] been; and continue [sic] to be, the motivation for Christian witness and service they provide.⁷¹

Bible schools have, thus, uniquely contributed to the preservation of the Canadian Mennonite Brethren churches and continue that function today.

Despite the strength with which they continue, their history has not been without stress and considerable personal sacrifice. Until recently, facilities consisted of bare essentials, teachers were meagerly supported, and students devoted several years to a training which provided no material return, let alone theological degrees. Moreover, for one-half century of history of a small denomination to witness the rise and decline of some eighteen schools appears to suggest colossal institutional experi-

⁷⁰ YB, 1945, p. 45.

⁷¹ Harold Jantz, "Bible Schools—Their Worth", MBH, VI (Sept. 1, 1967), p. 3.

mentation and atrophy. However, viewed developmentally, one can see the growth of regional and primitive schools into consolidated and sophisticated institutions. The tensions that have accompanied this development have thus enabled the sound establishment of several widely-supported and highly-appreciated parochial Bible schools which are attracting increasing numbers of students from other than Mennonite Brethren churches. No doubt, the Bible school movement has contributed greatly to the vitality of the church through this aggressively conspicuous means of socialization.

Christian high schools. That composite vision which in its early stage embodied a cultural-religious concern, in its attempt to preserve both German and religion, eventually found its fulfilment in the Christian high school movement of the Mennonite Brethren. As indicated earlier, during the first decades of this century, Canadian Mennonite Brethren attended the inter-Mennonite schools at Gretna,⁷² Manitoba, and Rosthern, Saskatchewan. The increasing demand for secondary school education and the rapid urbanization immediately following World War II led Mennonite Brethren to establish their own high schools. The Mennonite Educational Institute in Clearbrook, B. C., founded in 1944, has continued to have the largest enrolment, with some 430 students in 1975. In Yarrow, B. C., the Sharon Mennonite Collegiate served this neighbouring community from 1945 to 1970. In Alberta, the Alberta Mennonite High School provided that

⁷² Gretna, especially, attracted large numbers of immigrants who were thus able to continue their professional aspirations begun in Russia. The Mennonitische Rundschau carried repeated invitations to attend Gretna. See MR, XLVII (Sept. 10, 1924) and XLVIII (Aug. 19, 1925), pp. 4, 5, 12.

province with Christian training from 1946 to 1962. In Winnipeg, the Mennonite Brethren Collegiate Institute has continued since 1945 with an enrolment in 1975 of 360. In Ontario, Eden Christian College at Niagara-on-the-Lake was begun in 1945 and in 1975 had an enrolment of 315. As in the case of Bible schools, the high schools have not only improved their physical facilities and upgraded their teaching staff, but have become stable institutions, securing their widespread support from the respective regions.

What these schools accomplish by means of socialization can be ascertained from their own goals as well as from their spokesmen, both friends and critics. To legitimate the broader cultural-religious purpose of these schools in the mid-twenties, a friend responded as follows:

No, we cannot be negligent but must let it cost us something to train our children in a Mennonite way, and that can only be accomplished if we have teachers who themselves have studied German and religion and are also interested to teach it. Our government cannot train such teachers, we must do it ourselves.⁷³

More typical of the Mennonite Brethren schools established in the 1940's is the following statement of purpose by Eden Christian College which reflects the conversionist stance of the Mennonite Brethren:

1. direct unsaved students to a conversion experience;
2. train the students in the nurture and admonition of the Lord;
3. lay the foundation for a fruitful life of service in the Kingdom of God;
4. seek to preserve the spiritual heritage with which God has blessed our church;

⁷³Ein Schulfreund, "Das mennonitische Hochschulproblem", MR, L (June 15, 1927), p. 9.

5. offer a course of studies in which scholarship and academic thoroughness are fostered in a truly Christian atmosphere.⁷⁴

In 1964, the former principal of Eden Christian College, and at that time principal of Mennonite Educational Institute, affirmed this purpose when he explained,

... Above all the Christian high school seeks to lead every pupil to a saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ and to make Him Lord and Master of his life....

Furthermore, we want to create and nurture in the pupil a desire to serve God....

We also take great care in our total emphasis to develop an understanding of and an appreciation for the home church and our people.⁷⁵

Speaking more fundamentally to the vision for such a school in a secular society, editor Harold Jantz argued in 1967 as follows:

- 1) In view of the extent to which we are exposed to a secular and violently selfish culture, especially through increasingly pervasive communication media, should we not become more concerned to bring our young people under the influence and inspiration of a corps of dedicated Christian teachers?

- 2) There seems to be a distinct trend toward silence on religious and moral issues within our secular school systems, though anxiety about religion is definitely growing. Do we expect the majority of our youth to attend such schools and not be weakened by the spirit of relativism and religious neutralism?

- 3) Can we not regain a vision within our congregation of Christian high schools as part of our mission thrust?⁷⁶

The Christian high school, then, has become a powerful agency to socialize

⁷⁴ MBH, "Objectives of a Christian High School", IV (March 26, 1965), p. 5.

⁷⁵ David Neumann, "Should Our Children Attend a Christian High School?" MBH; III (Aug. 28, 1964), pp. 4, 5.

⁷⁶ Harold Jantz, "A Vision for Schools", MBH, VI (Dec. 1, 1967), p. 3.

a younger age group of Mennonite Brethren.

Despite these strong endorsements of the parochial schools, the high schools, especially in the earlier years of their history, were not without their tensions. Building permanent structures, employing qualified teachers, and maintaining the operation without any government grant or tax support has repeatedly required great personal sacrifice of the many contributors. Appeals such as the following by Harold Jantz have inspired the membership to give:

If someone is unconvinced that private schools are worth their high costs let him recall how many young people were lost to the Lord while we were without them. Let him ponder the reason, too, why we have so many uncommitted and unconcerned middle-aged people in our ranks. Undoubtedly, much of it is due to a time when we had no Christian high schools to speak in unmistakably committed terms to our young people.⁷⁷

Discussing the subject of stability for Christian high schools, former teacher at Eden Christian College and former editor of Mennonite Brethren Youth Worker indicated six areas requiring attention for greater stability: finances, educational programs, changing curriculum, publicity, turn-over in teaching staff, and election of school boards.⁷⁸ A problem which has now largely resolved itself is the large turn-over of teaching staff, as an anonymous former teacher indicates,

In a survey of 14 years of Mennonite Brethren private secondary school education, it was found that, of the approximately 100 teachers who had taught in these Canadian schools, 67 had left.

⁷⁷ Jantz, "We Might Possibly Give Our Support If...", MBH, IV (May 21, 1965), p. 3.

⁷⁸ H. H. Dueck, "Stability for Christian High Schools", MO, VI (May 20 and May 27, 1960).

Of the staff teaching in the year of the survey, over 30% had no previous teaching experience and over 25% were leaving at the end of the year.⁷⁹

The anonymous author then gives five reasons: lower salaries, poorer facilities, lack of a philosophy of education, lack of professional ethics, and the lack of authority in the presence of students and parents of the same communal group. Finally, a continuing problem is the disparity between the ideal and the real. Especially the teachers of such schools seek to resolve this dilemma.⁸⁰ Such tensions, however, have enabled the schools to mature and provide the stability and strength that are apparent today.

Bible College and College of Arts. While Tabor College in Hillsboro, Kansas, and especially the Bible department, were supported by the Canadian Conference from before 1925 until 1955,⁸¹ such moral and financial support and continuous attendance by some Canadian students⁸² did not replace the need for a school of higher theological training in Canada. Already in 1927 the Year Book reported that "Br. Abr. Unruh schaezt die Schule als ein Werk, in dem Wissenschaft und Bible im Einklang gehalten werden".⁸³ The report to the Conference in the following year expressed

⁷⁹ Anonymous, "Why Private High School Teachers Quite", MBH, II (Mar. 1, 1963), pp. 6, 7.

⁸⁰ Jake Isaac, "Raising the Spiritual Standards of our Private Schools", MO, V (Dec. 18 and Dec. 26), 1959, pp. 11 and 10 respectively.

⁸¹ YB, 1955, p. 5. Support through one annual collection in the churches was optional subsequent to 1955.

⁸² YB, 1949, p. 23 indicates that in the previous seven years 63 Canadian students graduated from Tabor College.

⁸³ YB, 1927, p. 34.

this same need for higher education.

Higher education has become necessary, because we have become a fellowship which is already noticed by the world. Therefore greater demands are made on our youth.

The young people must not imbibe the anti-Christian worldviews in schools of higher education; therefore, we want to provide the young people in our schools with a biblical perspective.⁸⁴

The need to establish its own school for higher theological education ("hoehere Bibelschule") was expressed as early as 1939,⁸⁵ and in 1943 the national Bible school committee (appointed several years earlier to coordinate Bible school instruction) was asked to investigate the possibility of a higher theological school.⁸⁶ At the 1944 Conference specific recommendations were passed to begin the Mennonite Brethren Bible College at Winnipeg.⁸⁷ Established initially as a "hoehere Bibelschule",⁸⁸

⁸⁴ YB, 1928, p. 44. See also YB, 1929, pp. 68, 69.

⁸⁵ In his report to the annual Canadian Conference, J. A. Toews, Sr., at that time a Bible school instructor at Hepburn, lamented, "Wenn die Bibelschulen Lehrer anstellen, welche selbst nur eine Bibelschule absolviert haben, dabei oft keine oder eine mangelhafte allgemeine Bildung erhalten haben, dann kann das nur beim schweren Anfang also Notbehelf geduldet werden. Wird dies nicht beruecksichtigt, dann bedeutet das einen langsamen Tod fuer die Schule" (YB, 1939, p. 25).

⁸⁶ YB, 1943, p. 18. "Im Gespraech ueber eine hoehere Schule wird unter anderem besonders auf die grosse Not hingewiesen fuer vorbereitete Arbeiter in den Dienstlagern, in den Bibelschulen, und in den Gemeinden selbst:.... Das Komitee moechte diese Sache zum weiteren betenden Nachdenken angeregt haben, dass spaeter zu etwas Konkretem fuehren koennte". See p. 31 for details of an interim arrangement to have an additional class at Winkler.

⁸⁷ See YB, 1944, pp. 28-29, 32-33, 85-90. For a history of Mennonite Brethren Bible College, see John G. Doerksen, Ph. D. dissertation at U. of North Dakota, 1968, "Mennonite Brethren Bible College and College of Arts: Its History, Philosophy, and Development".

⁸⁸ See references in YB, 1944, p. 28; 1945, p. 59.

the College had as its objective "to provide an opportunity for earnest young men and women to prepare adequately for the high calling of Christian service as ministers, teachers, missionaries and workers in other fields of Christian work".⁸⁹ Adequately to achieve this goal, the College soon recognized the need to supplement its undergraduate theological offerings with liberal arts courses, and gradually introduced sufficient courses for the first two years of a three-year B. A. program.⁹⁰ Failure to be able to affiliate with the University of Manitoba⁹¹ led to an affiliation with Waterloo Lutheran University (presently Wilfred Laurier) from 1960 to 1970, at which time an association was entered with the former United College of Winnipeg, now University of Winnipeg. At the same time, to strengthen its theological offerings, the College developed a Bachelor of Divinity program based on a Bachelor of Arts degree as entrance requirement. This program continued from 1962 to 1971.⁹² During its thirty-year history the college witnessed the following enrolment pattern:⁹³ 1945/46 - 99; 1950/51 - 182; 1955/56 - 105; 1960/61 - 140; 1965/66 - 164; 1970/71 - 109; 1975/76 - 223. An analysis of its 565 graduates at its twenty-fifth anniversary in 1969 revealed the following kind of

⁸⁹ Calendar, 1945-46, Mennonite Brethren Bible College, p. 1.

⁹⁰ John G. Doerksen, ibid., pp. 101-103.

⁹¹ Among other stipulations, U. of Manitoba required relocation of MBBC to the Fort Garry campus. See Doerksen, ibid., p. 109.

⁹² YB, 1962, p. 164 and YB, 1971, p. 66.

⁹³ The figures include part-time enrolment. See respective year-books, 1946, p. 100; 1951, p. 21; 1956, p. 73; 1961, p. 29; 1966, p. 114; 1971, p. 65.

information:

Geographical distribution of graduates:

Canada, 388;
U. S. A., 55;
other countries (Africa, Europe, South America and Asia), 47.

Programs completed:

Bachelor of Religious Education - 222;
Bachelor of Theology - 186;
Sacred Music Course - 43;
Bachelor of Arts (music major) - 13;
General Bible (diploma course) - 12;
Bachelor of Divinity - 8;
Missions (diploma course) - 7;
Graduate of Theology (certificate course) - 5.

Vocational distribution:

teachers - 257;
pastors - 63;
missionaries - 55;
nurses - 19;
housewives - 18;
others - 55.

Denominational affiliation:

Mennonite Brethren - 433;
Baptist - 20;
General Conference Mennonite - 7;
Evangelical Mennonite Mission Church - 5;
United Church - 4;
Evangelical Mennonite Brethren - 3;
Others - 17.

This breakdown shows how strongly denominational the college has been and how extensively pastors, missionaries, and lay members of the Canadian Mennonite Brethren Church are trained theologically.⁹⁴

Once again, the history of the college has not been without its tensions. While the physical plant has never been elaborate and the salaries but modest, such factors as facilities and finances have not been

⁹⁴ Twenty-fifth Anniversary Publication of MBBC, 1944-1969, pp. 56-62. The information for the booklet was gleaned from 495 replies of the survey questionnaire sent to 565 graduates.

the most crucial items of concern, for local churches and conference subsidy have continuously provided a viable, supporting base. The college has been one of the few national institutions--the only educational institution--for the entire Canadian Conference to rally its support. More central to its concern, first, have been the objectives which the college is intended to serve. The objectives have been reviewed by faculty, Board of Higher Education, and Canadian Conference sessions.⁹⁵ A second concern has been the nature of the program required to carry out these objectives. Such questions have been raised: To what extent is an arts program required? How professional need the musical division become? How do the theological offerings differ from those of Bible schools and graduate seminaries? How can there be the appropriate balance between theoretical input and practical expression?⁹⁶ A third area of concern has been the question of image.⁹⁷ If Mennonite Brethren Bible College is the only Canadian school for training church workers, how experimental and progressive dare such a school for training future leaders be? Must

⁹⁵For statements arising from such discussion, see the following: F. C. Peters, "Towards a Philosophy of Education at the MBBC", paper presented to faculty and board, in J. D. Doerksen, MBBC and College of Arts, pp. 179-207; V. Adrian, "The MBBC and the Evangelical Mission of the Church", YB, 1967, pp. 62-69. Adrian states this primary task as preparing men and women for the ministries of the church, and the secondary task as helping Christian laymen to become effective witnesses in their various professions.

⁹⁶For discussion of such issues, see H. H. Dueck, "The Future Role of M. B. B. C.", in YB, 1973, pp. 20-21.

⁹⁷See J. H. Redekop, "College and Constituency--An Analysis" in YB, 1971, pp. 56-58. Redekop provides a six-fold reason why he feels the image of the college is "blurred".

it simply reflect the conservative stance of its supporting churches or dare it set the pattern in theological and ethical change? Finally, supplying the college with qualified faculty who meet the expectations of its constituency has been a struggle. The founder, A. H. Unruh, and a number of faculty have served as teachers and administrators for long periods: A. H. Unruh, 10 years; H. H. Janzen, 10 years; J. H. Quiring, 17 years; J. A. Toews, 20 years; David Ewert, 19 years; Herbert Giesbrecht, 21 years; Peter Klassen, 19 years; and Ben Horch, 10 years. Others served seven to nine years: Victor Adrian, Frank C. Peters, Victor Martens, J. J. Toews, V. Ratzlaff, H. H. Voth, and Esther Wiens. Still others have served shorted periods of time. Fifthly, to retain a continuous, stable enrolment has been difficult. With the rapid changeover in faculty and changing image of the college, student enrolment fluctuated from a high of 177 in 1963/64 to a low of 92 in 1972/73, to an increase to 154 in 1974/75.⁹⁸ Yet despite the tensions that have tested its viability, the College is currently on an upswing and possibly verifies the assessment of editor Harold Jantz, who asserted on its twenty-fifth anniversary, "It would likely not be an exaggeration to say that during these years, no other center of influence has so decidedly shaped the Canadian Conference as the College."⁹⁹

The seminary. The story of theological education of the Canadian Mennonite Brethren Church is not complete without reference to its deci-

⁹⁸ See YB, 1975, p. 27. For an interpretation of enrolment fluctuation, see YB, 1971, p. 65.

⁹⁹ H. Jantz, "MBBC--Looking Ahead", MBH, VIII (May 2, 1969), p. 9.

sion at the General Conference session in August, 1975, to become a joint sponsor of the Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary at Fresno, California. The seminary was begun by the United States Area Conference of the Mennonite Brethren Churches in 1955.¹⁰⁰ Prior to this a three-year theological course had been offered at Tabor College since 1945. Because of the numerous pastors who were being trained in seminaries of other denominations, already in 1948 the General Conference session at Mountain Lake, Minnesota, established the need for a separate Mennonite Brethren seminary jointly sponsored by the United States and Canadian churches.¹⁰¹ However, in the subsequent General Conference sessions in 1951 and 1954, the proposal was further studied, but Canada withdrew from the proposal because of its own program of theological studies at Mennonite Brethren Bible College.¹⁰² From 1962 to 1971, Canadians incorporated a seminary program in the Bible College, and only after its discontinuation was the proposal to join United States seriously entertained.¹⁰³ By 1975 the seminary had an enrolment of 117 of whom 45 were Mennonite Brethren (U. S. A., 28; Canada, 15; and foreign, 2). Of its 148 graduates during its twenty-year history, 38 were Canadians.¹⁰⁴ For the continued role of the joint seminary in socialization of Canadian Mennonite Brethren, the words of the

¹⁰⁰ For a history of the seminary's first twenty years, 1955-1975, see A. J. Klassen, The Seminary Story (Fresno: MBBS, 1975), 140 pp.

¹⁰¹ GCYB, 1948, p. 76.

¹⁰² GCYB, 1951, pp. 119-120; and 1954, pp. 62-63.

¹⁰³ See YB, 1969, p. 125; 1973, pp. 35-36; and 1975, pp. 50-53, 66, 97.

¹⁰⁴ Klassen, The Seminary Story, pp. 125-126.

president, H. Dick, in 1975 may be prophetic, "As goes the seminary, so goes the denomination".¹⁰⁵

Summary of Chapter Eight

Canadian Mennonite Brethren ensure the transmission of their heritage and the retention of their sectarian stance through a deliberate and systematic process of socialization. A major aspect of this socialization is the weekly church participation. Empirical measures of such participation include associationalism, that is, church attendance and a degree of actual involvement, as well as the attitudes which accompany associationalism. Almost all Canadian Mennonite Brethren (98%) attend church almost every week or once a week or more, and almost one-half (43%) attend a meeting at church on a day other than Sunday. Again, most Canadian Mennonite Brethren (95%) feel they can get some/very much/quite a lot from a typical service, and most (91%) are somewhat interested/interested/strongly interested in assuming some responsibility of service. Further analysis suggests that such participation is meaningful to the believer because it provides occasion for worship. Mennonite Brethren have preserved a rich heritage of hymns which facilitate the worship, stress spontaneous prayer, and particularly center their worship on biblical preaching. The Sunday schools provide the strongest weekly instructional avenue. In addition, ladies societies and youth groups add a dimension of fellowship along with the instruction and worship, while vacation Bible schools, Bible camps, and, more recently, boys and girls clubs

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., p. 5.

have given outreach opportunities along with the socialization. Tensions accompanying such socialization means have resulted from the dialectic between the yen for spontaneity and the bent of routinization, the ease of socialization at a cognitive level and the difficulty of practical application, the penchant for socializing and the passion for socialization, and desire for conservation and the duty of evangelization.

The formal socialization through parochial, educational institutions has become a reality for more than one-half of Canadian Mennonite Brethren. Among the schools, the Christian high schools and Bible schools are most frequently attended, about one-fourth of all Canadian Mennonite Brethren having attended each of these schools. Moreover, not only do most Canadian Mennonite Brethren recommend attending a parochial school beyond high school, but are also prepared to support the same. From the beginning in 1911 Canadian Mennonite Brethren have been concerned with private schools. The Bible schools were begun first, and while twenty-one schools have existed in all, three large Bible schools have reached a degree of stability in program and student enrolment, with an aggregate of some 500 to 600 students. Christian high schools were begun after World War II, and three large schools with more than one thousand students optimistically continue their parochial education. In addition, a Bible college and college of arts, begun in 1944, serves the entire Canadian brotherhood and attracts other denominational groups as well. A graduate seminary, jointly sponsored with the American Mennonite Brethren, is a recent addition to ensure denominational preservation in times of change. Thus, church participation--through worship, teaching, fellowship, and evangelism--and formal instruction--through Bible schools, high schools,

college, and seminary—have significantly facilitated the socialization process and thereby contributed to the continuity of the Canadian Mennonite Brethren.

IX

REINFORCING INTEGRATION THROUGH STRUCTURAL NETWORKS AND SERVICE AGENCIES

This is the fifth and last chapter which tests the hypothesis that the synthetic process of sacralization accounts for the continuity of sectarianism. It has been demonstrated that the Canadian Mennonite Brethren Church has successfully confronted change and secularization by consciously delineating boundaries with its beliefs and ethics. The cohesive strength of family solidarity and ethnicity has further contributed to such a sectarian stance. Moreover, identities on a personal and group level have been consolidated through the relentless focus on conversion and the broad participation in leadership roles. So also, the transmission of its heritage and, thereby, the retention of its sectarian stance have been ensured through a deliberate and formal process of socialization. Finally, it remains to be discovered whether or not the structural network which binds the conference of churches and, thereby, enables the joint participation in service and recruiting agencies has a strongly integrating effect and serves, as well, in providing continuity to the religious movement.

The underlying model which allows for delineating boundaries, enhancing cohesion, consolidating identities, facilitating socialization, and reinforcing integration is a functionalist one. It allows for the emphasis upon consensus rather than conflict, without however precluding conflict. This model is particularly apt in explaining the role of structural networks. Less apparent is its connection with service agen-

cies. Yet, two concerns of any viable movement, that of retaining the old and recruiting new members, are linked to the organizational aspect of the sect. On the one hand, organization provides the centripetal force of binding and preserving; on the other hand, it allows for the centrifugal force of disbanding and proliferating while simultaneously ensuring the former. Although sociologically resembling organizational types, the conference structures of Canadian Mennonite Brethren fit Charles H. Cooley's primary groups more closely because of the primary relationships they permit: involving a variety of roles and interests of each participant, involving the total personality of each individual, allowing free and extensive communication, but not easily transferring the relationship to another person.¹ Edward Shils' use of ideological primary groups (as opposed to primordial primary groups, as in the case of families) is an appropriate term for this kind of association, since religious beliefs form the basis of the common bond.² How then does the organizational structure of Canadian Mennonite Brethren allow for both centripetal and centrifugal forces simultaneously to be operative? While the forces may simultaneously be operative, for purposes of analysis they will have to be treated separately.

1. The Centripetal Impact of Conference Organization

If the conference organization of the Mennonite Brethren provided

¹David Popenoe, Sociology (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1974), p. 162.

²Ibid., p. 163.

the centripetal force of binding and preserving, such structure did not come accidentally as the by-product of bureaucratization or institutionalization. While ambiguity in the name of the organization and inadequacy in the nature of the organization sometimes prevailed, the structure itself was intentional and has been changed and refined as a result of conscious self-study. To understand the structural dimension, it is helpful to analyse more particularly several aspects.

The Emergence of the Structural Network

Several levels of analysis must be recognized to achieve a more comprehensive view of the development of the structural network of the Canadian Mennonite Brethren.

The General Conference level. As earlier indicated, rapid growth and spread of the movement in Russia led to the first conference organization in 1872.³ This assembly of three congregations, together with their affiliate groups, was subsequently referred to as the Bundeskonferenz, implying a covenant relationship among the member congregations. In Russia this organization remained simple, although centralized.⁴ The growth of the comparable Bundeskonferenz or General Conference in North America has been depicted in four stages by Mennonite Brethren historian, J. A. Toews.⁵ In its earliest phase (1879-1909), viewed as the period of beginnings and centralization, the General Conference engaged in such

³ Supra, p. 115.

⁴ J. A. Toews, HMBC, p. 194.

⁵ Ibid., pp. 195-215.

common activities as home missions, foreign missions, city missions, and publishing; and expressed its concerns in regard to higher education and Christian ethics.⁶ In order to purchase property in its overseas expansion, it was incorporated in 1900. In the next phase, from 1909-1924, the Conference included under its aegis the work of relief and general welfare.⁷ The years from 1924-1954 witnessed within Canada increased focus upon its own unique interests and problems: the Reiseschuld, its own city missions, Bible school education and founding a Bible college, the preservation of the German language, and the acquisition of the Christian Press. This led the Canadian Conference in 1953 to request that higher education, church schools, youth work, and home missions become the responsibility of area conferences.⁸ The phase of renewed cooperation, from 1954 to the present, has resulted in the following areas of cooperative work: missions and services, Christian literature, Christian education, mass media, seminary training, and reference and counsel. It was the central structure that allowed such coordinated "organization for united action".

Of special importance to Canadian Mennonite Brethren are two developments in the North American General Conference. First, already in 1903 the need was expressed to enlarge the conference to be able to incorporate the expansion of the church into Canada. This was followed by a revised structure in 1909 which included Canada along with a congregation

⁶ Ibid., pp. 195-200.

⁷ Ibid., pp. 204-205.

⁸ YB, 1954, pp. 57-58.

in North Dakota to constitute the Northern District Conference. Second, the large-scale immigration into Canada in the mid-twenties led to such a rapid increase in the membership of the Northern District Conference that by 1951 its membership exceeded that of the other three district conferences. The result was a constitutional crisis by which in 1954 the whole General Conference structure was reorganized to constitute two area conferences, the United States and Canada.⁹ Significant to note in this emergence of the co-equal Canadian area conference within the international General Conference was the manner in which the covenant relationship was honored. While the impetus for such re-organization came from Canada,¹⁰ the authorization came from the Bundeskonferenz itself. Although for many years the Northern District, that is, Canada, was disproportionately over-sized among its American counterparts, it sufficiently cherished the cohesive and integrating strength of participating in a General Conference that it deterred any action disruptive to the brotherhood relationship.

The Canadian Conference level. Despite its being inadequately represented on a General Conference level for several decades prior to 1954, the Canadian Conference had since 1910 held its own annual conference sessions on a "district" level and organized its own action in evangelism and education.¹¹ Only in 1945 was it separately incorporated

⁹ GCYB, 1954, pp. 16, 17; 1957, pp. 14, 15; 1960, pp. 30-33.

¹⁰ YB, 1954, pp. 57-58. See also YB, 1945, p. 143, for the request for increased representation of Canadians in the Board of Missions.

¹¹ YB, 1910. The actual title was: Verhandlungen der ersten Noerdlichen Distrikt-Konferenz der Mennoniten-Bruedergemeinde von Nord-Amerika, abgehalten in der Gemeinde, Herbert, Saskatchewan, 27. und 28. Juni, 1910.

with a charter articulating the following objectives:

i) to promote, maintain, superintend and carry on, in any and all parts of Canada, in accordance with the doctrinal laws, constitution, acts and rulings of the Mennonite Brethren Church of North America, any or all of the work of that body;

ii) to organize, maintain and carry on, in any and all parts of Canada, charities and missions, and to erect, maintain and conduct therein churches, schools, colleges, orphanages, hospitals and homes for the aged;

iii) to advance in other lawful ways education, religion, charity, and benevolence;

iv) to administer in Canada the property, business and other temporal affairs of the Corporation; and

v) to organize and carry on, in any and all parts of Canada, in furtherance of the lawful objects of the Corporation, and not otherwise, the business of printing and publishing.¹²

The structure of the Canadian Conference was significantly changed at the annual conference in 1967.¹³ To divide the responsibilities assumed by the Conference, it established six boards: Reference and Counsel, Management, Christian Education, Higher Education, Evangelism and Publication. These boards along with the Conference executive would constitute the Council of Boards, which would meet twice annually to act as "Conference in interim". At the same time, it was decided to conduct business sessions biannually, with a Faith and Life Conference to be held in alternate years. This latter decision was repealed in 1975.¹⁴ From 1925, when the

¹²Charter and By-Laws of the Canadian Conference of the Mennonite Brethren Church of North America (Winnipeg: The Christian Press, 1945), pp. 4, 5.

¹³For a history of this change, see YB, 1965, pp. 40, 41; YB, 1966, pp. 30-38; YB, 1967, pp. 23-24.

¹⁴YB, 1975, p. 68.

Northern District had 21 churches in two provinces with a membership of 2090, the Canadian Conference has grown in 1975 to include 126 churches in six provinces with a total membership of 19,051.¹⁵ After fifty years of carefully defining the Canadian Conference's rights and responsibilities, the conference structure today is a strongly-binding network which ensures unity and perpetuates a covenant relationship on a national level in the face of repeated threats of regionalism and disintegration or assimilation into society at large. The joint tasks that the Conference undertakes become the cohesive force to integrate the otherwise fragile structure, for the only answer to jointly assuming such responsibility is to have conference structures.

The provincial level. Conference structures emerged not only on an international and national level, but also on a provincial level. The first Mennonite Brethren churches in Canada were established in Manitoba and Saskatchewan as early as 1888 and 1898, respectively. It was years later that they became separately incorporated as provincial conferences. Records for provincial conference sessions in Manitoba date back to 1929.¹⁶ The conferences occurred semi-annually and reviewed the work of evangelism, Bible teaching, and house visitation on a local level; and youthwork, city missions, and education on a provincial scale. Ordinations of ministers were also reviewed, as were the reports of contributions for home missions. In 1940, the Mennonite Brethren Church of Mani-

¹⁵ See YB, 1925, pp. 71-73; YB, 1975, pp. 114-15.

¹⁶ See Protokoll der Vertreterversammlung der Mennoniten Bruedergemeinde des Manitoba Kreises, 1929 (mimeographed copy in MBBC archives).

toba was incorporated,¹⁷ and subsequently the sessions were called provincial conferences instead of merely "Vertreterversammlungen" (assembly of representatives). The first all-provincial conference for Saskatchewan occurred in 1946, the northern and southern districts having met separately prior to this. Areas of work reviewed at this first conference included Western Children's Mission, city mission, tract mission, choir conductors' conferences, and the matter of incorporation, which was revised in 1952.¹⁸ Churches in Alberta were first organized in 1927, and conference sessions apparently began the same year.¹⁹ The Alberta Provincial Conference was incorporated as recently as 1957.²⁰ Ontario had its first convention in 1931,²¹ was incorporated in 1932,²² joined the

¹⁷ See Die Statuten der Mennoniten Bruedergemeinde von Manitoba, Canada, 1953, p. 1 (Winnipeg: The Christian Press); and Minutes of the Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches of Manitoba, (n. p.), 1941.

¹⁸ See Protokoll der 1. Saskatchewan Konferenz der Mennoniten Bruedergemeinden, 1946 (mimeographed copy in MBBC archives); and Protokoll der 6. Provinzialen Konferenz der Mennoniten-Bruedergemeinde von Saskatchewan, 1952: The original charter dates to 1909 (copy of which is in MBBC archives).

¹⁹ The fifth Jahressitzung was held in 1932. See Protokoll der 5. Jahressitzung der Mennoniten-Bruedergemeinde der Provinz Alberta, 1932 (mimeographed copy in MBBC archives).

²⁰ Acts of Incorporation and By-Laws of the Alberta Conference of the Mennonite Brethren Churches (Winnipeg: The Christian Press, 1957), pp. 1-6.

²¹ See The Eleventh Convention of the Ontario Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches (Winnipeg: The Christian Press, 1942); in MBBC archives, this is the earliest record available.

²² Constitution and By-Laws of the Ontario Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches, 1971 (mimeographed copy in MBBC archives).

General Conference in 1939, and the Canadian Conference as recently as 1946.²³ British Columbia, with only one congregation in 1929, organized into a provincial conference in the 1930's, burgeoned in growth during the 1940's, so that by 1975 it had thirty-six churches with about one-third of Canada's Mennonite Brethren membership.²⁴ The independent churches of Quebec as yet do not constitute a separate provincial conference, although belonging to the Canadian Conference. Thus, what unity in action through conference structure was facilitated on an international and national level was made even more effective on a provincial level, since the conference concerns were even more closely related to the life of the local congregation. While helping to bind the local churches together in a centripetal manner, the structures did not stifle the initiative of the individual nor of the local church, because of the polity which underlies.

Mennonite Brethren Church Polity

There has not always been clarity as to the polity that did in fact, and should, prevail. Until 1930, the precise name of the Conference on the North American level came almost by default. The history of the German General Conference yearbooks indicates this confusion. From 1883 to 1927, the title, Die Bundes-Konferenz der Mennoniten-Brueder-Gemeinde

²³ J. A. Toews, HMBC, pp. 171-173.

²⁴ The earliest conference minutes on record in MBBC archives are for June, 1946. In the following "Halbjahresversammlung" in November, 1946, the constitution was revised, but the date of the original charter was not included.

in Nord-Amerika, was consistently used. From 1930 to 1943, the plural Gemeinden was employed. In the yearbooks of 1945, 1954, and 1960, the singular Gemeinde was again used, while in 1948, 1951, and 1957 the plural form appears. Yet, in the English title of the German yearbooks (from 1898 to 1939) and later in the English portion of the bilingual yearbooks (from 1943 to 1960), there was the continuous use of the singular church.²⁵ In 1960, a motion to change the name of the conference to "The General Conference of the Mennonite Brethren Churches" was tabled for further study by the Committee of Reference and Counsel.²⁶ Only in the subsequent conference was there an extended rationale for such a proposal. The excerpt reflecting on polity reads as follows:

When we as Mennonite Brethren us [sic] the word "conference" in the official designation of ourselves as a brotherhood, the idea we have in mind and convey to others is that we are an association of churches. Specifically, according to the historic Mennonite Brethren concept of this term, we are an association of churches functioning autonomously in the administration of local affairs but banded together in voluntary interdependence for the purpose of mutual strengthening and cooperative action in matters of common spiritual heritage and mission under the headship of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. In this connotation the word "conference" has reference to the permanent organizational unity or oneness of Mennonite Brethren churches thus associated.... We conclude that while it is possible for a church (in the singular) to have a conference in the functional sense, it requires at least two or more churches to constitute or be a conference in the organizational sense of the word. Obviously, the latter is what we have in mind when we refer to ourselves in terms of an incorporated body.²⁷

²⁵ See respective yearbooks. However, according to GCRYB, 1954, p. 130, attention was called to the official name, The Church, suggesting a brotherhood of churches:

²⁶ GCRYB, 1960, p. 154.

²⁷ GCRYB, 1963, pp. 44-45.

The above explanation considerably clarifies the Mennonite Brethren church polity. On the one hand, there is the association of churches which is banded together in voluntary interdependence. A local church does not have to join the provincial conference. However, by remaining separate from the conference, the church would lose out on the benefits that accrue, since a group of churches has greater strength to carry out larger projects of action than does one congregation. At the same time, the local church retains its autonomy in local affairs. The General Conference constitution, for example, stipulates the following autonomy for the local church:

In the administration of local affairs each individual church handles its own matters without Conference intervention. Churches respect the autonomy in relation to each other. But when a church is engaged in activities or is confronted with problems which it is unable to solve alone, it shall solicit the aid of the Conference.²⁸

Its obligations with reference to Conference decisions are also stated:

Inasmuch as the Conference is one brotherhood, the local churches consider Conference decisions as morally binding and seek to support Conference activities, to recognize and abide by all Conference resolutions, and to carry them out to the best of their ability.²⁹

The constitution of the Canadian Conference includes a similar statement covering the above dual relationship of autonomy and obligation.

Each member church is autonomous in the structuring and management of its own local affairs. However, member churches accept as binding the decisions made by the Conference according to

²⁸ Constitution of the General Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches, 1963 edition, p. 20.

²⁹ Ibid., p. 21.

provisions of its constitution.³⁰

In addition, it subordinates Canadian Conference decisions to the General Conference: "the Conference is an area Conference of the General Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches and is subordinate to its decisions".³¹ And it further adds, "The provincial conferences are functionally united with the Canadian Conference and are subordinate to it".³² So also a provincial conference constitution, as for example in Alberta, disallows the Conference "to interfere with the local affairs of a church", but when it is "battling unsuccessfully against dangers", it shall be "the right and duty of the Committee of Reference and Counsel to inquire of said church in a brotherly spirit whether any outside assistance would be acceptable".³³ The polity, then, is one which balances local autonomy with external control, holds in tension the individualism of democracy with the interdependence of brotherhood,³⁴ and mediates between regional-

³⁰ Constitution of the Canadian Conference of the Mennonite Brethren Church of North America, 1970, p. 11. See also the document, "Die evangelische Freiheit in den Mennoniten Brudergemeinden Kanadas," a study paper to which all local churches responded prior to a conference, which states, "Jede Gemeinde ist selbststaendig in der Regelung ihrer inneren Angelegenheiten.... Die Konferenz haelt alle zu ihr gehoerenden Gemeinden verpflichtet, die in regelmaessiger Ordnung gefassen Beschluesse anzuerkennen und nach besten Moeglichkeit auszufuehren. Dieses umfasst alle Arbeitszweige, welche die Konferenz bereits aufgenommen hat, und auch die, zu deren Uebernahme sie sich in Zukunft einigt...." YB, 1950, pp. 124-125.

³¹ Ibid., p. 124.

³² Ibid.

³³ Act of Incorporation and By-Laws of the Alberta Conference of the Mennonite Brethren Churches (Winnipeg: The Christian Press, 1957), p. 8.

³⁴ This in-between stance has been articulated by J. A. Toews as congregational in theory and presbyterian in practice. See J. A. Toews,

ism and centralization (or federalism).³⁵

The Functions and Dysfunctions of Conferences

Having traced the emergence of the separate conference structures and reviewed the ecclesiastical polity which is implicit, one is further interested to discover how the individual member responds to such structural networks which appear to have been imposed from without. Do these structures in fact reinforce integration, or are they merely binding in that they inhibit vitality and lead to rigidity. The reply to this question is both positive and negative, and refers both to the structure of the conference itself and to the process of assembling for conference sessions (mainly the latter). Once again the reply comes from the editors of periodicals and the scholarly persons who reflect on these matters, but they do present the viewpoints of diverse individuals. What then are the functions and dysfunctions of a conference structure or assembly?

A preliminary clarification needs to be made with regards to the identity of those individuals who attend conferences. On the one hand, one notes the constitutional representation: for the triennial General Conference sessions, one delegate for every fifty members or fraction thereof may attend; for the annual Canadian Conference, one delegate for every twenty-five members or fraction thereof; for a provincial conference, usually one delegate for every fifteen members or fraction thereof.

³⁴ "The Church as a Brotherhood: A Study in Early Mennonite Theology", Voice, IV (Sept.-Oct., 1955), 13-16.

³⁵ See F. C. Peters, "Mennonite Brethren Church Polity", Voice, VIII (Nov.-Dec., 1959), pp. 17-21.

On the other hand, one could analyse the delegates from the perspective of vocation or church position, as Table XI-1 indicates. The largest

Table IX-1
Vocations and Church Positions of Delegates
at the Canadian Conference, 1963

VOCATION	ONT.	MAN.	SASK.	ALTA.	B. C.	TOTAL
Pastors	6	15	17	7	23	68
Bible school teachers	1	4	3	0	2	10
Public school teachers	6	24	7	0	7	44
Profession	2	8	1	0	2	13
Business	3	17	7	3	8	38
Farmers	5	34	42	20	9	110
Laborers and clerks	1	4	2	4	8	19
Retired	0	10	6	3	3	22
Not indicated	4	10	9	7	4	34
Total	28	126	94	58	66	358
CHURCH POSITIONS						
Ministers	11	40	28	15	33	127
Deacons	3	15	12	8	2	40
Choir leaders	2	5	8	1	5	21
Sunday school workers	4	34	14	8	11	71
Youth workers	3	7	2	4	1	17
Business administrators	5	10	12	5	5	37
Total	28	111	76	41	57	313

SOURCE: YB, 1963, p. 182.

vocational groups at the 1963 Canadian Conference session at Herbert, a farming community in South Saskatchewan, were farmers (110/358), pastors (68/358), public school teachers (44/358), and businessmen (38/358). Of these 358 delegates, 313 held some office in the church, the largest area of service being ministers (127/313)³⁶, Sunday school workers (71/313),

and deacons (40/313). How then do these participants of a conference session view the sessions?

Positively, the spokesmen view the experience of attending a conference as serving the following functions.

It enables fellowship. Particularly in earlier times when travel was infrequent, the scattered, lonely immigrant settlers used the conference session as an occasion to meet old friends and make new acquaintances. Even prior to the large-scale immigration of the 1920's, the assembly at a conference session was viewed as a "foretaste of heaven".³⁷ The recording secretary at these conference sessions invariably drew attention to the reception of conference guests.³⁸ Moreover, it was customary to receive and extend official greetings from fraternal Mennonite and Mennonite Brethren churches or from prominent members of the conference who were absent for reasons of health or service abroad.³⁹ Fellowship, the social dimension of attending conferences, has remained a pro-

³⁶ The number of ministers considerably exceeds the number of pastors, because of the multiple ministry practiced in Mennonite Brethren churches.

³⁷ The conference secretary reported, "Am besagten Tage um 3 Uhr nachmittages gab es bei dem Versammlungshause ein frohes Begruessen, welches allein schon ein Vorschmack des Himmels ist." YB, 1913, p. 13.

³⁸ See YB, 1923, p. 1, "Wie erfreulich ist doch das Begruessen mit so vielen Gotteskindern von nah und fern, nachdem man sich eine geraume Zeit nicht gesehen hat."

³⁹ For example, in 1962, the Yearbook (pp. 24-29) records greetings from F. C. Peters, J. J. Toews, B. B. Janz, A. J. Sawatsky, C. D. Toews, and P. P. Pauls. Greetings were extended by the Conference to A. Hiebert, I. Loewen, D. J. Klassen, F. C. Peters, J. J. Toews, B. B. Janz, C. D. Toews, A. J. Sawatsky, P. P. Pauls, and to the General Conference Mennonite Church (from whom a greeting had also come).

minent feature throughout the history of the Canadian Mennonite Brethren churches.

It fosters brotherhood. The conference session has prompted columnists and editors of church periodicals to reflect on the meaning of brotherhood. Interim editor of Mennonite Brethren Herald, Peter Klassen, in 1964 defined brotherhood as implying "a high regard for each other, a warm fellowship, a spiritual intimacy, a concern for the physical and moral welfare of other members of the group ... more than a democratic social order where behavior is regulated in such a way that the majority is served at best. Besides having a spiritual orientation, the brotherhood principle involves sharing and concern on a personal level".⁴⁰ Almost a decade later, when he was once again interim editor, this professor of music further accentuated the concern for the personal level in terms of listening to the deviant. "To arrive at a true consensus will mean taking every brother (even the oddballs) seriously and listening for God's voice in him. We can learn very little from those who already think as we do."⁴¹ The added dimension of brotherhood over another social group, according to columnist Redekop, is that "a brotherhood consists of people who are interested in and accept each other as total people.... Each member of the brotherhood has its own function to perform but the work of the individual is always part of a larger total thrust.... Each esteems the other more than himself."⁴² Conference sessions not only stimulated such

⁴⁰P. Klassen, "On Being Agreeable", MBH, III (July 3, 1964), p. 3.

⁴¹P. Klassen, "On Being a Brotherhood", MBH, XII (Jan. 26, 1973), p. 11.

⁴²J. H. Redekop, "A Brotherhood That Needs More!" MBH, IV (Oct.

theoretical articulation of brotherhood, but provided opportunities for its practical application, as the following further aspects indicate.

It cultivates sensitivity. Part of the brotherhood experience is to be sensitive to the needs and feelings of the minority. An example of such brotherhood sensitivity was evident in the very first Canadian conference session in 1910. When fifteen members abstained from voting for the increase of the salary for evangelists, the moderator at a later session of the same conference re-opened the discussion to allow for dissent, lest there be offence.⁴³ At the conclusion of the conference, the moderator wanted to be reassured that there were no hurt feelings and that unity and harmony prevailed.⁴⁴ Each conference session similarly gives opportunity to listen to the voice of the minority. Allowing them to speak helps prevent alienation.

It facilitates reconciliation. When differences in belief and practice become apparent, the conference sessions facilitate reconciliation. It may be a controversial issue, such as one's assessment of a private school, which evokes a clash of opinion. When in 1941 such a sharp debate ensued, the Conference subsequently expressed its regret

8, 1965), p. 2.

⁴³The minutes report as follows: "Der Vorsitzet fraegt, ob die gestrige Erhoehung des Monatsgehalt ... ohne verstimmte Gefuehle aufgenommen worden ist, dass wir uns nicht schwer werden moechten ... es tut sich kund, dass dieserhalb keine Verletzung vorliegt" (YB, 1910, p. 11).

⁴⁴YB, 1910, p. 15. "Die Frage, ob wir uns irgendwie sind schwer geworden, wird dahin beantwortet, dass wir nur einen bruederlichen Sinn verspueren und dass der Geist der Liebe gewaltet habe."

and gave opportunity for public apologies.⁴⁵ More subtle than an unkind remark of a single person is the economically superior attitude of a particular group, thus displaying provincialism. When the Canadian Conference assembled in British Columbia in 1949, such an attitude was confessed by the host province and an apology was requested.⁴⁶ Such a formal reconciliation melts a brotherhood together--indeed an integrating effect of conference sessions.

It expresses unity. Numerous spokesmen have repeatedly stated that church conferences unite a brotherhood. Former editor of Mennonite Observer, G. D. Huebert, in replying to the question, "Are Conferences of Any Value?", asserted, "A church conference may help greatly to create or strengthen the spirit of unity among believers".⁴⁷ Peter Klassen in 1963 explained,

... In order to work effectively on a conference level the members must feel that the conference does in fact exist--i. e., that

⁴⁵ The sharp debate over Rosthern academy caused one leader to use an expression which was not brotherly ("der des Bruederlichen Tonnes ermangelt"). As a result he apologized. Several apologies followed, as well as an official statement of apology by the Conference: "Die Noerdlich Distriktkonferenz der Mennoniten Bruedergemeinde bedauert es tief, dass waehrend der Verhandlungen ueber die Schulbestrebungen von einem Delegaten ein scharfes, unweises Urteil ueber die Rosthern Academy abgegeben wurde. Die Konferenz nimmt ernstlich Stellung gegen so ein Vorkehren." YB, 1941, pp. 56, 57.

⁴⁶ The moderator of the B. C. provincial conference publicly stated "dass viele Geschwister ihrer Provinz in der Vergangenheit oft in Selbstgefelligkeit ueber ihren wirtschaftlichen Aufschwung gesprochen haben. Manche Brueder waren darueber besorgt. Gott hat nun zugelassen, dass die Verhaeltnisse sich so gestaltet, dass sie ihre Ohnmacht erkannt haben. Dadurch sind sie gedemuetigt worden.... Die Konferenz erkennt mannigfaltige Vergehungen in den eigenen Provinzen, vergibt aber den Geschwistern gern und beweist das mit Aufstehen" (YB, 1949, p. 6).

⁴⁷ G. D. Huebert, "Are Conferences of Any Value?" MO, VII (June 30, 1961), p. 2.

churches are in fact working together to achieve common spiritual goals.

To get this necessary feeling (conference spirit) the members must have some physical entity in mind, since our membership is not made up of "souls" only. The personal contact with actual people and the working together at specific tasks in the service of God gives us the impression that a "real" Conference exists, and that the Conference is not some nebulous entity that other people talk about but we know little of.⁴⁸

The physical bond, however, is only one aspect of the unity. Editor. Harold Jantz points to the underlying common aspirations and goals which draw the members together. He asks,

What holds this conference of churches together? Yes, it is first of all the Christ whom we trust and love....

Yet there is more that binds us together. I'm overwhelmed every time I attend a convention of our churches at the remarkable interest in one another that one senses. I agree, we have our differences ... yet the level of common aspirations and goals is far greater than anything which might fragment us. I'm always impressed by the degree of closeness in our theological stance when we get together to confer with one another.⁴⁹

Similarly, in an article published in several Conference publications, J. A. Toews argued that attending conferences united the scattered brotherhood.

All "distances" vanish when we meet the Brethren face to face from East and West, North and South, and we gladly confess ... "We are not divided, all one body we, one in hope and doctrine, one in charity."⁵⁰

A conference, thus, gives visible expression to a unity pertaining to

⁴⁸ P. Klassen, "Conference Spirit", MBH, II (July 12, 1963), p. 3.

⁴⁹ H. Jantz, "What Holds Us Together?" MBH, XII (Nov. 30, 1973), p. 11.

⁵⁰ J. A. Toews, "On Attending the Conference", Voice, IV (March-April, 1955), 9-11; K-J, XI (May-June, 1956), 6-7; MBH, I (May 25, 1962), pp. 5-6.

invisible aspirations and beliefs.

It strengthens commitment. Attending a conference already indicates a degree of commitment. Such commitment, however, is intensified, as two separate comments on the first "Faith and Life" Conference held on a Canadian Conference level in 1968 suggest. Columnist J. H. Redekop asks about the involvement of young people.

Were the young people present? Indeed, they were, by the hundreds, and many were delegates.... Surely a church has a potentially strong future when at the height of the "busy season," and on a beautiful summer evening, a large congregation of young people assemble after a regular service to share Christian concerns.... All in all, the convention helped to raise the spiritual barometer of our churches. It revealed clearly that we have come to the point where we are willing to consider radically different responses to crucial questions of the day in a spirit of acceptance and brotherly love. For these reasons I believe that the convention was rewarding and valuable.⁵¹

Editor Harold Jantz sensed another dimension which reflected growth in commitment.

... The incorporation of simple sharing and prayer sessions into the conference program became a highlight for me personally as I believe also for many other delegates. It was a positive joy to sense the spirit within brethren from other parts of the dominion. We became aware of the deep currents of Christian wisdom and concern that direct the lives of brethren who are rarely heard from the convention floor.⁵²

It motivates for service. Attending conferences, finally, broadens horizons and, thus, motivates for service. J. A. Toews argued in 1955 that attending conferences would provide new incentives for service,⁵³ and

⁵¹J. A. Redekop, "Crowds at Clearbrook", MBH, VII (Aug. 23, 1968), p. 3.

⁵²H. Jantz, "Marks of the Spirit at Clearbrook", MBH, VII (July 26, 1968), p. 3.

⁵³J. A. Toews, ibid., p. 10.

Leslie Stobbe, first editor of Mennonite Observer, argued about attending conventions and conferences generally that "if you come with a right attitude you will go away a richer man in experience and knowledge. Your horizon will be much wider and work of the conference will have taken on a new significance. With new zeal you will support church and conference projects".⁵⁴ In a like manner, interim-editor Klassen viewed conferences, not only as "an extension of our collective personalities", but "at our conferences we deal with matter of 'works'. There are big things that need to be done in this world that can be done most effectively by a large group of people working together. Our conference business sessions organize this work for the individual members...."⁵⁵ It is not difficult, then, to isolate the functions that attending conferences serve.

There are also dysfunctions in conference organizations and conference sessions. While commentary on this aspect is less frequent, it comes as a caveat of concern by both critics and leaders, and reflects a persistent reality.

There is the tendency to stifle initiative. The first editor of the Mennonite Brethren Herald, Rudy Wiebe, today one of Canada's leading novelists, warned that the danger was not in the organization itself, nor in the officers who are elected to it, but "there is a good deal of danger in the attitude individual church members can gain toward the Conference as such", for "the Conference never actually does anything except as it

⁵⁴L. Stobbe, "Will You Be There?" MO, III (May 31, 1957), p. 2.

⁵⁵P. Klassen, "The Idea of a Conference", MBH, III (June 19, 1964), p. 3.

acts through dedicated individuals".⁵⁶ He cautions one not to count on the Conference to initiate things. Relying on a structure can, thus, lead to the loss of personal initiative.

There is the tendency to send the same people as delegates. Again, Wiebe laments that "extremely few laymen in the 20-40 year age group attend even provincial conferences unless they are directly appointed to conference or church work.... It is not that they are too apprehensive about younger brethren's views to send them to conferences. The problems usually center around the men directly involved: many do not want to go to conferences, even if they are named".⁵⁷ While the survey above⁵⁸ does not support Wiebe's opinion, his caution may well be in place, for the gifted, experienced, and highly motivated persons will naturally be elected as delegates.

There is the danger of elitism. If the more prominent church members are sent as delegates, these are the ones who assume offices on a Conference level, and some repeatedly. Reflecting on one conference session, political science professor and columnist Redekop asked "whether we are actually a brotherhood or a hierarchy, or perhaps a hierarchical brotherhood". He continued,

I suspect that a casual visitor at the sessions would have gotten the impression that while we all claim to be brethren, some are more brethren than others. Many of us seem to be reluctant to

⁵⁶R. Wiebe, "Counting on the Conference", MBH, II (Feb. 8, 1963), p. 3.

⁵⁷R. Wiebe, "New Faces Needed at the Conference", MBH, I (May 25, 1962), p. 4.

⁵⁸Supra, p. 333.

see ministers and pastors (especially of big churches) as equal brethren and tend to be embarrassed when we force ourselves to refer to medical doctors simply as brethren. Apparently we feel compelled to point out who these people REALLY are. There is clearly a time when deference and degree are in place, but I suggest there is also a time when they should be left out entirely.⁵⁹

The conference structure itself requires a measure of hierarchy, and becoming involved in conference sessions fosters the dysfunction of elitism.

There is the danger of bureaucratization. Not only social critics, but leaders who have served as educators, pastors, and moderators recognize the institutionalization of the church, a church which took a sectarian stance precisely because of the shift from a believers' church to a parish church prior to 1860. One such leader, after rehearsing the merits of attending conferences, writes,

But now the danger exists that in view of the great, one forgets the small; that in view of the many, one neglects the individuals; that in view of the Conference, the churches and the individual members are disregarded. The means becomes the end.⁶⁰

Then he views the three constitutions and notes the leaders required for each structure. He further sees the agendas for the conferences to be conducted in that particular year. In his fancy, he anticipates the events of three successful conferences, and then he adds poignantly,

Langsam, und vielleicht unbemerkt, haben sich Tendenzen entwickelt in unserem Konferenzwesen welche negative Folgen zeigen. Stehen wir nicht in Gefahr, dass die Bruderschaft eine Buerokratie verwandelt wird? dass die Lokalgemeinde ihr urspruengliches Gepraege verlieren und nur Diener einer Konferenz werden? dass die Kraft des Heiligen Geistes durch einen Mechanismus ver-

⁵⁹ J. H. Redekop, "Reflections on Hepburn", MBH, IV (Aug. 6, 1965), p. 2.

⁶⁰ J. H. Quiring, "Konferenz und Gemeinde", Voice, VI (May-June, 1957), 7-9.

draengt wird? dass wir die Einheit der Bruderschaft in einer Organisation suchen anstatt in einer Person? dass unsere Konferenzen anstatt vornehmlich Glaubens- und Missions-konferenzen zu sein, in blosse Geschaefstssitzungen entarten, auf denen der Rangstreit der Komitees endlich geklaert werden soll?⁶¹

He then concludes that the Canadian Mennonite Brethren Church could well afford to have fewer conferences, fewer constitutions, fewer committees, and fewer resolutions. He keenly sensed the process of institutionalization and, therefore, warned against the dysfunctions of conferences.

Despite the dysfunctions implicit in conference forms and assemblies, the overarching impact of these is predominantly functional. Maintaining a viable, rationally-oriented conference structure demands considerable effort and necessitates a centripetal force with the attention focused upon the conference entity. At the same time, this centripetal force generates a momentum which not only is integrating and enduring, but which also leads to an extension of the movement, as the further analysis indicates.

2. The Centrifugal Impact of Conference Organization

A further force which is channeled through conference structures and has enabled the movement to persist is centrifugal in direction. Although rooted in the organization, the focus in this instance is directed away from the conference structure, for it expresses itself in service and outreach. Earlier chapters have already illustrated other action-based expressions of faith, such as overt behavioral modes, group-oriented associations, decision-based commitments, and institutions of socialization.

⁶¹ Ibid., p. 9. (Because the above is so well articulated in German, I chose not to translate it.)

It is the evangelistic and service-oriented agencies of the conference which are used to illustrate the centrifugal impact of the structural base of this religious movement.

The Empirical Data

The evangelism and service agencies, loosely referred to as mission structures, represent collectively the Anabaptist understanding of mission--presenting the total gospel to the total man. Yet, Mennonite Brethren have chosen usually to separate the sphere of activity as evangelism and service, as the differing structures used to achieve this goal indicate.

Evangelistic agencies. Traditionally, Mennonite Brethren in Canada spoke in terms of "home" missions (Innere Mission) and "foreign" missions (Aeusere Mission)--the former the domain of the provincial and Canadian conferences, the latter the concern of the General Conference. For this analysis, the distinction will simply be evangelism in Canada and beyond Canada.

Even a brief survey of Mennonite Brethren evangelistic efforts in Canada must include the concerns prominent prior to 1925. From its first session in 1910 until well into the 1930's, the annual sessions of the Northern District Conference dealt almost exclusively with evangelism and missions, and were interspersed with numerous inspirational sermons relating to missions. The reports on "home missions" systematically reviewed the work of individual lay evangelists and Bible colporteurs for each of the participating districts (Kreise).⁶² The work of "city missions", initially a General Conference concern, and especially "foreign" missions

also highlighted these reports. Accordingly, the budget was largely devoted to evangelism and missions.⁶³ With the massive immigration of Mennonite Brethren in the mid-1920's and the need for involvement in relief, colonization, and Reiseschuld, the evangelism and missions reports gradually receded in prominence, and by 1945 the Canada Inland Mission was organized to coordinate the separate "home mission" efforts of the different provinces.⁶⁴ At the same time, new forms of evangelism were employed. In 1947 a tract mission was begun.⁶⁵ Increasingly short-term ministries in evangelism occupied Bible school teachers during summer

⁶²At the first conference, for example, there were oral reports from the "innere Missionskomitee" of the visitation evangelism of numerous lay brethren in both the Rosthern and Herbert districts to which the Conference expressed its satisfaction ("allgemeine zufriedenheit"); also the work among the Russian brethren at Eagle Creek was approved, and the evangelistic and colportage work of C. N. Hiebert and Jacob Ewert was approved for the subsequent six months (YB, 1910, pp. 7-10). The income for 1910 totalled \$1355.76 and expenditures \$1117.60 were used to sponsor individual evangelistic visits (YB, 1911, p. 11). By 1925, reports were given by three Kreise--Rosthern, Herbert and Manitoba--and Winnipeg figured prominently in city missions (YB, 1925, pp. 44-54).

⁶³The financial report of \$15,128.62 at the 1925 conference session shows the following breakdown: Heidenmission, \$5595.73; Evangelisation, \$2395.21; Gemeindegemeinschaft, \$1542.47; Stadtmission, \$1819.80; Schule und Erziehung, \$630.35; Not in Russland, \$757.18; andere Wohltätigkeitszwecke, \$2387.88. Thus, almost the total budget was devoted to evangelism and missions. See YB, 1925, p. 50.

⁶⁴YB, 1945, pp. 99-100. The separate reports from the provinces on "Innere Mission" continued to be presented at the annual conference (although there was not always time to read these; see YB, 1948, p. 125) until 1957, after which they were incorporated into the Canada Inland Mission reports.

⁶⁵YB, 1947, pp. 159-162. See also Peter Penner, "A Historical Survey of the Home Mission Work of the Mennonite Brethren Conference of Canada", a thesis for Th. B. at MBBC, 1957, pp. 28-30. See also YB, 1955, p. 132 for rejuvenation of the earlier concern.

months.⁶⁶ Already in 1953 the need for a conference evangelist was expressed, and in 1959 the conference accepted in principle the appointment of the same.⁶⁷ With the formation of a Committee on Evangelism in 1958, new inspiration for evangelism was stimulated and new techniques employed. Radio programs were sponsored provincially, none perhaps as prominently as the Gospel Light Hour, begun by a group of students at Mennonite Brethren Bible College in 1946.⁶⁸ Since the reorganization of the Canadian Conference in 1967, the Board of Evangelism has aggressively furthered the work in Quebec and extended itself into Nova Scotia.⁶⁹ Evangelism seminars in which laity are trained and campaigns employing professional evangelists have characterized the 1960's and 1970's. In addition, on a provincial scale, a systematic church extension program has been promoted in recent years.⁷⁰

Through the deliberate lay involvement from its earliest times, Canadian Mennonite Brethren churches extended their outreach by colportage

⁶⁶ J. A. Toews, HMBC, p. 316.

⁶⁷ YB, 1953, p. 38; YB, 1959, p. 159. In 1958 a special Committee on Evangelism was formed.

⁶⁸ In 1955 the Konferenz-Jugendblatt listed ten different radio programs. See K-J, X (March-April, 1955).

⁶⁹ See YB, 1960, p. 45, for the beginnings; and YB, 1975, pp. 79-103, for a more detailed account. See also J. A. Toews, HMBC, pp. 174-175. See also YB, 1964, p. 29; YB, 1965, pp. 28-41; and YB, 1966, pp. 89-94, for philosophy and aggressive planning.

⁷⁰ See P. Penner, ibid., pp. 43-113; see also P. Penner, Reaching the Otherwise Unreached: An Historical Account of the West Coast Children's Mission of B. C. (Winnipeg: The Christian Press, 1959). The interdenominational Western Children's Mission, begun by faculty and students of Bethany Bible Institute, was incorporated into the Canada Inland Mission. See YB, 1943, p. 32, and YB, 1944, pp. 50-51.

and visitation⁷ evangelism, mission Sunday schools and summer vacation Bible schools,⁷¹ summer camps, and radio ministries, and evangelistic campaigns and seminars. The result was an outreach into such ethnic communities as the Russians in Saskatchewan, the Doukhobors in British Columbia, the Old Colony Mennonites in Manitoba, the Jews in Winnipeg and Toronto,⁷² and the French Canadians in Quebec. Moreover, the church extended itself into such Anglo-saxon communities as Prince George and Terrace in British Columbia, Pincher Creek and Medicine Hat in Alberta, The Pas and Leaf Rapids in Manitoba, Orillia and London in Ontario, and Dartmouth in Nova Scotia.

While the numerical results of evangelistic efforts within Canada are difficult to ascertain because of the assimilation of Mennonites into the mainstream of Canadian society and the simultaneous loss of members to other than Mennonite Brethren churches, the churches in Canada have grown through other than merely biological or internal growth.⁷³ Beyond Canada such growth is more readily measurable. Already in Russia, Mennonite Brethren sent financial contributions to German mission societies and

⁷¹The 1948 annual report lists 111 schools with 213 teachers and 3236 students in a summer Bible school ministry in five provinces (YB, 1948, p. 105). In 1960 the annual report for the five provinces included 36 mission stations, 2 city missions, 67 full-time workers, 27 extension Sunday schools, 371 vacation Bible school teachers, and 6339 pupils (excluding Saskatchewan), 8 camps, and 20 radio programs (YB, 1960, p. 45).

⁷²For reports on the difficulty of this work, see YB, 1948, pp. 34-37, and YB, 1949, pp. 24-25.

⁷³One measure of such growth is to count the church members whose names are other than of Mennonite extraction. Such a list was prepared by Peter M. Hamm, "The Impact of the Designation of a Denomination upon its Outreach", a paper presented at the Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary, Spring, 1965.

eventually their own missionaries under Baptist sponsorship.⁷⁴ The earliest conference sessions of the North American Mennonite Brethren churches were primarily missions festivals, with interest centered on "home missions". In 1885 a "foreign missions" committee was elected to administer mission funds and to support missionaries under other organizations. In 1898 the General Conference chose to send its own missionaries to India which was the first and only "foreign" field until 1919, when the Conference assumed the responsibility for an independent Mennonite Brethren work in China.⁷⁵ From its very outset the Canadian Conference in 1910 included "foreign missions" in its annual conferences. Not only were missionaries on furlough invited for the inspirational sessions, but a major segment of the conference was devoted to reporting on foreign missions, including a financial report.⁷⁶ However, triennially the Canadian Conference participated in the General Conference sessions where foreign missions throughout the years has received greater attention than other conference issues. Especially significant to Canada was the decision of the General Conference in 1943 to assume the sponsorship for the Africa Mission Society, an independent society of Mennonite Brethren in Canada which had its

⁷⁴The first such missionaries were Rev. and Mrs. Abram Friesen, sent in 1889 to Nalgonda, India, under the American Baptist Missionary Union. See G. W. Peters, The Growth of Foreign Missions in the M. B. Church, pp. 55-60.

⁷⁵G. W. Peters, Growth of Foreign Missions, pp. 73-97, 107-114.

⁷⁶For example, YB, 1910, pp. 11, 12; YB, 1915, p. 22; YB, 1920, pp. 24-25; YB, 1925, pp. 54-58; YB, 1935, pp. 29-34. This practice continued until 1967, after which missions beyond Canada was included in inspirational sessions.

own missionaries and field in Bololo, northern Congo, since 1932.⁷⁷

Thereupon an increased representation in the Board of Missions was requested by Canada.⁷⁸ Of importance in shaping the further work of missions and service was the General Conference decision in 1966 to merge the Board of Missions and Board of Welfare which then became the present Board of Missions and Services.⁷⁹

The impact of this outreach in missions beyond Canada can be measured in terms of resources invested, as well as the growth of the church in other lands. One significant component of these resources is that of finances. Table IX-2 indicates these contributions for missions beyond Canada compared with the sister churches in the United States. The table yields the following information in assessing the commitment of Canadian Mennonite Brethren churches to overseas missions:

i) In 1925, when Canadian membership was about one-fourth that of the United States, contributions to missions were considerably less, about 1/20 of the total income. Could it be that these pioneer settlers were economically deprived, since foreign missions constituted about two-third of their total budget, as footnote #63 indicates.

ii) By the end of the depression in 1940, when Canadian membership became almost equal to the U. S. A., giving to missions was still considerably less in proportion, although the disparity was not as pronounced as in 1925. However, one must remember that Canadian Mennonite Brethren were also supporting Africa Mission Society, which had still not been accepted by the General Conference Board of Missions. Moreover, Canada that year did contribute towards other missions/services projects as follows: Innere Mission,

⁷⁷ See GCYB, 1943, pp. 23-24, 26. Appeals had already been made in 1936.

⁷⁸ YB, 1945, p. 143.

⁷⁹ GCYB, 1966, pp. 22-23.

Table IX-2

Comparison of United States and Canadian Mennonite Brethren
Membership and Contributions to Overseas Missions⁸⁰

YEAR	U. S. MEMBERS	CAN. MEMBERS	TOTAL GIVING	U. S. GIVING	CAN. GIVING
1925 (1924)	6,332	2,080	\$104,303.71	-	\$5,595.73
1940 (1941)	8,575	7,856	52,164.52	-	9,799.90
1950	10,262	11,167	284,630.43	\$159,856.71	82,243.51
1960	11,683	14,075	656,510.73	250,188.81	359,242.28
1965	13,268	15,807	967,075.41	333,894.24	431,776.84
1970	14,796	17,056	1,377,701.47	436,412.20	620,867.21
1975	15,880	18,663	2,110,826.23	587,039.99	1,087,060.75

SOURCE: See footnote #80 below.

\$9907.05; Stadtmission, \$3650.33; and Wohltatigkeitszwecke (Welfare), \$15,166.79.

iii) By 1950, when Canadian membership had exceeded the U.S.A., contributions to missions were still only about one-half the U. S. A.

iv) The 1950's was a decade of enlargement for Mennonite Brethren contributions to missions. While Canadian membership continued to lead the U. S. A. through 1960, giving to missions had also proportionately exceeded the U. S. A. giving per member, with Canada giving \$25.52 per member annually and the U. S. A. \$21.41.

⁸⁰ The following sources suggest the difficulty in locating the information, as well as the resulting unreliability, in as much as statistics were accumulated from numerous sources over a period of fifty years. YB, 1925, p. 49; YB, 1941, p. 25; GCRYB, 1943, pp. 63, 48-50; GCRYB, 1951, p. 18; GCRYB, 1963, p. 52; GCRYB, 1966, p. 138; GCRYB, 1972, p. 65; GCRYB, 1975, p. 172; Berichte an die Bundeskonferenz, 1951, pp. 18-19; Mission Report, 1960, pp. 21-22; Open Doors: Report to G. C., 1966, p. 36; Servanthood: Triennial Report, 1972, p. 26; Impact: Triennial Report, 1975, p. 42.

v) Since 1960, the growth of Canadian church membership increased at approximately the same rate as the United States, yet the giving to missions has continued to spiral, so much so, that by 1975 the Canadians were almost doubling the per member giving of the Americans, with Canadians giving \$58.25 per member and Americans \$36.96 per member.

In as much as voluntary financial contributions to a cause are a measure of commitment, Canadian Mennonite Brethren have increasingly shown this commitment since 1925 and in this sense have consciously facilitated the formation of an enduring denominational legacy in areas beyond Canada.

A second significant component of the investment of resources is that of personnel. Table IX-3 indicates this growth in participation of personnel in missions beyond Canada on the basis of a survey conducted by the Board of Missions/Services in 1972. Gleaning additional facts from the General Conference yearbooks, one can make the following statements about involvement of Mennonite Brethren personnel in missions beyond Canada:

i) The total number of Canadian Mennonite Brethren has gradually increased from only two in 1925 to 72 in 1972, when Canadians constituted just in excess of one-half of North American Mennonite Brethren missionaries.

ii) The total number of missionaries was at an all-time high in 1967, with 243 missionaries.⁸¹ The following dates further summarize this growth and decline in number of missionaries (the numbers in parentheses indicate the Canadians, based on a count of the missionaries listed by name in the respective yearbooks): 1925 - 27 (2); 1945 - 47 (24); 1950 - 114; 1955 - 205 (73); 1960 - 211; 1963 - 220; 1966 - 224 (89); 1969 - 221; 1972 - 139 (72); 1975 - 154.

iii) In addition to the 72 Canadians serving under the Mennonite Brethren Board of Missions/Services, an additional 89 Canadian Mennonite Brethren are serving under other mission societies.

⁸¹ Confrontation: Triennial Report, 1969, p. 22.

Table IX-3

Involvement of Mennonite Brethren Missionaries in Overseas

Mission Agencies in 1972

DISTRICT CONFERENCE	CHURCHES	MEMBERSHIP	M.B. BOARD	NON-M.B. BOARD	TOTAL
Alberta	13	1,541	7	8	15
British Columbia	41	5,407	21	26	47
Manitoba	27	4,473	21	12	33
Nova Scotia	1	33	0	0	0
Ontario	14	2,783	6	9	15
Saskatchewan	31	2,542	15	34	49
Quebec	5	46	2	0	2
Canadian Total	132	16,825	72	89	161
Central District	30	2,391	19	7	26
Latin American Churches	7	-	0	0	0
North Carolina	6	128	0	0	0
Pacific District	40	6,689	40	17	57
Southern District	38	5,538	8	19	27
Total U. S. A.	121	14,741	67	43	110
Grand Total	253	31,566	139	132	271

SOURCE: MBH, XI (June 30, 1972), p. 18.

Thus, in 1972 Canadian Mennonite Brethren churches had one missionary for every 105 members (compared to United States with one for every 134 members), certainly an important indicator of Canadian Mennonite Brethren interest in extending its outreach beyond Canada.

The impact of the Canadian outreach into areas beyond Canada can

also be seen in the growth of the Mennonite Brethren churches in other lands. Table IX-4 shows this growth from 1960 to 1975.

Table IX-4

Baptized Mennonite Brethren Believers Around the World⁸²

COUNTRY	1960	1963	1966	1969	1972	1975
Austria	--	--	--	--	120	200
Brazil	86	160	296	552	780	1,971
Colombia	132	300	421	649	538	c.1,000
Germany	123	202	188	308	260	380
				(includes Austria)		
India	23,902	24,554	20,148	--	20,000	25,000
Japan	221	394	480	545	700	787
Mexico	118	85	175	--	50	--
Panama	--	--	200	292	300	483
Paraguay	450	852	1,265	1,485	1,458	2,829
Peru	--	30	15	--	--	600
U. S. S. R.	--	--	--	--	--	c.22,000
Uruguay	--	--	--	78	83	86
Zaire	5,399	5,000	8,689	9,205	9,000	15,900
Canada						18,557
U. S. A.						16,064
						104,857

SOURCE: See footnote #82 below.

To better understand the above statistical summary of baptized believers across the world, the following must be kept in mind:

⁸² Missions Report, 1960; Obedience in Partnership, 1963; Open Doors, 1966; Confrontation, 1969; Servanthood, 1972; Impact, 1975. All of the foregoing are Board of Missions/Services publications, Hillsboro, Kansas.

- i) The role that Canada had in the years prior to 1940 was only minimal as the previous tables indicate.⁸³
- ii) Accurate records of overseas memberships in earlier years are simply not available.
- iii) The above numbers are those of baptized believers (usually adults), in keeping with the Mennonite Brethren understanding of baptism, and the Christian community would be considerably larger, possibly two or three times the number.
- iv) The above numbers do not include the many converts who joined other than Mennonite Brethren churches, but who were converted under the influence of Mennonite Brethren workers associated with the many non-Mennonite Brethren mission organizations.

Thus, the impact of Canadian Mennonite Brethren beyond Canada has been very significant, as these empirical measures of monies contributed, missionaries sent, and believers added indicate. The coordination of these efforts to disband such a centrifugal force is rooted in the conference structure, as earlier shown.

Service agencies. The impact emanating from this centrifugal force is not to be measured solely in evangelistic outreach. The other very meaningful dimension is humanitarian service. An overview of the two levels of analysis--within Canada and beyond Canada--indicates a continual growth as well in this humanitarian dimension.

Within Canada opportunity for such service occurred with the large-scale immigration of economically deprived Mennonites from Russia in the mid-1920's. Usually immigrants got their start in Canada through the hospitality of other Canadian Mennonites who provided food and lodging for the initial months while immigrants found jobs, purchased land through the Mennonite Land Settlement Board, and began to pay their Reiseschuld. Mennonites in United States provided large quantities of clothing.⁸⁴ It was the Canadian Mennonite Board of Colonization, an inter-Mennonite

⁸³ Supra, pp. 350, 352.

organization founded in 1922, which coordinated these efforts. Subsequently, in 1924 a Zentrales Mennonitisches Immigrantenkomitee was formed, with regional branches to promote educational and cultural activities, as well as such mutual aid activities as welfare, hospitalization, and burial aid.⁸⁵ Much effort was extended to negotiate and collect the Reiseschuld⁸⁶ and more recently to assist conscientious objectors to secure alternative service during World War II.⁸⁷ Assistance in immigration was also given after World War II both by the Board of Colonization and many individual families. Eventually in 1960 the Canadian Mennonite Board of Colonization merged with the Mennonite Central Relief Committee to form the Canadian Mennonite Relief and Immigration Council, supported by the Canadian Mennonite Brethren and the Conference of Mennonites in Central Canada. This organization became the Mennonite Central Committee (Canada) branch in 1964 and has subsequently expanded its services to other than merely Mennonites, including peace education, rehabilitation of residents from correctional institutions, and ministries to natives of Canada. Also, within Canada, Mennonite Brethren, as well as inter-Mennonite groups, have built and continue to administer with government support mental hospitals⁸⁸ and numerous

⁸⁴ F. H. Epp, Mennonite Exodus, pp. 183-202. From 1923 to 1931 the Board handled some \$100,000 worth of clothing, some 140,000 pounds distributed among immigrants. See also YB, 1933, pp. 58-67 for help which Mennonite Brethren received.

⁸⁵ Ibid., pp. 203-217.

⁸⁶ Supra, p. 220-21.

⁸⁷ See YB, 1942, p. 31 for such a typical report to the Canadian Conference.

⁸⁸ The two mental institutions are Bethesda in Vineland, Ontario, administered by the Canadian Mennonite Brethren Church, and Eden Mental

retirement homes. Since 1966, the domestic branch of the General Conference Board of Missions/Services has opened numerous opportunities for short-term "Christian" services within Canada itself.⁸⁹

Humanitarian service beyond Canada has been channeled by the Board of General Welfare and Public Relations or, more frequently, the Mennonite Central Committee, an inter-Mennonite agency. The Board of General Welfare and Public Relations, organized in 1924,⁹⁰ channeled relief via Mennonite Central Committee and, in particular, gave assistance to the Mennonite Brethren churches in South America, especially Paraguay where the struggle for survival was the severest.⁹¹ In 1960, a new form of voluntary "Christian Service" was initiated by the Board to attract young people to short-term services at home and abroad. By 1966, when the Board merged with Board of Missions/Services, it reported 93 workers in 30 projects, of which eight projects were overseas and in which nineteen Canadians were serving.⁹² In 1975, the Board of Missions/Services listed 67 Christian Service workers, who since 1971 had been involved in an overseas assignment of education, medicine, economic devel-

Health Centre, Winkler, Manitoba, administered by an inter-Mennonite organization.

⁸⁹In 1975, Board of Missions/Services listed 58 Christian service persons in Canada (some of whom will have been American), most of whom had been engaged since 1972 in a one or two-year assignment in medicine, education, counseling, camping, secretarial ministries. See Impact, (Fall, 1975), p. 34.

⁹⁰GCYB, 1924, p. 60.

⁹¹J. A. Toews, HMBC, p. 213.

⁹²GCYB, 1966, pp. 44-48.

opment, carpentry, social service, and maintenance.⁹³

Mennonite Central Committee, organized in 1920 to coordinate several relief committees active since the 1890's in both India and Russia,⁹⁴ was predominantly non-Canadian and non-Mennonite Brethren in its early stages, yet gradually included participation of Mennonite Brethren of Canada. Beginning as a relief agency, it extended its services overseas to include agricultural development, education, material aid,⁹⁵ medical services, child sponsorship; while at home it promoted peace education, voluntary service, mental health services, disaster service, travel service, aid societies, and an indemnity company.⁹⁶ In a comprehensive study of Mennonite Central Committee personnel from 1920 to 1970, Paul Classen lists a total of 5241 persons having served one or more assignments in 90 countries. Among these there have been 252 men and 260 women from the Mennonite Brethren church, of whom 101 men and 183 women were Canadian Mennonite Brethren.⁹⁷ Of the total number of assignments (6018), of which 595 were by Mennonite Brethren, 290 were in countries

⁹³ Impact (Fall, 1975), pp. 29-33. This number includes both Americans and Canadians.

⁹⁴ For a history of the background, see Guy F. Hershberger, "Historical Background to the Formation of the MCC", MQR, XLIV (July, 1970), pp. 213-244.

⁹⁵ John Hostetler estimates that from 1941-1969 \$50,000,000 worth of relief goods have been distributed. See J. Hostetler, "Mennonite Central Committee Material Aid, 1941-1969", MQR, XLIV (July, 1970), pp. 318-323.

⁹⁶ Larry Kehler, "The Many Activities of the MCC", MQR, XLIV (July, 1970), pp. 298-315.

⁹⁷ Paul Classen, "Statistics on Mennonite Central Committee Personnel", MQR, XLIV (July, 1970), pp. 324-329.

other than United States and Canada. With the exception of six persons, all Mennonite Brethren served since 1940. Mennonite Brethren, therefore, have demonstrated themselves to be active not only in evangelism, but perhaps even more so in social service. Empirical data strongly support the centrifugal forces at work, both in evangelization and service agencies and both in Canada and beyond Canada. While rooted in organizational structures held together by covenantal bonds or centripetal forces, the centrifugal thrust of the Canadian Mennonite Brethren has stimulated vitality and strengthened its worldwide impact as a religious movement.

The Integrating Effect

It is quite apparent that Mennonite Brethren have had extensive involvement in agencies of service and outreach. How does such involvement strengthen the bonds with the organizational structure, and why does the extensive interaction with the non-Mennonite Brethren world not become counter-productive by weakening the ties with the structural core?

Whether active at home or abroad in evangelistic outreach or in a service assignment, such activity integrates the individuals involved with the cause with which they identify so overtly.

It legitimates the existence of the movement. On the one hand, as an adherent of the movement explains his involvement in religious recruitment or humanitarian service, the very purpose of the organization is singled out. The sociological or psychological explanation for such involvement proves inadequate. As editor Jantz explains in an editorial regarding a study conference on evangelism and discipleship,

Mennonite Brethren Christians face an intense challenge to

demonstrate that what they possess cannot be explained in mere sociological or psychological terms. People have a right to ask whether our motivation, our practices, our goals, our rationale are really any different than that of a concerned person who makes no claim to having Christ resident within him.⁹⁸

Mennonite Brethren would argue that Jesus Christ is the legitimating purpose of their activity. They evangelize to "win them to Christ" and serve "in the name of Jesus". On the other hand, in order to expedite a service assignment with efficiency and allow for a supporting body to whom one appeals for funds and reports the action, an organizational entity is a must.

It channels the interest in mission. Evangelism and service receive much emphasis from Mennonite Brethren pulpits. Missions is viewed as a denominational distinctive of Mennonite Brethren, as one such tract which identifies Mennonite Brethren indicates: "From the beginning, Mennonite Brethren have held the missionary mandate to be obligatory for all Christians".⁹⁹ Again, historian J. A. Toews asserts, "... No other cause or concern has received such wholehearted and universal support in the Mennonite Brethren Conference as the work of missions and evangelism."¹⁰⁰ This concern is reflected in the frequency of its mention in the church periodicals which reach each home.¹⁰¹ For those individuals who then

⁹⁸ H. Jantz, "Winnipeg Study Conference", MBH, VII (April 26, 1968), p. 3.

⁹⁹ "The Story of the Mennonite Brethren Church", a leaflet with no date, no publisher, but published about 1970 for purposes of publicity.

¹⁰⁰ J. A. Toews, HMBC, p. 373. He lists evangelism and missions as one of the seven distinctives of the Mennonite Brethren Church.

¹⁰¹ For example, of the 24 pages of a given MBH, 12 pages were related to missions: 4 to historical and theological dimensions, 2 to reports

cannot personally be involved, the structures which support the participating personnel allow for such participation by proxy.

It reaffirms commitment. Involvement strengthens the commitment of participating personnel, not only to the ideological objective, but also to the supporting constituency of the agency. Without the constituency, the agency would be impotent--of money, of worthy goals, of moral support, and of a sounding board to test one's progress in the work. The commitment, hence, is not merely to the brotherhood, but to the organization which furnishes the coordinating structure.

Despite such an integrating effect, the very centrifugal force which sends participating personnel away from the structural base also weakens the ties and threatens possible assimilation with the world it seeks to convert. What, then, prevents such secularization and eventual total assimilation?

The repeated assessment. Voluntarism in a religious movement does not foster irresponsibility. Instead, once the adherent voluntarily commits himself to the cause, the person becomes responsible to the brotherhood, giving account of one's work, and assessing the degree of one's accomplishments. It affirms identity with the group, and helps retain the former members. It purges the movement of obsolescent forms and functions.

The new recruits. The successful evangelistic enterprise results in new recruits, for Mennonite Brethren believe that where no evangelism

on "home" missions, 2 to reports on MCC, and 4 to overseas missions. See MBH, II (October 25, 1963).

occurs, the church will ultimately die.¹⁰² Whereas evangelism results in a loss to the denomination of some of the recruits from the out-group, many more are normally gained than lost. Despite the loss of those whose commitment is half-hearted or who do not feel at home within the brotherhood, others who continue add vitality to the sectarian movement.

The added vitality. Evangelism requires exposure and confrontation. Through the associations with the out-group, the movement gains new perspectives along with the vitality that the new converts bring to the movement and that the evangelists experience in their faithfulness to, and success of, their mission. Despite the risks of such exposure and confrontation, the movement gains not only numerically but in vitality as the new adherents choose to make the sectarian break from the parish church which they have abandoned to the believers' church with which they choose to identify. The overall, revitalizing and integrating effect is greater for the movement, therefore, than the eroding consequences which its adherents perceive by identifying with the host society.

Sectarianism persists, therefore, because the integrating reinforcement of structural networks and service and outreach agencies have further sacralized the movement. Despite some loss and obvious fragility, Canadian Mennonite Brethren have grown in strength and number and have withstood the erosive force of secularization implicit in a pluralistic world. The next chapters trace this process of secularization.

¹⁰² J. A. Toews, "Die Gemeinde muss evangelisieren--oder sterben", Voice, II (Jan.-Feb., 1953), 12-14.

Summary of Chapter Nine

When the dynamic force of sectarian religiosity is given structural form, the vitality of the force is not only properly channeled to give persistence to the religious movement, but also more capably harnessed to produce action. Conference structures, thus, help both to retain its old members and to recruit new ones. Implying a covenant relationship among a number of congregations, such conference structures appear on three levels among Canadian Mennonite Brethren, every congregation usually being a member at each of these levels. Most local in nature is the provincial conference in Canada (or district conference in the United States) with its own charter and constitution and its annual or semi-annual sessions. On the Canadian national level is the Canadian Conference (until 1954 referred to as the Northern District Conference). Although separately incorporated with its own charter and constitution since 1945, it has held its annual sessions since 1910. Most all-inclusive is the General Conference of the Mennonite Brethren Churches of North America, of which the Canadian churches constitute one equal area conference. First formed in Russia as a Bundeskonferenz in 1872, it organized in the United States in 1879 and soon extended itself to include Canada. At each conference level, specific common tasks unite the action of the participating churches. The polity of these structures emphasizes the autonomy of the local church in matters of local interest, but conference decisions become morally binding upon all churches participating in a given conference, the provincial conferences subject to the Canadian, and the Canadian subordinate to the General Conference. Attending con-

ference sessions has generally been found to be a positive experience--enabling fellowship, fostering brotherhood, giving ear to minority views, facilitating reconciliation, expressing unity, strengthening commitment, and motivating for service. At the same time, relying upon conference structures stifles personal initiative, limits universal representation in decision-making, promotes elitism, and invites bureaucratization.

While the centripetal impact of conference structures helps to retain its members and preserve the movement, the centrifugal impact of conference agencies facilitates recruitment of new members despite the implicit hazards of such a conversionist stance. Canadian Mennonite Brethren have been active in both evangelistic and service-oriented agencies. Evangelism within Canada has expressed itself in many types of outreach--Bible colportage, city missions, tract missions, summer vacation Bible schools and camp ministries, radio programs, home visitations, and evangelistic campaigns. More successful numerically, both in terms of financial and personnel resources employed as well as church membership experienced, is the evangelistic outreach beyond Canada in such countries as India, China, Japan, Zaire, Colombia, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru, Brazil, Uruguay, Germany, and Austria. Likewise, involvement in humanitarian service has been prominent both within and beyond Canada. Mutual aid was extended by Mennonites to their own brotherhood both to fellow immigrants within Canada as well as to those settling in Paraguay. Assistance was given to many handicapped and deprived groups outside of their denomination as well. Particularly effective have been the efforts through the Christian service branch of the denominational mission board and through the inter-Mennonite agency of Mennonite Central Committee.

The impact of these outreach and service efforts has been integrating, despite the centrifugal tug, because such involvement has legitimated the movement for its adherents, has channeled the momentum of their motivation, and has involuntarily reaffirmed their commitment. Conference structures and service agencies have sacralized the sectarian movement and given it tenacity and vitality in the face of a threatening society into which it is increasingly assimilated.

EDUCATION AND RELATIVIZATION

The preceding five chapters dealt with factors enhancing the continuity of a religious movement and supported the central hypothesis of this study, namely, that the synthetic process of sacralization contributes to the continuity of sectarianism. Sacralization has been viewed as a process whereby man reinforces and eternalizes patterns of religiosity and thereby modifies and obstructs or even legitimates change in order to safeguard identity.¹ The sacralizing process is, thus, a response to change, but safeguards the identity of the movement against the dysfunctional and erosive strain of excessive adaptability.

The following cluster of five chapters analyses the components contributing to such religious change and tests the hypothesis that these components of change lead to secularization. As indicated earlier, it would be oversimplifying the processes at work to insist that the factors of sacralization are solely integrative in their effect and the factors of secularization are solely disruptive.² Admittedly, a complex dialectic is at work, and these chapters test the overall effect of change. For this reason, both chapters eight and ten are concerned with education, chapter eight occupying itself with the synthesizing process of socialization and chapter ten with the relativizing effects of education.

¹Supra, p. 137.

²Supra, pp. 37-38.

The sequence of the following chapters is deliberate, not simply analysing the usual components of socio-economic status--education, occupation, and wealth, but tracing a larger number of components in a more chronological and causal order, namely, education, urbanization, occupational change, economic ascendancy, and assimilation. This order fits more clearly the actual developments among Canadian Mennonite Brethren from 1925 to 1975. Because of the fuzzy boundaries which characterize such concepts, as change, secularization, and dialectic, a further note on social and religious change and its relation to secularization is in order at this time.

1. Religious Change and Secularization

Each of the chapters in the cluster begins with one aspect of social change, but attempts also to indicate the religious implications of such change. It is important, however, to note that social change and religious change are not to be confused; nor are they to be viewed as totally separable. What, then, is the relationship between these modes of change?

Simply to assert the occurrence of social change is to engage in one of the most obvious of platitudes. Social change is not only normal and ubiquitous for the contemporary world, but some kinds of change have been universal throughout human history. It is probably the rapidity of social change which is unique to the present age.³ Because of the rever-

³Wilbert E. Moore, Social Change (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1974), pp. 1-22. Among the characteristics of contemporary change, Moore includes the following: "Changes are neither temporally

berating implications of such change, religion must necessarily be affected and, indeed, religious change becomes a concomitant of social change. One cannot, therefore, analyse religious change in isolation without reference to other components of social change. For this reason, chapters ten through fourteen analyse aspects of social change with their resulting impact on religion.

To explain the interaction between social change and religious change, one might use the categories of Pitirim Sorokin--the ideational, idealistic, and sensate--without implying that the twentieth century is on the verge of a catastrophic sensate collapse, to be followed by a reassertion of more spiritual values.⁴ While the latter may indeed be the case, the typology of Sorokin is more useful in understanding the dialectic which is at work between the sensate mentality which stresses volatility and flux (being more hedonistic with the emphasis upon things readily available to the senses) and the ideational which stresses eternity and stability (being more ascetic with the emphasis upon things

nor spatially isolated--that is, changes occur in sequential chains rather than as 'temporary' crises followed by quiet periods of reconstruction, and the consequences tend to reverberate through entire regions or virtually the entire world"; and, "The normal occurrence of change affects a wider range of individual experience and functional aspects of societies in the modern world--not because such societies are in all aspects more 'integrated' but because virtually no feature of life is exempt from the expectation of normality of change."

⁴Pitirim Sorokin, Social and Cultural Dynamics (Boston: Porter Sargent Publisher, 1957), pp. 8-19, 28-36, 53-66. Sorokin depicts not only the polar opposites, the ideational and sensate cultures, but also the "mixed types of mentality and culture" and the "sociocultural fluctuations" or "punctuation and pulsation of sociocultural processes". See also Neil J. Smelser, Sociology: An Introduction (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1967), p. 714.

readily available to the spirit). The resulting dialectic is described by the idealistic state, representing a rich mixture of the sensate and ideational extremes.⁵ There seems to be a close parallel, therefore, between the dialectic of the sensate and the ideational and the dialectic of social change and religious change, or, more precisely, between the secular and the sacred, or even between society and religion.

Now, then, is secularization related to religious change or to change itself? As earlier indicated, change is not to be equated with secularization.⁶ Change, a more neutral concept, suggests differentiation or transformation of any type and need not be evaluative. Secularization, as it is used in this study, suggests religious decline and loss of faith or conformity to the world, or, as Bryan Wilson defines it, "the process whereby religious thinking, practice, and institutions lose social significance".⁷ Certain forms of social change have secularizing effects, for they result in religious decline or conformity to the world (to use the expression popularly employed among members of the Canadian Mennonite Brethren Church). However, this is not to suggest that all religious change is to be interpreted as secularization, for some religious change leads to separation from the world (as the instances of sacralization have suggested) rather than assimilation of the world, as the following chapters

⁵See Louis Schneider, "Toward Assessment of Sorokin's View of Change" in Explorations of Social Change, by G. K. Zollschan and W. Hirsch (ed.) (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1964), pp. 375-86, who also suggests the importance of this heuristic device. See also P. Sorokin, "Comments on Schneider's Observations and Criticisms", ibid., p. 402.

⁶Supra, p. 57.

⁷Wilson, Religion in Secular Society, xiv.

will illustrate.

This brief treatment of the nature of social change and its distinction from religious change is intended to introduce the understanding of the process of secularization. Neither the processes of change nor secularization are to be viewed independently of the countervailing forces of continuity and sacralization. Here the dialectic of Marx and Sorokin come into play. One might say that the sacralization process has within itself the seeds of its own destruction, or, the eternality of the ideational is tempered by the transitoriness of the sensory realm. Or, as Hans Mol suggests,

Change has again and again clumsily trampled underfoot the refined web of sacralizations woven around peoples and societies. To account for change and to check the conservative bias we have adopted a framework of countervailing processes: an inexorable tendency towards conservation and integration being crosscut by a similar inexorable tendency towards change and differentiation.... The dialectic as such seems to be a prerequisite for the viability and survival of personal, group, or social identity.⁸

The outcome of the following chapters is not a foregone conclusion. While it is anticipated that the overarching impact of social change will be secularization, there will be evidence of countervailing forces as well. According to the models of Marx and Sorokin, something generates its own opposite. The positive function becomes a negative, and the negative produces a positive. Success brings downfall, and failure produces success. To use Sorokin's language, the "ascetic ideational" turns into the "active ideational" and vice versa.⁹ In this dialectical process,

⁸ Mol, Identity and the Sacred, p. 262.

⁹ See L. Schneider, ibid., pp. 375-86.

therefore, both sacralization and secularization are at work. Even as in chapters five through nine, where the overarching impact was seen as sacralizing the religious identity (although not without repeated evidences of erosive forces of secularization), so in chapters ten through fourteen the simultaneous overarching impact is anticipated to be secularization; yet both occurring within the same sectarian movement during the same fifty-year period under consideration. And it may well be that it is precisely the dialectic that brings vitality to the movement.

Chapter ten assesses the degree to which education, one component of social change, has relativized the Canadian Mennonite Brethren during the past half century.

2. Some Empirical Evidence of the Impact of Education

Before attempting an explanation of the change in attitudes that education has engendered and before assessing the relativizing impact of the same, a closer look at the "hard" facts of empirical evidence is in place. The Church Member Profile provides data on the educational attainment of the church population, as well as on varying aspects of religiosity.

Educational Attainment of Canadian Mennonite Brethren

Since 37% of the respondents were themselves immigrants, the striking differences in educational attainment for the varying age groups comes as no surprise. Table X-1 indicates that among church members 60 years or over, 52.3% had not gone to school beyond the eighth grade, compared to 26.5% of those aged 40 to 49, and only 2.4% of those aged 20 to

Table X-1

Educational Attainment of Three Generational Groups

AGE GROUPS	ROW PERCENTAGE FOR LEVELS OF ATTAINMENT			
	GRADE*	HIGH	COLLEGE	GRAD/PROF.
20-29 (N=42)	2.4	45.2	40.5	11.9
40-49 (N=102)	26.5	43.1	5.9	24.5
60 and over (N=44)	52.3	31.8	2.3	13.6

SOURCE: Church Member Profile, 1972.

*KEY TO LABELS: GRADE = complete grade eight or less

HIGH = some high school/trade school, or graduate of school

COLLEGE = some college or graduate of college

GRAD/PROF. = some graduate/professional school or graduate

29. Thus, fifty years ago, most Canadian Mennonite Brethren had but a grade school education. Similarly, among those 60 years or older, 84.1% had not gone beyond high school, compared to 69.6% of those aged 40 to 49; and 47.6% of those aged 20 to 29. The fact that only 2.3% of those 60 years or more attended college (but not graduate professional school) and 5.9% among those aged 40 to 49, compared to 40.5% of those aged 20 to 29, confirms the recency of the trend for college education among Canadian Mennonite Brethren. However, larger numbers among the older generations have taken some graduate/professional training or attained the respective degrees, the percentage being 13.6 among those aged 60 or above, 24.5 among those aged 40 to 49, and only 11.9 among those aged 20 to 29. It would appear that until recently professional training was more popular than a college education by itself. It may well be that professional training is a necessity for occupational purposes. Could it also be a

commentary on the value-system of Canadian Mennonite Brethren, namely, that a college education per se has relatively little worth, while graduate/professional training has pragmatic worth, since it promotes upward social mobility?

Educational Attainment and Measures of Religiosity

Neither the seven measures of religiosity nor the questions from the survey used to constitute a viable measure of such religiosity are simply the result of arbitrary choice.¹⁰ The first two measures reflect the practice of religion, the next three reflect beliefs or doctrine, and the last two indicate attitudes towards ethics.

Devotionalism. Table X-2 summarizes the cross-tabulations of indicators of devotionalism with levels of educational attainment. Interestingly, in 4 out of 5 questions the most highly trained (the graduate/professional) have the highest score, and in 4 out of 5 cases the high school trained score the lower. If a simple scale be prepared in which the lowest for each question is assigned the numeric value of 1 and the highest 4, then the following rank order results: graduate/professional - 19; college - 14; grade school - 11; and high school - 6. One might conclude that higher education does not affect religiosity negatively, as expressed in the measure of devotionalism; in fact, the reverse seems to

¹⁰ While the seven measures of religiosity were selected by myself as constituting those components most indicative of the faith, life, and practice of a church member, the questions used to constitute a given measure were taken from the Kauffman and Harder Anabaptists Four Centuries Later, since their study was based on the same Church Member Profile. To conserve space, only a select number of questions was used in several instances.

Table X-2
Educational Attainment and Devotionalism

QUESTIONS MEASURING DEVOTIONALISM	PERCENTAGE COLUMN RESPONSE (to answers in parentheses)			
	GRADE	HIGH	COLL.	GRD/PR.
Other than at mealtime, how often do you pray to God privately on the average? (daily/several times per day)	86.2 n=75	86.3 n=151	87.5 n=35	90.7 n=49
Do the members of your household have a family or group worship, other than grace at meals? (yes)	74.7 n=62	63.4 n=109	72.5 n=29	79.2 n=42
How often do you study the Bible privately seeking to understand it and letting it speak to you? (daily/frequently or weekly)	83.9 n=73	79.9 n=139	90.0 n=36	88.9 n=48
In general, how close do you describe your present relationship to God? (close/very close)	67.1 n=57	52.6 n=92	57.5 n=23	67.9 n=36
When you have decisions to make in your everyday life, how often do you ask yourself what God would want you to do? (often/very often)	70.2 n=59	65.3 n=113	82.1 n=32	84.9 n=45

SOURCE: Church Member Profile, 1972.

be true. If lack of devotionalism is a true and only measure of secularization, then one might tentatively conclude that education does not result in secularization.

Associationalism. Table X-3 summarizes the cross-tabulation of indicators of associationalism, or participation in religious activities, with levels of educational attainment. Again, in this second measure of the practice of religion, the post-secondary trained rank the highest in most questions (the exception being for mid-week meetings, in which high school trained are highest). Those who attained but to grade eight have

Table X-3

Educational Attainment and Associationalism

QUESTIONS MEASURING ASSOCIATIONALISM	PERCENTAGE COLUMN RESPONSE (to answers in parentheses)			
	GRADE	HIGH	COLL.	GRD/PR.
On the average, how often have you attended church worship services (Sunday morning, evening, and/or other days) during the past two years? (once a week/more than once a week)	75.3 n=64	84.0 n=147	87.5 n=35	88.7 n=47
How frequently do you attend Sunday School? (every Sunday possible)	51.7 n=45	66.3 n=116	70.0 n=28	69.8 n=37
How regularly do you attend any youth or adult meetings held on days other than Sunday, that are related to your local congregation? (regularly)	29.9 n=26	48.3 n=85	45.0 n=18	42.6 n=23
Do you presently hold, or have you held within the past three years, a position of leadership in your local congregation (minister, elder, council member, officer, S. S. teacher, committee chairman, youth group officer or sponsor, etc.)? (yes)	35.3 n=30	57.1 n=100	79.5 n=31	84.9 n=45

SOURCE: Church Member Profile, 1972.

the lowest scores. The scale, according to the above pattern, would give the following rank order: grad./professional - 13; college - 13; high school - 10; grade school - 4.

Again, one concludes that the higher the educational attainment, the greater the degree of participation. If lack of devotionism and associationalism are true measures of secularization, then education does not cause secularization. Thus far, the empirical data consistently point in the same direction.

General Orthodoxy. Indicators of the first measure of belief, general orthodoxy, were cross-tabulated with educational attainment as shown in Table X-4. The results show little differentiation, perhaps the

Table X-4

Educational Attainment and General Orthodoxy

QUESTIONS MEASURING GENERAL ORTHODOXY	PERCENTAGE COLUMN RESPONSE (to answers in parentheses)			
	GRADE	HIGH	COLL.	GRD/PR.
I know God really exists and I have no doubts about His existence. (comes closest to my belief)	97.6 n=83	92.0 n=162	87.5 n=35	96.3 n=52
Jesus was not only human but also is the Divine Son of God and I have no doubts about it. (comes closest to my belief)	98.8 n=85	96.0 n=169	90.0 n=36	96.3 n=52
I believe the miracles were supernatural acts of God which actually happened just as the Bible says they did. (comes closest to my belief)	96.5 n=83	97.7 n=171	97.5 n=39	96.3 n=54
I believe Jesus' physical resurrection was an objective historical fact just as his birth was an historical fact. (comes closest to my belief)	98.8 n=83	97.1 n=169	97.5 n=39	100.0 n=54
Jesus will actually return to earth some day. (definitely)	97.7 n=86	98.9 n=174	95.0 n=38	100.0 n=54
Satan, as a personal devil, is active in the world today. (definitely)	100.0 n=88	98.9 n=174	95.0 n=38	98.1 n=53
There is life beyond death. (definitely)	97.7 n=86	98.3 n=172	97.5 n=39	98.1 n=53

SOURCE: Church Member Profile, 1972.

only significant loss of belief would be among the college group. A scale, constructed according to the earlier model, would give the following rank order: grade school = 21; graduate/professional - 20; high school - 19;

college - 10. As expected college students lack the measure of assurance in beliefs that those with less education have. Surprisingly, once graduate/professional training occurs, there is a greater degree of commitment. Can it be that while college education has a secularizing effect, graduate/professional schools are too committed to vested interests to let their training liberalize their religious beliefs? Moreover, professional schools tend to be technical rather than probing philosophically.

Fundamentalist Orthodoxy. A further, more precise measure of a particular belief is that of fundamentalist orthodoxy.¹¹ Table X-5 shows the cross-tabulations of indicators of such orthodoxy with educational attainment. As in general orthodoxy, so here the college group decidedly ranks lower than the others. On the question pertaining to creation days, very obviously the higher the attainment of education, the lower the measure of orthodoxy. The rank order according to the above scale is as follows: grade school - 19; high school - 15; graduate/professional - 10; college - 6.

One might conclude that, although those with graduate/professional training are more fundamentalist in outlook than college students, generally the higher the attainment of education the lower the degree of fundamentalism. Again, it appears that while college training relativizes belief, professional training strengthens conservatism.

Anabaptism. An even more precise measure of a denominational distinctive of belief is that of Anabaptism, as reflected in Table X-6. The

¹¹ This term was taken from Kauffman and Harder's study and is used to include those distinctive beliefs held by Evangelical Conservatives. Supra, pp. 142-43.

Table X-5

Educational Attainment and Fundamentalist Orthodoxy

QUESTIONS MEASURING FUNDAMENTALIST ORTHODOXY	PERCENTAGE COLUMN RESPONSE (to answers in parentheses)			
	GRADE	HIGH	COLL.	GRD/PR.
I believe the Bible is the divinely inspired and infallible Word of God, the only trustworthy guide for faith and life. (comes closest to my belief)	98.9 n=86	96.0 n=169	92.5 n=37	98.1 n=53
Jesus was born of a virgin. (definitely)	98.8 n=85	98.9 n=174	95.0 n=38	98.1 n=53
God created the earth and all living things in six 24-hour days. (definitely)	77.9 n=67	56.8 n=100	27.5 n=11	16.7 n=9
There was a flood in Noah's day which destroyed all human life except for Noah's family. (definitely)	96.6 n=85	94.3 n=166	85.0 n=34	88.9 n=48
All persons who die not having accepted Christ as their redeemer and savior will spend eternity in a place of punishment and misery. (definitely)	88.5 n=77	88.1 n=155	80.0 n=32	81.5 n=44

SOURCE: Church Member Profile, 1972.

cross-tabulation reveals that the least educated have the highest overall record. Yet, the next least educated group, that is, up to high school completion, have the lowest record. Moreover, next to the least educated, the college group ranks the highest. The rank order resulting from this scale is: grade school - 27; college - 22; graduate/professional - 21; high school - 10.

At first glance, such a variable response is confusing. However, several interesting new dimensions seem to be reflected. The high score in Anabaptism by those with a maximum of eight years of schooling is

Table X-6

Educational Attainment and Anabaptism

QUESTIONS MEASURING ANABAPTISM	PERCENTAGE COLUMN RESPONSE (to answers in parentheses)			
	GRADE	HIGH	COLL.	GRD/PR.
Jesus expects Christians to follow the pattern which he set in his own life and ministry, including such things as putting evangelism above earning a living, and deeds of mercy above family security. (agree/strongly agree)	65.9 n=56	52.6 n=92	67.5 n=27	53.7 n=29
If Christian believers proclaim the Lordship of Christ and truly follow Him in all of life they can expect to incur severe criticism and frequent persecution from the large society. (agree/strongly agree)	83.5 n=71	76.0 n=133	77.5 n=31	83.3 n=45
Baptism is neither necessary nor proper for infants and small children. (agree/strongly agree)	87.1 n=82	85.7 n=144	95.0 n=35	94.4 n=44
The Mennonite Churches should practice a thorough church discipline so that faltering or unfaithful members can be built up and restored, or in exceptional cases, excluded. (agree/strongly agree)	96.5 n=82	82.3 n=144	87.5 n=35	87.0 n=47
It is against the will of God for a Christian to swear the oath demanded by the civil government on occasion. (agree/strongly agree)	86.2 n=75	75.4 n=132	82.5 n=33	83.3 n=45
The Christian should take no part in war or any war-promoting activity. (agree/strongly agree)	71.6 n=63	60.3 n=105	70.0 n=28	72.2 n=39
There are certain offices in our government the tasks of which a true Christian simply could not in clear conscience perform. (agree/strongly agree)	75.0 n=66	69.0 n=120	67.5 n=27	68.5 n=37
If a Christian has a legitimate claim of property damage against another person, he is justified in bringing a suit in a court of law. (disagree/strongly disagree)	48.9 n=43	30.5 n=53	51.3 n=20	34.0 n=18

SOURCE: Church Member Profile, 1972.

explained, not so much by socialization through education, but by the fact that these represent the older, more conservative generation. The fact that the high school group scores so low might be interpreted as a lack of socialization in the denominational distinctives, rather than secularization resulting from education. So far, however, the results support the earlier trend apparent in the measures of belief, namely, that education leads to lower scores of religiosity. The fact that the college group ranks higher than the high school group speaks of socialization through education and of the possibility of being attracted to these normative ideals of Anabaptism. The somewhat lower graduate/professional group score might suggest that in the crucible of reality the ideals of youth are not as practical. Thus, education leads not only to secularization of orthodox beliefs, but simultaneously to the attraction to idealism, while the practical experience of life tempers with realism the loftiness of youth.

Moral Issues. Table X-7 summarizes the cross-tabulation of the indicators of personal ethics with educational attainment. The results are not surprising in that the grade school group, represented by the older generation, is most conservative, followed by those with high school only. The most relativized is the college group, with the graduate/professional somewhat less. The rank order resulting from this scale is as follows: grade school - 28; high school - 16; graduate/professional - 14; college - 12. It appears that education does lead to a relativizing of ethics, but that graduate/professional training places some restraint on the relativization.

Social Ethics. Table X-8 represents the cross-tabulation of indi-

Table X-7

Educational Attainment and Moral Issues

QUESTIONS MEASURING MORAL ISSUES	PERCENTAGE COLUMN RESPONSE (to answers in parentheses)			
	GRADE	HIGH	COLL.	GRD/PR.
Drinking alcoholic beverages moderately (always wrong)	72.9 n=62	53.4 n=93	22.5 n=9	40.7 n=22
Smoking tobacco (always wrong)	92.9 n=78	78.9 n=138	72.5 n=29	70.4 n=38
Attending movies rated for adults only (always wrong)	76.5 n=65	48.6 n=85	40.0 n=16	37.0 n=20
Premarital sexual intercourse (always wrong)	97.6 n=81	94.9 n=167	95.0 n=38	96.2 n=51
Homosexual acts (always wrong)	96.4 n=81	91.9 n=159	90.0 n=36	92.5 n=49
Gambling (betting, gambling machines, etc.) (always wrong)	90.7 n=78	73.1 n=128	75.0 n=30	79.2 n=42
Social dancing (always wrong)	85.9 n=73	62.3 n=109	55.0 n=22	47.2 n=25

SOURCE: Church Member Profile, 1972.

cators of social ethics with educational attainment. Surprisingly, while the college group ranked lowest on the personal ethics scale, it ranks highest on the social ethics scale. Equally astonishing is the fact that the graduate/professional group ranks lowest on this measure. The resulting rank order is: college - 19; high school - 14; grade school - 14; graduate/professional - 13.

One might conclude that education, as in the Anabaptism measure, leads to socialization among the more idealistic college trained group, and that further graduate/professional training tempers such idealism. In fact, the questions which constitute the measure are possibly more representative of traditional Anabaptism than of traditional Mennonite Breth-

Table X-8

Educational Attainment and Social Ethics

QUESTIONS MEASURING SOCIAL ETHICS	PERCENTAGE COLUMN RESPONSE (to answers in parentheses)			
	GRADE	HIGH	COLL.	GRD/PR.
The Christian should take no part in war or any war-promoting activities. (agree/strongly agree)	71.6 n=63	60.3 n=105	70.0 n=28	72.2 n=39
Although there is no essential difference between blacks and whites, it is preferable for them not to mingle socially. (disagree)	41.4 n=36	58.3 n=102	80.3 n=32	55.6 n=30
For the most part, people are poor because they lack discipline and don't put forth the effort needed to rise above poverty. (disagree)	38.9 n=21	38.1 n=40	36.4 n=8	30.6 n=11
The national government should take every opportunity to stamp out Communism at home and abroad. (disagree)	9.5 n=8	12.0 n=21	45.0 n=18	44.4 n=24
A church member should not join a labor union even if getting or holding a job depends on union membership. (agree)	29.1 n=29	7.4 n=13	10.0 n=4	0.0 n=0
Capital punishment is a necessary deterrent to crime and should not be abandoned by our national, provincial, or state government. (disagree)	11.6 n=10	14.9 n=26	25.0 n=10	14.8 n=8

SOURCE: Church Member Profile, 1972.

ren understanding of social ethics. The relatively low score among the older generation would suggest this.

Summary of the Empirical Evidence

To summarize the findings in consolidated form, Table X-9 indicates the totals of the scales based on the rank order employed for each of the

Table X-9

Summary of the Scales of the Variables of Religiosity

VARIABLES OF RELIGIOSITY		TOTALS OF RANK ORDER/ VARIABLES GRADE HIGH COLL. GRD/PR.				DIRECTION OF TREND*
PRACTICE OF RELIGION	Devotionalism	11	6	14	19	+
	Associationalism	4	10	13	13	+
	Sub-total	15	16	27	32	+
RELIGIOUS BELIEFS	General Orthodoxy	21	19	10	20	-
	Fundamentalist Orthodoxy	19	15	6	10	-
	Anabaptism	27	10	22	21	?
	Sub-total	67	44	38	51	-
ETHICS	Moral Issues	28	16	12	14	-
	Social Issues	14	14	19	13	+
	Sub-total	42	30	31	27	-
TOTAL		124	90	96	110	?

*LEGEND: Plus sign (+) = more education results in enhanced religiosity
 Minus sign (-) = more education results in relativization

questions used for the different variables of religiosity. The sub-totals for each of the three areas of religiosity are also indicated to enable one to detect particular trends. It appears that the overall trend is ambiguous. One cannot say that education necessarily leads to secularization; it also socializes concurrently in some variables of religiosity. It would appear safe to conclude that education enhances such variables of religiosity which reflect the practice of religion: devotionalism and

associationalism. Among the variables of belief, a higher attainment in education generally results in greater relativization or secularization for measures of orthodoxy, but not Anabaptism. Again, in ethical matters, a higher attainment in education relativizes one's personal ethical attitudes, but enhances the more idealistic social ethics. Those with least education (the older generation) have the highest measure of overall religiosity; those with the most education (the professional group) have the next highest rating. Those educated up to high school and college have the overall lowest rating or seem to be most secularized. No doubt, the age factor considerably influences the religiosity of these educational groupings. Education leads to both socialization and secularization.

3. An Analysis of the Church's Attitudes to Change, Secularization, and Education

The Canadian Mennonite Brethren Church has not been oblivious to change and secularization, nor to the impact that education has upon these. To understand how social change has, on the one hand, legitimated the sacralization of religious practices (such as devotionism and associationalism) and religious distinctives (such as Anabaptism and the uniquely Anabaptist social ethics) and, on the other hand, relativized beliefs and morals, it will be helpful to analyse further the church's attitudes to change, secularization, and education.

Attitudes to Change

For Canadian Mennonite Brethren, the decade of the 1960's, more particularly, 1964 to 1974, was an era of change. This can be seen in its

expression of the need for change, the awareness of change, and the response to change.

The need for change. While occasional references in sermons and articles focus on changing times prior to the 1960's,¹² the last decade of the time span covered by this study was particularly cognizant of change. Columnist John Redekop lamented just prior to the annual conference in 1964 that "anyone who has attended any conference sessions of our brotherhood cannot help but be impressed by the tendency not to change things".¹³ Interim editor Peter Klassen, in the same year welcomed cultural change.

Change in the area of culture should be made constantly in order that our faith may in fact be communicated.... Thus a change from the plow to a profession, from German to English, from country to city, from "Die Stille im Lande" to The Voice, from poverty to wealth, from clan to a diaspora, etc.,—all these changes are in the secondary area of culture and are naturally subject to change. The pains we suffer should be welcomed provided they are growing pains (*italics his*).¹⁴

¹²In a sermon preached to the annual conference session in 1933 on the subject, "Die Gefahren unserer Gemeinden in der Jetztzeit", J. F. Redekopp emphasized among other dangers general superficiality ("allgemeine Verflachung") and worldliness ("Weltformigkeit"). He stated, "Wir leben in einer Zeit, wo das Christentum verweltlicht und die Welt verchristlicht", YB, 1933, pp. 86-87. Moreover, in a conference address in 1945 on the theme, "Die gegenwaertige Weltkrise im Urteil der Zeit", H. H. Janzen quoted Pitirim Sorokin's, The Crisis of our Age, asserting, "Jede Phase des Lebens, der Organization und der Kulture der menschl. Gesellschaft durchlebt eine ausserordentliche Krise.... Wir sind allem Anschein nach auf der Grenze zwei Epochen: der sterbenden sinnlichen Kultur von gestern und der kommenden idealen Kultur des schaffenden Morgen. Wir leben, denken und handeln am Ende einer glaenzenden 600 Jahre lange sinnlichen Tages." YB, 1945, p. 5.

¹³J. H. Redekop, "Time for a Change?" MBH, III (June 12, 1964), p. 2.

¹⁴P. Klassen, "A Philosophy of Change", MBH, III (June 26, 1964), p. 3.

In the following year, a pastor, Hugo Jantz, called for radical change.

Rather critically, he exposed the church's need for change in these words:

... To boil it right down: the church is actually very little more than a lop-sided and tradition-encrusted capsule-like institution, bobbing about with little sense of direction on humanity's troubled sea. And she can do little more than estimate the damage sustained and the cost of repair and rehabilitation necessary after riding out a particular storm or typhoon of change.... It is time for drastic change.¹⁵

These expressions of need for change seemingly elicited numerous responses to change in subsequent years.

The awareness of change. That the church had suddenly entered an era of momentous change became apparent in both conference and special study sessions in the following years. In 1966, Marvin Hein, pastor of one of the largest Mennonite Brethren churches in United States, addressed the triennial General Conference session at Corn, Oklahoma, on the theme, "The Church in Flux". In this keynote address, he asserted, "There is nothing more certain than change.... Like it or not, the Christian Church, too, is changing--much too rapidly for some of us.... The Mennonite Brethren Church is no exception."¹⁶ Responding to Marvin Hein's address, editor Harold Jantz first reassured his readers that some things do not change--Jesus Christ, man, God's way of salvation--, but then confronted them with two frontiers of significant change: the crisis of faith in the personal life, and the understanding of the nature of the

¹⁵ Hugo Jantz, "Time for Change", MBH, IV (Feb. 26, 1965), pp. 9, 18.

¹⁶ Marvin Hein, "The Church in Flux", GCYB, 1966, p. 2.

church and Christian fellowship.¹⁷ At a study conference on "Issues Concerning Church and Home", F. C. Peters, then moderator of the General Conference, expressed awareness of the threat of change. He begins his study paper by noting,

Perhaps nothing has vexed our brotherhood more in the last few decades than the phenomenon of change. Those who have viewed traditional positions in social and personal ethics as normative have been seriously threatened by such rapid change.¹⁸

The 1969 report of the Board of Spiritual and Social Concerns reflected a keen awareness of areas of change to which the board was already reacting or envisaged doing so.¹⁹

The response to change. The active response to change became apparent both in conference addresses and study sessions, as well as in actions taken by conferences. Marvin Hein's address on "The Church in Flux" included an appeal to forced mobility. F. C. Peter's study paper on "Consensus and Change in our Brotherhood" called for action through

¹⁷ About the first crisis, Jantz explains, "It may have been that at one time our brotherhood faced its most crucial testing in such matters as drinking, card playing, theatre going, dancing, etc.... But for the majority of us, these are not the points at which we are most severely tested, and if they are, we will not solve the problems by simply prohibition." Jantz then illustrates the trials of a university student who "felt buffeted by almost irresistible forces. No one was consciously out to destroy his faith, but he felt that nowhere, whether in Bible school, church, or home, had he been prepared for the battles he had to face. It is this change in front of conflict that we must prepare for." See H. Jantz, "Changeless and the Changing", MBH. V (Nov. 25, 1966), p. 3.

¹⁸ F. C. Peters, "Consensus and Change in our Brotherhood", a study paper presented to the Reedley, Calif., conference on Nov. 23-24, 1967; printed as insert in MBH, VII (Jan. 12, 1968).

¹⁹ These areas of change have to do with employer-labour relations, capital punishment, divorce laws, abortion, affluence, leisure, and discipleship. See YB, 1969, pp. 41-44.

"group process" rather than through individual dissent and action.²⁰ The 1969 Canadian Conference approved a "Declaration on our Peace Witness" (including statements on pacifism, demonstrations, race relations, labour relations) and a "Declaration on Situation Ethics", which affirmed,

We believe that changes in the ethical expression of the Christian life should be an evidence of a position and [sic] dynamic discipleship which arises out of a growing understanding of the implications of the Gospel together with a better knowledge of the world in which we live.²¹

At a study conference at Clearbrook in 1974 on "The Church, the Word, and the World", Edmund Janzen, now President of Fresno Pacific College (a Mennonite Brethren liberal arts college) argued that "change is not a threatening word, but a releasing word"--and appealed to the assembly of clergy, educators; and other laity that "we the church should be at home with change".²² In the brief time of a decade, the Canadian Mennonite Brethren had seemingly traversed the whole panorama of response to change--from the place where the mention of change is done with fear and hesitation to the place where one feels released and at home with change. Change in the Mennonite Brethren Church today is not viewed as an unmitigated evil, but as a potential for both good and bad. However, where change would result in loss of faith, it would be viewed as secularizing.

²⁰Peters, *ibid.*, p. 7.

²¹YB, 1969, pp. 44-50.

²²Edmund Janzen, "The Church and the Urban Frontier", insert in the MBH, XIII (Oct. 18, 1974).

Attitudes to Secularization

Secularization threatens the essence of sectarianism.²³ Therefore, contrary to the more recent phenomenon of change, secularization has been viewed more consistently as erosive to faith, and throughout its history the Mennonite Brethren Church has warned of its damaging effect. Only rarely has the secularization process been viewed positively. Chapter five drew attention to early expressions of separatism.²⁴ Assessments of the Canadian Mennonite Brethren Church in the mid-1950's by its most prominent leaders, A. H. Unruh and B. B. Janz, include statements about the effects of secularization. In his appending conclusion to Die Geschichte der Mennoniten-Brudergemeinde, A. H. Unruh observed,

The more the Mennonite Brethren Church exposes itself to the influence of contemporary culture, the more human reason seeks to give direction to the church in doctrine as well as in ethics.²⁵

B. B. Janz, in his keynote address to the Canadian Conference in 1954, assessed the Mennonite Brethren Church after ninety-four years of existence. After depicting six positive features, he developed eight negative

²³For a further discussion of the twofold response by a sectarian group, the defensive or accommodating stance, see supra, pp. 67-68.

²⁴Supra, pp. 161-67. Jakob Lepp's sermon at the first Canadian Conference warned against worldliness. Similarly, at the second conference session, in 1911, there was special mention of the "Strom der Verweltlichung" with the following action: "Die Konferenz bewies mit Hand-aufheben, dass wir uns aufraffen wollen und in den Gemeinden mehr dahin arbeiten, dass wir uns reinigen...." YB, 1911, p. 15.

²⁵A. H. Unruh, Die Geschichte der Mennoniten-Brudergemeinde, p. 831. In an elaboration of this observation, Unruh indicates the secularizing effect of education in particular. "Diese Verrueckung der Einfalt beginnt durch die Ueberbetonung der saekularen Bildung des Predigers, durch welche die gruendliche Schriftkenntnis mehr und mehr in den Hintergrund geschoben wird und viele Probleme mehr philosophisch beleuchtet werden als durch den klaren Wortlaut der Heiligen Schrift."

aspects, the fourth of which is the love for the world ("Weltliebe") to which apparently youth was particularly prone. He illustrates.

Many young people along with Demas forsake Paul, that is, the church, to love the world—the glamorous, frenzy, resonant world. Not that the world first penetrates the church, but much more the members penetrate the world and then bring the world with them into the church.²⁶

In more recent times, such a penetration of the world would have been viewed positively as an occasion for evangelism. Yet, the warnings of the secularization process continued. In an editorial in 1966, Harold Jantz lamented that "we live in a world in which Christianity has to a large extent been dismissed as inconsequential". He asked rhetorically, "Do all the strains which are acting upon her spell the end of the church? Should we answer as one writer I read recently: 'Theologically no, but sociologically yes'?"²⁷

The secularization process has but rarely been viewed positively. Replying in a letter to the editor to David Ewert's article, "Sacred Times and Places",²⁸ John E. Toews questioned that secularization of

²⁶ B. B. Jantz, "Die-Konferenzbotschaft", YB, 1954, pp. 10-15. The Conference viewed Jantz's assessment with such seriousness that they requested it to be published along with the conclusion of A. H. Unruh's history of the denomination. In the same year, Biblical theologian, David Ewert, wrote an extended article on the "Danger of Secularism". See Voice, III (Sept.-Oct., 1954), 16-19.

²⁷ H. Jantz, "Does the World Mold the Church?" MBH, V (Jan. 14, 1966), p. 3. A week earlier, Jantz had written an editorial on "Displaced Christianity" in which he explained, "Secularism, as a way of life that focuses on man and leaves God out of the picture, also illustrates modern man's loss of a biblical view of life". MBH, V (Jan. 7, 1966), p. 3.

²⁸ D. Ewert, "Sacred Times and Places", MBH, IV (June 4, 1965), p. 8. Ewert asserts, "One of the great tragedies of our age is the almost complete secularization of society."

modern society is such a tragedy as Ewert makes it out to be. He writes,

... The secularization of society is not a great tragedy for the church, but rather a great opportunity for it to re-examine itself and experience a renaissance. Stripped of our "religion" do we still have something to say? .4. The sacral society is gone, discredited by its hypocrisy. The secular society gives Christians a chance to prove the holiness of Christ's love in inter-personal relationships. Self-examination, questioning, and ferment are in store for the church in a secular society. A tragedy? As Martin Luther King said recently, "There has never been a better time to be a Christian."²⁹

In a similar vein, Edmund Janzen more recently drew attention to Cox's distinction between secularism as a world view and secularization as a process,³⁰ and suggests a positive interpretation to be "both possible and necessary", since "there is no special sacred order through which God works, for he works in all of life".³¹ Janzen concludes,

... Thus the process of secularization when understood in terms of the biblical background of our faith may be welcomed instead of feared; for it refers not to a way of life which denies God, but to a process of life which frees man from the rule of a sacral order--from him to choose God personally, not out of coercion, but out of choice, to serve him in the world.³²

Both change and secularization can, thus, be viewed positively as well. Once again, a dialectic becomes "apparent"--a single process having both positive and negative attractions, both sacralizing and secularizing forces. In the same way, the overall effect of education is secularizing

²⁹ John E. Toews, "Secularized Society", *MBH*, IV (June 11, 1965), p. 19. Toews, a graduate student at the time, is presently a colleague of D. Ewert as professor of New Testament at the Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary, Fresno.

³⁰ *Supra*, p. 57.

³¹ Edmund Janzen, "The Church and the Urban Frontier", insert in *MBH*, XIII (Oct. 18, 1974).

³² *Ibid.*

in both negative and positive ways.

The Attitudes to Education

Before summarizing the secularizing or relativizing effects of education, it will be useful to note the attitudes towards education which Canadian Mennonite Brethren have held during the past half century.

The attitude to education per se. In as much as the Canadian Mennonite Brethren have had an attitude of openness to education, they not only welcomed its positive, liberating effect, but also exposed themselves to the negative effects of secularization. Even before the immigration of the Russlaender in the mid-1920's, education was already affirmed. The need for instruction in German and religion was registered in 1911, and in 1912 a committee recommended that children attend public school in keeping with legal requirements and, besides proposing the building of two Bible schools, also suggested the need for a normal school.³³ Reports on Tabor College (Mennonite Brethren liberal arts college in Hillsboro, Kansas), together with pledges of financial support for the Bible department, began as early as 1913, and continued annually.³⁴ Attention was called to opportunities for high school education at Gretna, Manitoba, and Rosthern, Saskatchewan, in 1918.³⁵ However, these early attempts at education above grade school level were largely meant to pre-

³³ See YB, 1911, p. 14; YB, 1912, pp. 12-15.

³⁴ See YB, 1913, p. 37. The basis of the appeal for support was the awareness of the dangers of young people in schools of higher education. See YB, 1924, p. 23.

³⁵ YB, 1918, p. 27. These were inter-Mennonite schools.

serve the religious faith through separate schools.

The coming of the Russian Mennonites encouraged education to an even greater extent. Not only were they of a higher socio-economic group than their Mennonite forerunners to Canada, but they had already adjusted to the Russian society, a number having attended schools for higher education in Europe.³⁶ Sociologist E. K. Francis maintained that "some of the best educated and leading personalities among the immigrants belonged to the brotherhood" and that "they were more broad-minded than any other branch with regard to the use of English in church functions".³⁷ One immigrant, after a return visit to Russia following thirteen years of residence in Canada, justifies the Russian immigration because the standard of education in the Mennonite schools in Russia had suffered in recent times, and Mennonites desired opportunities of higher education for their children.³⁸ The effect of this open attitude to education is further depicted by Francis:

One of the most striking changes in recent years has occurred in the field of education, mainly under the influence of the Russ-laender immigrants.... A quarter of a century later (since the end of the first World War), a whole generation had grown up which had never attended a parochial Mennonite grade school. Day after

³⁶ Leo Driedger, "Developments in Higher Education among Mennonites in Manitoba", Proceedings of the Sixteenth CMECP, 1967, p. 65.

³⁷ E. K. Francis, In Search of Utopia, pp. 262-63.

³⁸ Peter Klassen, "Korrespondenzen", MR, LI (Jan. 4, 1928), p. 4. Klassen writes, "Ich musste auch als einer, der von auswaerts kommt, feststellen, dass das Schulwesen der Mennoniten sehr gelitten hat.... Weil wir einst so hoch standen, empfinden wir das Gleichmachen mit all den anderen russischen Schulen als einen starken Verlust. Man kann wohl sagen: Durch die neue Zeit haben die russischen Schulen und Bauern gewonnen, die mennonitischen Schulen und Bauern verloren."

day, year after year, the secular public school had taught young Mennonites the same language and the same culture it had been teaching to the youth of all Anglo-Saxon Canada.³⁹

In more recent years, Rudy Wiebe, first editor of Mennonite Brethren Herald, reflected on the effect of this openness to education and the slowness of the church to keep up with the change of its members. He writes,

Our church has encouraged education; in doing so it has opened to its members wider horizons, both in meeting new people whose practices differ from those common to us, and in meeting new ideas....

We have not really been prepared for the tremendous upswing in the educational level of our church members. As a result, much of the preaching and church activity of today is not suited to meet the intensified needs of our members. Often the problem of practical ethics which our conference committees discuss have been fought through in the minds of the members several years before; the official statement, whenever it comes, can only affirm what has long been practiced.⁴⁰

The attitude to higher education. Whereas there was an openness to education per se, the purpose of such education was usually utilitarian and thus harmonized with the Mennonite drive for upward social mobility--the urge to "get ahead". Of the Mennonites in Manitoba alone, E. K. Francis observed that between 1932 and 1947 the enrolment at the University of Manitoba had increased from 19 to 88.⁴¹ The Mennonite Observer in 1957 noted that nearly sixty Mennonites received degrees at the University of Manitoba at its annual convocation.⁴² In 1964, Peter Penner

³⁹ Francis, ibid. p. 264.

⁴⁰ R. Wiebe, "The Rule Book and the Principle", MBH, II (June 28, 1963), p. 3.

⁴¹ Francis, ibid., p. 264.

observed that there were 760 Mennonite Brethren undergraduates and 189 graduates in United States and Canada.⁴³ A closer analysis of post-secondary training in Canada revealed the following breakdown as indicated in Table X-10. The data were based on a 77% return of a questionnaire to local pastors. The results, representing but a part of the whole, suggest a strong trend towards professional training.

Table X-10

Canadian Mennonite Brethren Post-Secondary Education in 1964

FIELD OF STUDY		PROVINCIAL DISTRIBUTION OF STUDENTS ENROLLED				
		ALTA.	B. C.	MAN.	ONTARIO	SASK.
Medical		3	1	12	5	5
Graduate		4	23	34	21	14
Seminaries		-	4	2	-	1
College and Universities	Conference	23	56	41	34	15
	Non-Conference	4	78	88	28	50
Nursing		3	16	31	11	9
Trades		3	7	1	-	2
Bible Institutes		38	75	7	16	90
T O T A L		78	260	115	186	175

SOURCE: Peter Penner Survey, MBH, May 22, 1964.

⁴²MO, "Nearly 60 Mennonites Receive Degrees", III (May 24, 1957), p. 12. These degrees included B. A., B. Sc., B. Ed., B. Paed., B. S. W., B. LL., M. A., M. Sc., and M. D.

⁴³Peter Penner, "What does Student Services Do?" MBH, III (May 22, 1964), p. 7.

This trend in the 1960's evoked expressions of concern. In 1963 an analyst addressing university students wrote as follows:

To my way of thinking, a utilitarian motive for university enrollment is not adequate for the committed Christian. Our New Testament convictions (or vague opinions) never will make even a dent on intellectuals if our motivation is geared to merely getting the knowledge and skills we need for chosen careers or specialized disciplines and not to giving answer to those issues on campus which require a Christian and a New Testament confrontation.⁴⁴

In the following year, Peter Penner, then pastor in Toronto, advised young people with academic ability to take a general arts course, but cautioned,

Very few, however, take this somewhat unpragmatic approach to higher education. This observer has found most Mennonite students unabashedly utilitarian, taking the shortest route to a job providing an adequate salary, status, and promising security....⁴⁵

And in the same year, John Redekop opines on the impact of such higher education.

The burgeoning drive for secondary and advanced education has necessarily resulted in large-scale expansion into the various professions. New problems of ethics and propriety have overwhelmed more than a few unprepared "pioneers". In brief, more than a few are finding it difficult to interpret the Christian Way apart from the plow.⁴⁶

Higher education for Mennonite Brethren has usually meant the penetration of the professional world, which had its own secularizing effect, as chapter twelve will show.

The attitude to liberal arts. Aside from the crassly utilitarian

⁴⁴MBH, "Conformity or Confrontation", II (Nov. 29, 1963), p. 4.

⁴⁵P. Penner, "Academic Qualifications and Migration Evangelism", MBH, III (June 26, 1964), p. 4.

⁴⁶J. H. Redekop, "The Winds of Change", MBH, III (June 26, 1964),

motive for higher education, increasingly Canadian Mennonite Brethren have recognized the worth, as well as the risks, of a liberal arts training. While few advocates have openly argued for a liberal arts education, many more have simply exposed themselves to it. It is precisely because of its secularizing effect that this area of education has been dealt with so gingerly.

Almost from the outset Mennonite Brethren Bible College required at least one year of liberal arts "with the view of broadening the theology student's horizon, and with the hope that such subjects would equip him better for a ministry in today's world."⁴⁷ In 1959, the Education Committee called for a study conference on liberal arts education,⁴⁸ and at the conference on February 12-14, 1960, on the question of "the need for, and the possible implementation of, a private liberal arts college ... it was the unanimous opinion of those present that such a need exists".⁴⁹ Dr.

⁴⁷ D. Ewert, "What About our Liberal Arts College?" MBH, I (Aug. 24, 1962), p. 11. Note also, YB, 1956, p. 84, in which out-going President H. H. Janzen predicts the trend for the coming decade: "die naechsten zehn Jahre werden im College eine radikale Wendung sehen und stark nach der Seite der seklaeren Bildung hin". Note the response at the subsequent conference in 1957 (YB, 1957, p. 88), "Dieses Empfinden unseres Bruders hat sich wohl auf Grund der haeufigen Fragen von seiten unserer Jugend herausgebildet. Wir, als Komitee, sind hier auch in die Enge gekommen. Da waere es wohl an der Zeit dass diese Frage weiter eroertert wird von dem zukuenftigen Komitee...."

⁴⁸ YB, 1959, p. 186. The reasons given were: "In view of the increasing interest among our young people in a liberal arts education, and in view of the invitation from other Mennonite groups to join them in the building of a residential college on the campus of an existing university."

⁴⁹ W. A. Wiebe, "M. B. Study Commission Considers Liberal Arts College", MO, VI (Mar. 4, 1960), p. 2. The reasons given were: "In view of the increasing number of our young people who are interested in education beyond the high school level, and the fact that no evangelical liberal

Peter Bargen, then school inspector in Edmonton, presented the following objectives for such an education:

1. To provide for the total development of the individual, enabling him to invest his talents in the service of God through the various vocations of life.
2. To provide for the acquisition of such knowledge as will enable the individual to make wise decisions in the social, political and economic areas which are his responsibility as a true witness of Christ.
3. To provide for the development of a Christian philosophy of life, which relates all knowledge to the divine revelation and sees God as Creator and Jesus Christ as Redeemer.
4. To provide for the sound integration of the areas of Biblical studies and general knowledge.
5. To provide for opportunities of gaining a better understanding of and a deeper appreciation for the Mennonite Brethren Church and its mission.⁵⁰

These objectives have in fact become the objectives of the Bible College today. More recently, faculty members at the Mennonite Brethren Bible College presented a rationale for such broader exposure. Herb Giesbrecht in 1965 argued for an integrated approach, since the New Testament does not disparage the world's learning as such and because Christian humanists have demonstrated that liberal education is possible since such learning is also "part of God's truth".⁵¹ The debate continues to the present.

arts college exists in Canada, it is true that we erect such a college, where our young people can receive a sound liberal arts education in a Christian frame of reference and under the inspiration of our own leading men."

⁵⁰YB, 1960, p. 166. See also, F. C. Peters, "Mennonite Liberal Arts Education in Canada", MO, V (Sept. 25, 1959), p. 2, where Peters speaks of the "plus factor" which justifies the intrusion of the church into the academic field.

⁵¹Herb Giesbrecht, "Teaching the Liberal Arts", Voice, XIV

The dilemma in which the Canadian Conference finds itself results from the awareness of the secularizing effects of a liberal arts education and the failure to know how best to cope with the situation. In 1965, John Redekop expressed his alarm as follows:

... They (the many observers) point out that the church is not relating itself in any truly effective way to the hundreds of Canadian MB's now on our university campuses.... I am sufficiently alarmed by our ever-growing academic casualty lists, in terms of our spiritual warfare, to take seriously any suggestion advanced in good faith.⁵²

More recently, Dr. Harry Loewen, former Bible College instructor, frankly admits, "Yes, a liberal arts education is dangerous in that it effects change. A young person who exposes himself to the influence of philosophy, psychology, literature, history and science will at the end of three or four years be different from what he was when he entered the halls of learning."⁵³ The dilemma is concisely pinpointed by Dr. Loewen when he states, "We want the best of two worlds, our traditional faith and way of life and an education which will give us the goods and comforts of earthly existence."⁵⁴ Acknowledging the risk of "losing some of our sons and daughters to the world", Loewen asks,

(Sept.-Oct., 1965), 4-8. See also, Harry Loewen, "Why Liberal Arts at College?" Voice, XV (July-Aug., 1966), 1-2, who not only calls attention to the "doubt and suspicion concerning the need, value, and desirability of a liberal arts department", but cautions against the compartmentalization of knowledge and experience where this is lacking.

⁵²J. H. Redekop, "College Training--Where are we heading?" MBH, IV (Feb. 19, 1965), p. 2.

⁵³Harry Loewen, "University Education Dangerous", MBH, XII (June 15, 1973), p. 11.

⁵⁴Ibid.

But do we really have a choice? For good or ill (and hopefully mostly for good) we have for some time in the past valued higher education, and our young people will continue to attend university whether we like it or not.... Since we have opted for higher education, we will not escape the dangers, problems, and growing pains that accompany the acquisition of knowledge.⁵⁵

And so the Canadian Mennonite Brethren cannot escape the relativizing and secularizing effects of education.

Summary of the Relativizing Impact of Education

The foregoing discussion of the attitudes to change, secularization, and education has shown how closely these concepts are intertwined, and yet, how differently Canadian Mennonite Brethren have responded to these processes. Initial reluctance to change has given way in the last decade to widespread acceptance of, and adjustment to, change. Persistent resistance to secularization has been tempered by tacit approval of certain forms of exposure to the world. Openness to education in order to reap its benefits of upward social mobility has been offset by hesitancy to risk the truly relativizing effects of the same. The earlier summary of the cross-tabulations of levels of educational attainment with variables of religiosity also indicated that the impact of education was not without ambiguity--sometimes enhancing religiosity, at other times loosening the web of religious beliefs and ethics. To assess the overall effect of education, it will be necessary, then, to distinguish between its impact on change generally and on secularization specifically, as well as to distinguish between the countervailing consequences of each. It is

⁵⁵ Ibid.

the dialectic of these forces, in the end, that not only provides the movement the tension of the present but also proffers the vitality of the future.

First, there seems to be no question that education effects change. On the one hand, such change brings about conformity, as the emphasis upon socialization in chapter eight intended to show. On the other hand, such change can also release from the sacralizing encrustations of religious conformity and institutionalization. For Canadian Mennonite Brethren, the socialization impact of education, whether through formal training or religious participation, has been prominent throughout the period under study, yet the relativizing effects of education have made their greatest impact on social change within the last decade, as later chapters on urbanization, occupational change, economic ascendancy, and assimilation will indicate. Change, thus, not only molds and strengthens religious beliefs and thereby fosters continuity of sectarianism, but change also weakens and dislodges set patterns of beliefs and ethics, and hence poses as a threat to continuity.

Next, education has also resulted in a two-fold effect upon secularization. On the one hand, from the outset, Mennonite Brethren have resisted secularization, because to them secularization means conformity to the world and loss of separatism. Some forms of idealistic separatism still prevail, even among the most educated, as the empirical tests of religiosity indicate. Education has, in fact, increased the practice of religion (in participation and associationalism) and strengthened the Anabaptist beliefs and social ethics among those who are college educated. In this respect, education has arrested the secularization process. On the

other hand, education has also had a relativizing effect upon religious beliefs and ethics and, in this sense, has enhanced the secularization process. Education leads to increased differentiation in the symbolic system,⁵⁶ that is, a proliferation of perspectives and specialized social structures, which offers man a plurality of viewpoints. This necessitates a tolerance, to view the perspectives with a measure of objectivity, and results in a broadening of outlook. Such relativization, then, loosens the attachment to one's sacralized commitments and sometimes even embraces new perspectives into one's own symbol system. This relativizing effect is apparent in the loss of belief in orthodoxy and personal ethics, as the empirical evidence indicates, and in the concession to view secularization positively in recent times.

In conclusion, then, it is the interplay of these sacralizing and secularizing forces that keeps the religious movement viable. The impact of education illustrates this curious dialectic. Education, at the same time, strengthens religious belief and practice and also loosens or relativizes the fabric. The relativizing or secularizing effect expresses itself not only negatively in a loss of religious belief or a denial of God, but positively as a freeing process to enable man to choose God personally. In this latter sense, secularization supports the Anabaptist notion of voluntarism. Education, thus, simultaneously builds up religious faith and commitment and breaks down taken-for-granted forms of religiosity. It thereby challenges the religious movement to acquire adaptable forms and functions that the changing world demands.

⁵⁶Robert Bellah, "Religious Evolution", in Beyond Belief (New York: Harper, 1970), pp. 20-50.

XI

URBANIZATION AND FRAGILITY HAZARDS

Perhaps more than any single component of change, education broadens the horizons, loosens the moorings, and relativizes the commitment on the level of the symbolic or the abstract. Urbanization affects not only the mind and attitudes, but exposes the whole person, body and soul, to a new cultural environment, so that one continuously lives, and works, and enjoys his leisure in a setting which poses both threats and challenges to his worldview. Repeatedly Mennonite Brethren have asserted that the "Bible and plow" motif no longer characterizes them.¹ Questions naturally follow: When did this urbanization occur, to what extent has it come about, and what are the fragility hazards of their loss of rurality? If Canadian Mennonite Brethren are no longer a rural people, what price did they pay for their urbanity? As in the previous chapter on education, so here with reference to urbanization, the process of change has the twofold effect of exposing to hazards as well as confronting with new opportunities. However, the parameters within which the change occurs are broader in the case of urbanization.

1. The Urbanization Process

To understand the process of urbanization among Canadian Mennonite

¹See Isaac Redekopp, "Education in the Christian Church", Voice, I (Mar.-Apr., 1952), p. 9. See also J. A. Toews, "Die Stadtgemeinde in der Mennonitischen Bruderschaft", Voice, V (July-Aug., 1956), p. 1.

Brethren, it is essential to examine not only the meaning of urbanization itself and how it contributes to secularization, but also the urban and rural backgrounds of the early Anabaptists and Mennonite Brethren respectively.

Its Meaning. To gain a better understanding of urbanization itself, several related terms will need to be differentiated. Structurally, one needs to distinguish between city and suburb, and city and megalopolis. As Louis Wirth states, a city can simply be viewed as "a relatively large, dense, and permanent settlement of socially heterogeneous individuals".² The emphasis on heterogeneity suggests the possibility of change and secularization in such an environment. More comprehensive is Robert E. Park's description of a city as "a state of mind, a body of customs and traditions, and of the organized attitudes and sentiments that inhere in these customs and are transmitted with these traditions".³ This latter definition does not confine the notion of urbanism to the walls of a city, but allows the consideration of urbanism as a style of life. The suburb, the setting of urbanization of rural Mennonites, is the smaller community adjacent to and dependent on a central city.⁴ According to Mennonite sociologist Paul Peachey, "Here many of the decisive battles of the church will be waged and, it is to be feared, lost."⁵ The megalopolis refers to

²Louis Wirth, "Urbanism as a Way of Life", American Journal of Sociology, XLIV (July, 1938), pp. 1-25.

³Quoted by Paul Peachey, The Church in the City (Newton, Kansas: Faith and Life Press, 1963), p. 14.

⁴David Popenoe, Sociology (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, 1977), p. 475.

⁵Peachey, ibid., p. 37.

urban concentration of two or more metropolitan areas that overlap. In the subsequent empirical data on Mennonite Brethren a simple division of "small city" (containing a population of 2500 to 24,999) and "large city" (above 25,000) is observed. Naturally, such an arbitrary division based on size alone does not adequately account for differing life-styles better described by "urbanism".

"Urbanization", as a term, indicates change. On the one hand, it refers to the movement of people from rural to urban or city areas and, on the other hand, to a process or "way of life",⁶ or "the product of the interacting processes of rising productivity and increasing division and specialization of labour".⁷ Perhaps the term, "urbanism", more clearly refers to the patterns of culture and social structure that are characteristic of cities. It was Louis Wirth and the "Chicago school" of sociologists who singled out the following aspects of urban culture:

... urbanites meet one another in highly segmented roles rather than in personal relationships involving the whole personality; they have highly specialized work tasks; symbols, such as those of role, occupation, or status, become extremely important; formal social mechanisms outweigh informal ones in significance; many forms of activity are commercialized and bureaucratized; and kinship and family groups play a less important part in social experience.⁸

⁶Wirth, ibid.

⁷Hans Blumenfeld, "The Process of Urbanization", in The City: Canada's Prospects, Canada's Problems by L. Axworthy and J. M. Gillies (ed.) (Toronto: Butterworth & Co., 1973), p. 17.

⁸Wirth, ibid. See summary of Wirth in Popenoe, ibid., p. 486. For a summary of Sorokin and Zimmerman's differences between rural-urban societies, see Peter H. Mann, An Approach to Urban Society (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1965), pp. 4-28, who develops a typology based on eight characteristics: occupation, environment, size of community, density of population, heterogeneity of population, social differentiation, mobility, and system of interaction.

With such a dynamic concept of urbanism as a style of life, it is quite conceivable that residents of rural farms and, especially, rural nonfarms (those, according to this study, living on a plot smaller than three acres or in a village or town of under 2500) might have urban qualities, or, conversely, that residents of urban areas lack these qualities because of their rural mentality. Moreover, such an understanding of urbanism comes close to the notion of modernization as secularization. The latter must now be reviewed.

Its Relation to Secularization. That a dynamic view of urbanism implies secularization can be seen from Stewart Crysdale's view of urbanism.

Urbanism as a style of life means openness to new ideas and readiness to question old norms. It means the growth of rationality in everyday life.... Urbanism implies heterogeneity. We live in close touch with people whose religion, colour, language and customs may be different from our own. It implies pluralism. No longer is the community dominated by white, Anglo-Saxon, Protestant norms or interests.⁹

Such openness, rationality, and heterogeneity both frees and fragments. If secularization is viewed positively, as the alternative interpretations by Toews and Janzen in chapter ten suggest,¹⁰ then urbanization spells openness to change and a freeing from the rule of the sacral, rural order. It should also free one to choose God personally, and, thus, strengthen the Anabaptist notion of voluntarism. If, however, secularization is viewed as loss of faith, religious decline, or confor-

⁹ Stewart Crysdale, The Changing Church in Canada (Toronto: United Church of Canada, 1965), p. 10.

¹⁰ Supra, 389-90.

mity to the world, then the city likewise creates a rather fragile environment where the individualism and pluralism help to fragment the faith through "psychic overload".¹¹ Robert Nisbet comments on the consequences of such total preoccupation with the physical environment:

Where men give their energies preponderantly and obsessively to control of physical environment, moral decline is inevitable.¹²

The Committee of Reference and Counsel of the Canadian Mennonite Brethren sensed the secularizing impact of the city in 1961, when, in conjunction with establishing urban churches, they cautioned against the fragmentation resulting from individualism.¹³ The option for good or for bad, for secularization viewed positively or negatively, was perceptively stated by an American clergyman, Lyman Abbott, at the turn of the century:

On the one hand, the city stands for all that is evil--a city that is full of devils, foul and corrupting; and, on the other hand, the city stands for all that is noble, full of the glory of God, and shining with a clear and brilliant light.... The greatest corruption, the greatest vice, the greatest crime, are to be found in the great city. The greatest philanthropy, the greatest purity, the most aggressive and noble courage are to be found in the great city. San Francisco, St. Louis, Chicago,

¹¹ Stanley Milgram uses this term, drawn from systems analyses, which refers to the inability of a system to process inputs from the environment because there are too many inputs for the system to cope with. When overload is present adaptations occur. See Stanley Milgram, "The Experience of Living Cities: A Psychological Analysis", Science (March 13, 1970), 1461-1468.

¹² Quoted by Paul Peachey, ibid., p. 19.

¹³ YB, 1961, p. 99. "Ferner stellen wir mit Bedauern fest, dass sich auch in unsern Gemeinden ein stark ausgeprägter Individualismus immer mehr bemerkbar macht, der eventuell zu Spaltungen in den Gemeinden führt."

Cincinnati, Philadelphia, Boston, and Brooklyn, are full of devils--and also of the glory of God.¹⁴

Mennonite Brethren were quick to discover the secularizing effects of urbanism, and these were viewed both with doleful alarm and welcome alacrity.

Its Early Development among Mennonite Brethren. As Mennonite historian, Cornelius Krahn, states, "Urbanism among the Anabaptists and Mennonites is as old as Anabaptism itself."¹⁵ Anabaptism had its beginnings in major Swiss, German, Dutch and French cities.¹⁶ It is persecution that drove them to rural areas, and for some 300 years, Mennonites were largely rural. When the Mennonite Brethren Church was born in 1860 it was entirely rural, and at the time of the great influx of immigrants into Canada in the mid-twenties, the church was still predominantly rural despite the education and wealth that numerous individuals had acquired in Russia. Until 1920 the Mennonite Brethren in North America had two city missions (in Minneapolis and Winnipeg), but no self-supporting, urban congregations.¹⁷ As J. A. Toews assesses, "Cities were places for

¹⁴Quoted by Paul Peachey, ibid., p. 19.

¹⁵Cornelius Krahn, "Research on Urban Mennonites", Mennonite Life, XXIII (October, 1968), 189.

¹⁶See Paul Peachey, "Early Anabaptists and Urbanism", Proceedings of 10th CMECP, 1955, pp. 75-83. See also Peachey, "Social Background and Social Philosophy of the Swiss Anabaptists, 1525-1540", MQR, XXVIII (1954), 105.

¹⁷For example, in 1924 there were some 100 persons attending the General Conference Mennonite Church in Winnipeg. Benj. Ewert, "Mennoniten in Winnipeg", MR, XLVII (Dec. 24, 1924), p. 5, writes, "Die Anzahl der Mennoniten in Winnipeg lässt sich nicht gut bestimmen." He then lists three reasons for this indeterminateness of number: i) he may not know of some; ii) some Mennonites have joined other denominations; iii)

establishing 'missions', but not for planting Mennonite Brethren churches."¹⁸ However, Mennonite Brethren soon learned that "not everything that is rural is for that reason Christian".¹⁹

Today it no longer can be said, as Leland Harder typified Mennonites at the turn of the present century, "The typical Mennonite lives in a rural community, he farms for a living, and he attends a country church."²⁰ Especially the depression of the 1930's brought about the process of urbanization. Sociologist E. K. Francis estimates that "perhaps as many as half of the immigrant settlers (speaking of the Russ-laender) lost their farms during the Depression. Some of them took over smaller holdings while others drifted to towns and cities".²¹ In recounting the experiences of his own family and Mennonite community in Northern Saskatchewan, novelist Rudy Wiebe poignantly explains, "We

a number of Mennonite Brethren have their own fellowship and mission work. The work in Winnipeg was begun by Mennonite Brethren in 1913 after Wm. Bestvater shared his vision for a city mission in Winnipeg. He was forthwith appointed to commence work on Nov. 1, 1913 (YB, 1913, pp. 30, 31). Although the mission church (Nordende) became a recognized, self-supporting church of the Canadian Conference in 1934 (See YB, 1934, p. 44), the Kildonan Mennonite Brethren Church began its fellowship in 1928. (See Die Entstehung und Entwicklung der Mennoniten Bruder Gemeinde in Winnipeg, compiled by Anna Thiessen, in MBBC archives.)

¹⁸J. A. Toews, HMBC, p. 331.

¹⁹P. Peachey, "Early Anabaptists and Urbanism", p. 76.

²⁰Leland Harder, "Mennonite Mobility and the Christian Calling", Mennonite Life, XIX (Jan., 1964), p. 7. This generalization by Harder is not out of line with H. R. Niebuhr's analysis of the rurality of the more sectarian, lower-class churches in 1906, where 88% of Baptists, 86% of Methodists, 89% of Disciples, and 92% of United Brethren were rural. See Niebuhr, Social Sources of Denominationalism, p. 183.

²¹E. K. Francis, In Search of Utopia, p. 210.

drove into the district in 1933 with what equipment we had on a rented truck and we left fourteen years later in exactly the same way."²² More important, however, to Francis was the middle-class origin of the immigrants.

... The main reason for urbanization among the Russlaender group, however, must be sought in the middle-class origin of many of the refugees, who included a disproportionate number of former estate owners, teachers, physicians, nurses, businessmen, clerks, bankers, and so on. At first the provisions under which they were admitted to Canada compelled all of them to work in agriculture. Yet, in the face of great hardships and difficulties, a majority of these new farmers took up more familiar occupations when opportunities presented themselves after they had become naturalized.²³

It was probably this "middle-class origin" of many of the Mennonite families which provided the incentive to capitalize on the lure of the city, be this lure an economic one or a legitimate pursuit of cultural and religious ends.

The major move to the cities occurred after World War II. Most immigrants to Canada after World War II migrated to cities, for many of them had an urban background in Europe.²⁴ In 1952 it was claimed by I. W. Redekopp, then instructor at Mennonite Brethren Bible College, that 20% of Mennonite Brethren were urban.²⁵ In 1956, J. A. Toews noted that there were 13 churches in cities of 5000 or more, constituting more

²² Rudy Wiebe, "Tombstone Community", Mennonite Life, XIX (Oct., 1964), p. 153.

²³ Francis, ibid.

²⁴ J. A. Toews, HMBC, p. 334.

²⁵ I. W. Redekopp, "Education in the Christian Church", Voice, I (March-April, 1952), 9.

than one-fourth of Canadian Mennonite Brethren membership.²⁶ Mennonite sociologist, Leo Driedger, discovered that in 1961 about one-third of the Mennonites in Canada (including others than Mennonite Brethren) were urban.²⁷ The growth of Canadian Mennonite Brethren city churches over a period of twenty years, 1951 to 1971, is indicated in Table XI-1, where "city" refers to an urban population of 10,000 or more. The increase

Table XI-1
Number and Membership of Canadian Mennonite Brethren
City Churches, 1951 and 1971

PROVINCE	1951				1971			
	NO. OF CHURCHES		MEMBERSHIP		NO. OF CHURCHES		MEMBERSHIP	
Ontario	2	(8)*	517	(1,529)*	7	(14)	1,500	(2,770)
Manitoba	3	(26)	977	(2,819)	10	(27)	2,580	(4,445)
Saskatchewan	3	(25)	195	(2,118)	7	(31)	877	(2,576)
Alberta	0	(9)	--	(1,124)	4	(13)	522	(1,486)
British Columbia	3	(15)	738	(3,667)	12	(37)	2,189	(5,702)
TOTAL	11	(83)	2,427	(11,257)	39	(125)	7,637	(17,396)

SOURCE: J. A. Toews, HMBC, p. 333.

*The numbers in brackets represent the total number of churches and members for each province. (See YB, 1951, pp. 106-119.)

The total figures for 1971 include Quebec with 3 churches and 71 members. (See YB, 1971, p. 97.)

²⁶J. A. Toews, "Die Stadtgemeinde in der Mennonitischen Bruderschaft", Voice, V (July-Aug., 1956), 1. Toews also notes that the number of residents in such cities increased from 1500 in 1945 to 3500 in 1955, more than doubled in a decade.

²⁷Leo Driedger, "A Perspective on Canadian Mennonite Urbanization", Mennonite Life, XXIII (Oct., 1968), p. 150.

in the percentage of the number of city churches is from 13.3 to 31.2, and the urban membership increase is from 21.6 to 43.9. This is somewhat lower than the Church Member Profile results, based on a random sample, indicate for the following year, 1972.²⁸ In any case, urbanization of Canadian Mennonite Brethren is still considerably below the national level of 72.4% at the 1971 census.²⁹ Even the above more conservative percentage of urbanization is, at best, a measure of urban residence, not a measure of urbanism in the cultural sense indicated above.³⁰ This was well illustrated in 1969 by an interpretative remark by F. C. Peters, Mennonite Brethren psychologist, theologian, and educator, and frequent contributor to the Mennonite Brethren Herald.

I think 90% of us still have a basically rural mentality. Though we're living in a city, we've never been trained for city life. But our children have developed an urban mentality. We must take these things into consideration in terms of parent-child conflicts. The parents are often at variance with the values which the young people imbibe. They absorb so quickly without being able to discriminate, while the parents have other values which are dominant.³¹

Peters observes the resulting conflict of such urban residence coupled with rural mentality. This dilemma will be further explored after a closer examination of the empirical data that relate to rural-urban residence and religiosity.

²⁸ Infra, p. 413.

²⁹ This is an adjusted figure to include all cities over 2,500, according to Kauffman and Harder, AFCL, p. 54, while the Statistics Canada counts as urban all persons residing in places over 1000 population, giving an urban population of 76.1%.

³⁰ Supra, p. 404.

³¹ F. C. Peters, "Needed—A Sense of Identity for Christian Families", MBH, VIII (May 2, 1969), p. 4.

2. Empirical Findings on Canadian Mennonite Brethren

Rural-Urban Residence

Numerous Mennonite Brethren spokesmen through sermons, feature articles, and denominational columns refer to the urbanization trend. Few, however, have precise empirical data, if any data at all, to substantiate their claims. The following data not only provided the comparison of rural-urban residence patterns of Canadian Mennonite Brethren with other Mennonite groups, but attempt also to relate urbanization to demographic variables of social change and then, more particularly, indicate the impact of urbanization upon components of religiosity.

The Degree of Rural-Urban Residence

While rural-urban residence has to do with the place where people live, urbanization indicates a process not only of change in residence but of change in style of life, including one's attitudes and rational processes. To know where people live is, thus, but one measure of their urbanity. To what extent their religious life is affected by such location is to be discovered later. Table XI-2 suggests that North American Mennonite Brethren are the most urban in residence among those Mennonite groups measured, since 56% live in small or large cities, proportionately twice as many as members in the (Old) Mennonite Church. However, somewhat fewer Canadian Mennonite Brethren live in small cities and a few more live on rural farms than do their American counterparts. The Mennonite Brethren urban residence compares to 73.5% for the American census data of 1970 and 72.4% for the Canadian census data of 1971.³²

Table XI-2

Comparative Rural-Urban Residence for Mennonite Denominations

TYPE OF RESIDENCE	PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION FOR			
	MC n=1195	GC n=611	NAMB n=703	CMBC n=359
Rural Farm	38.1	33	25	30.1
Rural Nonfarm	36	28	19	19.8
Subtotal	74	61	44	49.9
Small City	14	16	20	13.5
Large City	12	23	36	36.7
Subtotal	26	39	56	50.2

SOURCE: Church Member Profile, 1972.

LEGEND: Rural Farm = residence on farm of 3 acres or more

Rural Nonfarm = residence on plot of less than 3 acres outside a village or city, or in a village or town of under 2,500'

Small City = residence in a city of 2,500 to 24,999

Large City = residence in a city of 25,000 or more

Such extensive urban residence of this sectarian group challenges Gibson Winter's assertion that

... a sectarian community can preserve its unique identity only if it insulates itself against the pressures of the surrounding world; such insulation, however, is almost impossible in a metropolitan area.³³

If Mennonite Brethren are indeed sectarian, and if they are in fact maintaining their sectness in an urban setting, then Winter needs to modify his theory.

³² Kauffman and Harder, AFCL, p. 54.

³³ Gibson Winter, The Suburban Captivity of the Churches (Garden City, N. Y.: Doubleday and Co. Ltd., 1961), p. 123.

Effect of Urbanization upon Other Demographic Variables of Social Change

In order to examine the impact of urban residence upon religiosity, it will be helpful to know the effect of urban residence upon such factors of socioeconomic status as education, occupation, and income.

Rural-Urban Residence and Education. Table XI-3 confirms the usual assumption that urban areas attract the more educated. Comparing the "rural farm" and "large city" column makes this clear. The higher the level of educational attainment, the lower the row percentage response of those resident on a rural farm; conversely, the higher the level of educational attainment, the higher the row percentage response of those resident in a large city. The "rural nonfarm" and "small city" columns do not indicate this trend so consistently. The table simply

Table XI-3

Rural-Urban Residence and Levels of Educational Attainment

LEVEL OF EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT	ROW PERCENTAGE RESPONSE			
	RURAL FARM	RURAL NONFARM	SMALL CITY	LARGE CITY
GRADE SCHOOL	35.3 n=30	22.4 n=19	14.1 n=12	28.2 n=24
HIGH SCHOOL	34.3 n=60	17.7 n=31	14.3 n=25	33.7 n=59
COLLEGE	22.5 n=9	25.0 n=10	7.5 n=3	45.0 n=18
GRAD/PROF. SCHOOL	14.8 n=8	16.7 n=9	14.8 n=8	53.7 n=29
TOTAL	n=107	n=69	n=48	n=130

SOURCE: Church Member Profile, 1972.

confirms that the more educated tend to live in the large cities.

Rural-Urban Residence and Occupation. Table XI-4 shows the cross-tabulations of the ten occupational categories with the four variables of rural-urban residence. Obviously, most farmers live on a farm, although a few have possibly retired in the city. Most managerial, professional, clerical, skilled and service workers live in cities. A

Table XI-4

Rural-Urban Residence and Occupational Variation

OCCUPATIONS	ROW PERCENTAGE RESPONSE			
	RURAL FARM	RURAL NONFARM	SMALL CITY	LARGE CITY
Farmer	81.8 n=36	6.8 n=3	4.5 n=2	6.8 n=3
Manager	5.3 n=1	26.3 n=5	21.1 n=4	47.4 n=9
Professional	7.8 n=4	23.5 n=12	15.7 n=8	52.9 n=27
Clerical	0.0 n=0	15.0 n=3	25.0 n=5	60.0 n=12
Craftsman	22.7 n=5	9.1 n=2	13.6 n=3	54.5 n=12
Machine Operator	6.3 n=1	25.0 n=4	18.8 n=3	50.0 n=8
Service Worker	0.0 n=0	30.0 n=3	20.0 n=2	50.0 n=5
Laborer	25.0 n=1	50.0 n=2	0.0 n=0	25.0 n=1
Housewife	35.5 n=38	20.6 n=22	12.1 n=13	31.8 n=34
Student	35.8 n=19	22.6 n=12	11.3 n=6	30.2 n=16
TOTAL	n=105	n=68	n=46	n=127

SOURCE: Church Member Profile, 1972.

higher percentage of housewives and students are rural residents. Perhaps more city housewives are fully employed and have indicated their vocation as other than housewife (according to instructions). It is not obvious why a higher percentage of students are rural. Could this reflect the trend of Canadian Mennonite Brethren of recent decades, namely, to leave the farm for the city and let education be the legitimating instrument? Could it be that city youth, once urbanized, are less attracted to further training?

Rural-Urban Residence and Income. Table XI-5 shows the cross-

Table XI-5

(Rural-Urban Residence and Levels of Income for 1971

ANNUAL COMBINED NET INCOME FOR HOUSEHOLD BEFORE INCOME TAX DEDUCTIONS	ROW PERCENTAGE RESPONSE			
	RURAL FARM	RURAL NONFARM	SMALL CITY	LARGE CITY
Below 3000	60.0 n=18	23.3 n=7	6.7 n=2	10.0 n=3
3000-5999	32.7 n=16	12.2 n=6	16.3 n=8	38.8 n=19
6000-8999	23.7 n=18	26.3 n=20	15.8 n=12	34.2 n=26
9000-11999	25.0 n=16	23.4 n=15	17.2 n=11	34.4 n=22
12000-14999	13.5 n=5	27.0 n=10	10.8 n=4	48.6 n=18
15000-19999	20.8 n=5	4.2 n=1	12.5 n=3	62.5 n=15
20000 or more	33.3 n=5	20.0 n=3	6.7 n=1	40.0 n=6
TOTAL	n=83	n=62	n=41	n=109

SOURCE: Church Member Profile, 1972.

tabulations of seven levels of income for 1971 with the four variables of rural-urban residence. The most striking differential in income between rural and urban is apparent in the "Below 3000" category and again in the "12000-14999" or higher categories in which instances rural farm residence has a predominance of the lowest incomes and the large city a predominance of the highest incomes. Collapsing the categories for both rows and columns, one arrives at the following simple analysis:

Income for 1971	Number of Residents		Total No.
	Rural	City	
Below 6000	47	32	79
Between 6000 -12000	69	71	140
Above 12000	29	47	76
TOTALS	145	150	295

Those below \$6000 per annum are predominantly in rural areas (47/79).

Those above \$12000 per annum are predominantly in urban areas (47/76).

One's rural-urban residence does indicate something about those among the lowest and highest incomes. The effect of the affluence upon one's religious beliefs and life will be further examined in chapter thirteen.

One's place of residence does affect one's socioeconomic status as the variables of education, occupation, income indicate. Either the city attracts those of higher education, skilled, service and professional vocations, and higher income, or the city contributes to the same. Both, no doubt, hold true. In as much as one's education, occupation, and income have a bearing upon religion, urbanization can likewise be expected to influence one's religiosity. How this occurs will next be

discovered.

The Effect of Urbanization upon Religion

To measure the effect that rural-urban residence has upon one's religion, three measures of religiosity are chosen, and representative questions are selected from the Church Member Profile to constitute each measure. Each of the main indicators is again subdivided into more precise areas to allow for variation of response. The questions used for the items measuring the variables of religion in the tables that follow are the same questions as those in chapter ten, but they are abbreviated in order to conserve space. Also, as in chapter ten, a simple scale will be devised to compare the overall effect.

Rural-urban residence and the practice of religion. Four questions will provide data for each of two components, devotionism and associationalism. Table XI-6 shows the cross-tabulations. Although the scores on the practice of religion are high for all groups, especially in associationalism, there is a significant difference between the rural farm and the large city. Church attendance and involvement appears to be a little more extensive in rural areas. In devotionism, the greatest difference lies between the rural farm and rural nonfarm. Does this suggest that the rural nonfarm may be distantly located from a church and that members find attendance more difficult or do these residents belong to those sophisticated urbanites who have left the suburbs and their churches to find the isolation of the rural nonfarm an excuse not to involve themselves in the activities of the local church?

Table XI-6

Rural-Urban Residence and Devotionalism/Associationalism

ITEMS MEASURING PRACTICE OF RELIGION		PERCENTAGE COLUMN RESPONSE			
		RURAL FARM	RURAL NONFARM	SMALL CITY	LARGE CITY
D E V O T I O N A L I S M	Prayer	88.8 n=95	81.2 n=56	89.4 n=42	86.9 n=113
	Bible study	86.0 n=92	79.7 n=55	83.3 n=40	83.7 n=108
	Closeness to God	63.8 n=67	58.8 n=40	57.4 n=27	55.4 n=72
	Seeking God's will	74.3 n=78	64.3 n=45	72.1 n=31	73.4 n=94
	RANK ORDER SCALE	15	6	10	9
A S S O C I A T I O N A L I S M	Church attendance	84.9 n=90	83.6 n=56	83.3 n=40	80.6 n=104
	Sunday school attendance	79.4 n=85	58.8 n=40	68.1 n=32	51.5 n=67
	Mid-week services	50.0 n=53	41.4 n=29	39.6 n=19	38.5 n=50
	Leadership part	63.2 n=67	58.8 n=40	60.4 n=29	55.1 n=70
	RANK ORDER SCALE	16	10	10	4

SOURCE: Church Member Profile, 1972.

Rural-urban residence and religious beliefs. Five questions for each of three components of religious beliefs constitute the measures for these beliefs as indicated in Table XI-7. While the responses to general

Table XI-7

Rural-Urban Residence and General Orthodoxy,
Fundamentalist Orthodoxy, and Anabaptism

ITEMS MEASURING RELIGIOUS BELIEFS	PERCENTAGE COLUMN RESPONSE			
	RURAL FARM	RURAL NONFARM	SMALL CITY	LARGE CITY
GENERAL ORTHODOXY				
Deity of Jesus	100.0 n=107	94.2 n=65	95.7 n=45	93.8 n=122
Belief in miracles	100.0 n=107	95.6 n=65	97.9 n=47	96.1 n=124
Jesus' resurrection	100.0 n=107	98.5 n=67	93.8 n=45	97.6 n=123
Jesus' return	99.1 n=106	97.1 n=68	100.0 n=48	97.7 n=127
Personal devil	100.0 n=107	98.6 n=69	100.0 n=48	97.7 n=127
RANK ORDER SCALE	19	9	15	8
FUNDAMENTALIST ORTHODOXY				
Inspiration of Bible	99.1 n=106	95.7 n=66	97.9 n=47	95.4 n=124
Virgin birth	99.1 n=106	97.1 n=66	100.0 n=47	97.7 n=124
Six-day creation	62.3 n=66	52.9 n=37	58.3 n=28	41.9 n=54
Universal flood	99.1 n=106	92.9 n=65	93.8 n=45	88.5 n=115
Eternal punishment	90.7 n=97	87.1 n=61	93.8 n=45	80.6 n=104
RANK ORDER SCALE	18	9	17	6
ANABAPTISM				
Following Jesus	59.8 n=64	55.1 n=38	52.1 n=25	59.4 n=76
Against infant baptism	86.9 n=93	85.5 n=59	93.8 n=45	90.6 n=116
Church discipline	86.0 n=92	87.0 n=60	91.5 n=43	87.6 n=113
Non-resistance	66.4 n=71	62.3 n=43	72.9 n=35	63.8 n=83
Non-swearing of oaths	81.3 n=87	76.8 n=53	83.3 n=40	78.5 n=102
RANK ORDER SCALE	13	7	17	13

SOURCE: Church Member Profile, 1972.

orthodoxy are high throughout, the residents of rural farms are exceptionally high, followed by the residents of the small city. A similar pattern prevails for beliefs of fundamentalist orthodoxy. The rank order of the resulting scale for these two measures of beliefs is: rural farm--37; small city--32; rural nonfarm--18; and large city--14. As in the effects of education, so in rural-urban residence, the Anabaptist beliefs do not provide a consistent pattern with the other beliefs. Here the small city ranks highest, followed by rural farm and large city, with rural nonfarm the lowest. As in devotionism, so in Anabaptist beliefs, the rural nonfarm residents score the lowest. Does their possible isolation from rural or city congregations account for their low rating on this denominational distinctive?

Viewing the total effect upon beliefs, one might conclude that small city and rural farm residents tend to be more conservative, while urbanism has its relativizing effects upon those in large cities and the rural nonfarm residents. The big city residents appear to be more secularized than the rural farmers, but to draw the line more finely is impossible on the basis of the evidence.

Rural-urban residence and personal-social ethics. Five questions for each of two components of the personal-social ethics are used to measure this aspect of Mennonite Brethren religiosity. Table XI-8 shows that for the personal moral issues, traditionally held in tabo, residents from rural farm areas are more conservative with residents of large cities considerably more flexible. The scores on social ethics, however, are less diverse, the greatest divergence being between rural farm and rural nonfarm residents. As in the cross-tabulations with education,

Table XI-8

Rural-Urban Residence and Personal-Social Ethics

ITEMS MEASURING PERSONAL-SOCIAL ETHICS	PERCENTAGE COLUMN RESPONSE			
	RURAL FARM	RURAL NONFARM	SMALL CITY	LARGE CITY
MORAL ISSUES				
Drinking moderately	66.7 n=70	47.1 n=33	50.0 n=24	44.1 n=56
Smoking tobacco	85.8 n=91	79.1 n=53	83.3 n=40	74.4 n=96
Adult-rated movies	69.2 n=74	54.3 n=38	52.1 n=25	37.3 n=47
Premarital sex	98.1 n=103	97.1 n=67	95.8 n=46	92.9 n=118
Social dancing	75.7 n=81	69.6 n=48	64.6 n=31	51.6 n=65
RANK ORDER SCALE	20	13	12	5
SOCIAL ETHICS				
Race relations	61.3 n=65	58.0 n=40	45.8 n=22	56.2 n=73
Social welfare	43.4 n=46	31.9 n=22	34.0 n=16	40.8 n=53
Anti-Communism	12.5 n=13	18.8 n=13	25.5 n=12	24.6 n=32
Labor unions	16.8 n=18	8.7 n=6	12.5 n=6	7.8 n=10
Capital punishment	3.8 n=4	13.0 n=9	25.5 n=12	22.5 n=29
RANK ORDER SCALE	14	10	14	12

SOURCE: Church Member Profile, 1972.

the results of the measure of social ethics vary significantly from the results on personal ethics. Urbanization has not brought about a significant relativization.

Summary of Conclusion of Empirical Evidence

Mennonite Brethren are the most urban among Mennonite churches, yet their Canadian rate of 50.2% (based on 1972 survey) is considerably below the national average of 72.4% (based on 1971 census). Although comparable data for Canadian Mennonite Brethren is not available for the 1920's, the immigration pattern and the location of churches would indicate an almost completely rural pattern. Urbanization has unquestionably taken place.

One's residence, moreover, affects one's socio-economic status, as the cross-tabulations with variables of education, occupation, and income indicate. The more educated tend to live in large cities; those in the skilled, clerical or professional occupations likewise tend to be residents of the large city; while most of those listed as farmers, laborers, housewives, and students are rural in residence. Furthermore, while the largest number with lowest incomes are rural farm residents, the largest number with highest incomes are large city residents.

Urbanization has occurred and with it there are changes in education, occupation, and income. It is not clear which is causal, urbanization or the components of socio-economic status. Such changes, however, do affect one's religiosity. The Mennonite Brethren resident of the large city is somewhat less rigorous in his devotional practice and decidedly less involved in local church activities. Again, especially in the orthodox beliefs and the evangelical doctrines, the residents of the large city are less convinced of the traditional beliefs or possibly more open to alternative viewpoints; not so, however, for Anabaptist beliefs. As in the study on effects of education, so also the effects

of urbanization have not negatively influenced the denominational distinctives. Finally, in personal moral issues, residents of rural farms are decidedly more conservative; not so, however, for social ethics. Here the rural nonfarm resident, as in matters of religious practice and beliefs, rates among the lower.

A summary of the scales devised in each measure is shown in Table XI-9. The table simply confirms the divergence of religiosity between residents of rural farm and large city. It also indicates that the small city resident is more akin in his religious beliefs and practices to the rural farm resident, while the rural nonfarm resident is closer to the large city resident. These empirical data may be more meaningfully interpreted with a better understanding of the church's view of urbanization and its effect upon the church member.

3. The Church's Understanding of Urbanization

How, then, does the church view the phenomenon of urbanization of which it is so conscious? Once again, there is no unilateral response. While it is true that in earlier years there was greater anxiety about the secularizing effects of the city, the city has not only posed a threat but also a challenge to the church.

Viewing the City as a Peril

Mennonites were naturally more conscious of their recent rural background than of the urban origin of their Anabaptist forebears. The attitudes of Canadian Mennonite Brethren until the 1950's resembled that of other Mennonite groups for whom Guy F. Hershberger was a spokesman.

Table XI-9

A Summary of Scales of the Effects of Rural-Urban

Residence upon Religion

MEASURE OF RELIGIOSITY	TOTAL OF RANK ORDER RATINGS			
	RURAL FARM	RURAL NONFARM	SMALL CITY	LARGE CITY
PRACTICE OF RELIGION				
Devotionalism	15	6	10	9
Associationalism	16	10	10	4
SUBTOTAL	31	16	20	13
RELIGIOUS BELIEFS				
General Orthodoxy	19	9	15	8
Fundamentalist Orthodoxy	18	9	17	6
Anabaptism	13	7	17	13
SUBTOTAL	50	25	49	27
ETHICS				
Moral Issues	20	13	12	5
Social Issues	14	10	14	12
SUBTOTAL	34	23	26	17
GRAND TOTAL	115	64	95	57

SOURCE: Church Member Profile, 1972.

He maintained,

Certainly no environment is more favorable for the perpetuation of the nonresistant faith than the rural community; and for this reason the Mennonite churches will do well to keep themselves established in such communities, with a high percentage of their members directly engaged in agriculture.³⁴

³⁴Quoted by J. Lawrence Burkholder, "Social Implications of Mennonite Doctrines", Proceedings of the Twelfth CMECP (Elkhart, Indiana: 1959), p. 102.

That the perils of the city loomed large is apparent from such an idealization of rural life. The perils were not expressed simply through projected concerns, but also in terms of realized consequences.

Concerns expressed in anticipation of urbanization. Preaching to the Canadian Conference at Hepburn in 1928, Winnipeg city missionary, C. N. Hiebert, warned of the perils of the city: its restlessness, its enticements to spend, and its lure to conform.³⁵ Conformity would be wrong because of the sinfulness of city life-styles. J. A. Toews explains the suspicion of such urban culture. "The city was regarded as more sinful and corrupt than the country, with a good deal of biblical and historical evidence to support such a view.... Urban life-styles were generally equated with worldliness."³⁶ Edmund Janzen more graphically depicts the traditional Mennonite Brethren repudiation of the city.

Consider what we in our M. B. circles have always been taught about cities and city life: they throb with sin; they are places where sin is rampant, where it is wholesaled. Cities are associated with Sodom and Gomorrah, scarlet women, crime, and filth.... As someone has said, we tend to view urbanized society through anti-urban 3-D spectacles, for we see the city as depraved, deprived, and dirty.³⁷

³⁵YB, 1928, p. 9. "Welches sind etliche Gefahren für die Leute in einer Grossstadt? Da ist erstens ein unruhiges, rastloses Treiben, das viele Menschen hindert, ueber ihr Leben nachzudenken. Zweitens gibt es dort sehr viele Gelegenheiten, Geld zu verausgaben, daher so viele arme Einwohner. Ferner ist man beständig in der Gefahr, mit dem Strom der Zeit mitgerissen zu werden."

³⁶J. A. Toews, "Christian Encounter with Culture", MBH, XIII (Feb. 22, 1974), p. 3.

³⁷E. Janzen, "The Church and the Urban Frontier", Address to Clearbrook Study Conference, May 12-14, 1974, printed as insert in MBH, XIII (Oct. 18, 1974).

The city was a threat not only because of its blatant appeals to sinful living, but because of its more subtle attacks upon the faith of the Christian, especially the young person. As Leo Driedger explains, "The Western urban metropolis tends to create many questions of meaning and purpose and few answers."³⁸ The Board of Spiritual and Social Concerns (Fuersorgekomitee) expressed its concern about the loss of faith among the young people in the universities of Canada.³⁹ Related to this concern was the possibility of losing one's confessional distinctive, as cautioned by J. A. Toews in 1956.⁴⁰ A further danger, included also by Toews, was the loss of community. This was not an unrealistic concern. In 1973, John Redekop listed six "casualties of urbanization", three of which had to do with community: failure for young people to make the church youth group their most important peer group or social activity; the weakening of ethnic ties among church members; best friends are not Christians or even church attenders.⁴¹ A fourth "casualty" listed by

³⁸ Leo Driedger, "Mennonite Urbanism", MQR, XLIX (July, 1975), 236.

³⁹ YB, 1955, p. 131. "Mit Bedauern muss festgestellt werden, dass unter unsere studierenden Jugend manche ihren Glauben loslassen oder doch tief erschuettert werden. Es sind gegenwaertig schon recht viele Universitaetsstudenten in groesseren Staedten: Vancouver, Edmonton, Saskatoon, Winnipeg und Toronto. Wie kann man diesen jungen Leuten in ihren Zweifeln und Kaempfen helfen?"

⁴⁰ J. A. Toews, "Die Stadtgemeinde in der Mennonitischen Bruderschaft", Voice, V (July-Aug., 1956), 1-4. In his article Toews includes three "drohende Gefahren": Gemeinschaftsbewusstsein zu verlieren, Schwächung des Familienlebens, Verlassung der konfessionellen Eigenart.

⁴¹ J. H. Redekop, "Casualties of Urbanization", MBH, XII (May 18, 1973), p. 2.

Redekop, mentioned also by Toews, was the weakening of the family ties. Redekop illustrates, "Family devotions tend to be neglected. What with shift work, ease of movement, and busy schedules, the family is rarely together."⁴² Realizing the cohesiveness of rural family life, rural pastor, Abe Froese, appealed to the city constituency on behalf of the rural newcomer.

... Relatives and friends of such a newcomer should feel it a Christian privilege to take him under their wing. His appreciation for the Christian home must be preserved by associating in homes other than the boarding place.⁴³

These concerns, which indicated both suspicion and fear of the city, were not solely hypothetical, for Mennonite Brethren actually encountered some of these perils.

Consequences encountered in the realization of urbanization. Urbanization has perils that are physical, psychological, social, and ideological in their consequences. Physically, residential mobility demands adjustments not only to new working conditions (the impact of occupational change will be separately treated in chapter twelve), but also to new patterns of worship and styles of association in urban congregations. Leland Harder suggests the religious implications of such physical mobility.

One of our basic problems in the increasing mobility of our members is that when they move to the city, too many Mennonites have not been taught to take the "church" with them [*italics his*].⁴⁴

⁴² J. A. Redekop, *ibid.*

⁴³ Abe Froese, "New in the City", *MBH*, I (Aug. 31, 1962), p. 5.

⁴⁴ Leland Harder, "Mennonite Mobility and the Christian Calling", *ML*, XIX (Jan., 1964), p. 11.

Harder's three alternatives--becoming inactive, transferring to another congregation within the denomination, or joining another denomination--suggest how fragile one's church connections tend to be when such residential mobility occurs.⁴⁵ The extent of such mobility was further suggested by Marvin Hein in his keynote address to the 1966 General Conference. He warned, "We will swallow hard when we learn that we must expect a complete turnover of membership every seven years in an urban congregation."⁴⁶ The possible resulting loss of membership becomes apparent in the observation by Friesen and Vogt, who estimated that "up to 80 percent of the membership of several large Alliance and Free Evangelical churches in Winnipeg is made up of persons of Mennonite background".⁴⁷ The following chapter will further explore the degree of defection among church members as a result of residential mobility.

Psychologically, the perils of urbanization are experienced in the new anonymity and the resulting anomie which mark many urban residents. Professor Leonard Siemens of the University of Manitoba charac-

⁴⁵ Harder, *ibid.* See also, Leslie Stobbe, "Whose Responsibility?" *MO*, III (Feb. 8, 1957), p. 2, who similarly comments about Mennonite Brethren specifically: "There is one problem that is often overlooked, however, and that is the large number of church members who move to the city for shorter or longer periods of time, yet retain their membership in the church 'back home'. This situation is intensified by the increase in the student population in the city.... He may (and only too often does) not feel at home in any Mennonite church in the city--and becomes a church vagabond drifting from church to church as the mood (and the distance to travel) suits him...."

⁴⁶ Marvin Hein, "The Church in Flux", *MBH*, V (Nov. 25, 1966), p. 8.

⁴⁷ Jim Friesen and Reinhard Vogt, "The Mennonite Community in Winnipeg", *ML*, XIX (Jan., 1964), p. 15.

terizes such anonymity as part of the "terrifying freedom of the city".

... The church member living in the suburb or in the big apartment has the freedom to mow his lawn or wash his car or go golfing on Sunday morning if he so wishes, because his neighbours whom he doesn't even know couldn't care less. He is nameless, anonymous, alone, most of the day.... This freedom of anonymity allows people to veer off the straight and narrow from time to time; to taste just slightly of the forbidden fruit without getting caught.⁴⁸

Siemens indicates the psychological effects when he adds that "Having tasted, some people get feelings of guilt, misery, and anxiety. Others may indeed decide to switch primary reference groups--from the church to the club or whatever it may be. Anonymity, namelessness, then offers a measure of freedom".⁴⁹ Such anonymity enhances the fragile nature of his religious association. Another psychological effect is the anomie that follows. Mennonite Brethren philosopher-social analyst, Delbert Wiens, muses on the "dis-ease" that comes from "growing up in the city".

And so we are no longer confident. We react defensively, interpreting new things or new ideas as threats. We cannot understand how the present complexity has grown naturally out of the earlier simplicity. And so we blame it on communist spies and outside agitators. Even city dwellers do not automatically understand the city.... And we flee to the church for comfort, demanding of it religious sanctions against the threat of the city. Therefore, the church itself also is defensive. It fights with the special fear of those who do not understand the enemy they face.⁵⁰

In addition to anomie is the motivational ennui that characterizes the

⁴⁸ Leonard Siemens, "To Be Christian in the 'Secular City'", Voice, XIX (Jan., 1970), 18.

⁴⁹ Siemens, ibid.

⁵⁰ Delbert Wiens, "From the Village to the City", Direction, II (Jan., 1974), 108.

new generation of the city. It is more than a simple "summer slump".⁵¹ Of the youth of the city Delbert Wiens writes, "Nor do they have the same hunger to climb.... They are more likely to be left with the uneasy feeling of never having risen to the top of anything."⁵² This is a marked contrast to their parents who moved to the city and made every effort to succeed and climb the mobile ladder.

Socially, upward mobility for Mennonites has meant the mushrooming of churches in suburbia. The perils encountered by a particular Mennonite church in Toronto is well illustrated by two psychologists, who observed that the convergence of group cohesiveness and interaction during the early years was dissipated when closer relationships evolved with one's associates at work or near one's home.⁵³ Leonard Siemens likewise recognized the peril in the freedom to choose one's Gemeinschaft group.

In the city a person is a member, at the same time, of many different groups: family, neighbourhood, church, club, Home and School, work, recreation, etc. But the life style of the individual will conform to the values of the primary or Gemeinschaft groups within which he most desires acceptance and status.⁵⁴

There is a social peril, therefore, in the pluralism offered by the city.

Perhaps even more hazardous to one's religious commitments are the perils of plurality which affect one's ideology. Leslie Stobbe, no

⁵¹ See L. Stobbe, "We Cannot Afford a Summer Slump", MO, II (June 29, 1956), p. 2. Stobbe observed then, "A phenomenon becoming increasingly more noticeable in Mennonite churches, especially in the city, is the summer slump in attendance and participation."

⁵² Wiens, ibid., p. 117.

⁵³ William Dyck and John Sawatsky, "Psycho-Social Changes Within a Metropolitan Religious Minority", ML, XXIII (Oct., 1968), pp. 172-176.

⁵⁴ Siemens, ibid., p. 17.

doubt, had such a peril in mind in his editorial in 1958,

Young people who enter the modern work-a-day world, be it in business, in education, in manufacturing or other fields, are exposed to much that their farmer-fathers never knew existed.⁵⁵

Peter Penner in the same year referred to the complexity of modernization which almost imperceptibly brings ideological sophistication, and this comes with the move to the city.

Our people--young married couples, teachers, single girls with their various careers, single men as students, technicians, labourers, and many middle-aged and even older people--are moving to towns and cities. There, especially in the larger centers, they take on a certain sophistication almost without knowing it. They become part of a complex way of life.... This professionalization and urbanization are forcing us to change.⁵⁶

In his essay, "From the Village to the City", Delbert Wiens explains that modern youth with its "openness to other sorts of realities ... are also more open to the spiritual and the occult than were previous generations".⁵⁷ However, the options of pluralism do not present perils alone, they also offer opportunities for good.

Viewing the City as a Frontier

Just as change, secularization, and education have both positive and negative forces which dialectically interact, so in urbanization there is an interplay of the perils and opportunities which make it an exciting frontier for church renewal. In fact, Paul Peachey argues,

⁵⁵ Leslie Stobbe, "Preparing for Life", MO, IV (Jan. 17, 1958), p. 2.

⁵⁶ Peter Penner, "The Heritage of M. B. Young People", MO, IV (May 30, 1958), p. 8.

⁵⁷ Wiens, ibid., p. 116.

... If the genius of Anabaptism is the creation and perpetuation of the distinct religious community, and is thus involved in social heterogeneity, then the urban environment provides a more congenial setting for a vital Anabaptism than does the rural.⁵⁸

A fuller understanding of the Mennonite Brethren response to urbanization must include such a view of the city to be a "congenial setting for a vital Anabaptism".

Individual voices articulate the challenge of the city. Amidst the numerous expressions of concern over the hazards of urbanism are the prophetic voices of Mennonite Brethren, who, while realizing the perils, also exploit the opportunity of this new frontier. In 1956, J. A. Toews discovered in the city opportunities for more systematic instruction (not having to contend with the roads and the weather of the country), for mission, and for banding together organizationally in joint projects.⁵⁹ A decade later, Calgary history professor, John B. Toews, rhetorically asked, "Have we really seen the city?" He particularly pointed to the religious challenge of urbanism.

... The rise of urbanism is a sign of what God is doing in our world and so provides a galaxy of new opportunities for the Church of our time. The Church can still be God's instrument if it learns to serve the city....

A mobile age calls for a mobile church, boldly innovating where it discerns a need.... we embrace the burdens of today's urban life and face its ghettos, crime, squalor and sophistication. We cannot help but be concerned about justice, love, suffering and exploitation.

⁵⁸ Paul Peachey, "Early Anabaptists and Urbanism", Proceedings of 10th CMECP, 1955, p. 82.

⁵⁹ J. A. Toews, "Die Stadtgemeinde in der Mennonitischen Bruderschaft", Voice, V (July-Aug., 1956), pp. 2, 3.

The city forces the church to diversity of action and structure. There is something for everyone to do and endless ways to do it. This does not mean the rejection of the institutional church, only a recognition of its varied structure.⁶⁰

In 1970, Leonard Siemens likewise found "justification for a positive attitude".⁶¹ He viewed the city as a symbol of cultural and technical progress with opportunities for health services, education, employment, cultural enrichment and religious participation well beyond what is offered in most rural areas and the "best opportunity to demonstrate the love of Christ to the aged, the dispossessed, the dependent, the lonely, the sick, and the needy...".⁶² He adds,

If we believe that God has been leading and guiding the movement of our people through time, then God is now calling us (some of us, not all of us) into the metropolitan mainstream of modern life. Rather than denounce and deplore, we should celebrate this achievement.⁶³

In a similar vein, Delbert Wiens sees future promise in the city.

At first glance, the city seems to be the well-nigh universal solvent, destroying community, dissolving ethics, denying greatness, under cutting the Scriptures and theology, and eradicating the sense of God.... But the city is not only Babel and Babylon. The city is also Jerusalem. Even in the Scriptures the future promise is--a city.⁶⁴

Finally, Edmund Janzen seeks for ways of overcoming "our inexperience in urban church ministry" and creatively adapting "new principles and pat-

⁶⁰ John B. Toews, "Have We Really Seen the City?" MBH, V (Nov. 25, 1966), pp. 4, 5.

⁶¹ Leonard Siemens, "To Be Christian in the 'Secular City'", Voice, XIX (Jan., 1970), p. 13.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Wiens, ibid., p. 147.

terns of ministry for the largely urban future that awaits us".⁶⁵ These spokesmen, representative of many others, view the urban opportunity (or "metropolitan remnant") as a "springboard"⁶⁶ for new frontiers of action.

The collective thrust of the church in response to the city. In summary, then, viewing the city as a frontier enables one, in a sociological analysis, positively, to find opportunity which would otherwise appear to have but pejorative overtones. The heterogeneity and plurality offered by the city means multiple exposure and an infinite variety of choice. While the possibility of overchoice exists, human choice is taken seriously, and, thus, one exercises the Anabaptist notion of voluntarism. Again, mobility, be it residential or upward social mobility, means increased accessibility. This also resembles the early Anabaptist movement with people of many professions penetrating the urban and rural areas in their zeal to witness or in their flight from persecution. Moreover, urbanism might help a tradition-bound, ethnically-inhibited church to overcome its staleness and ethnicity. As Paul Peachey maintains, true Anabaptism protests the ethnicizing of Christianity.⁶⁷ Finally, urbanization means liberation. The new freedom extends beyond enjoying the physical and socio-economic accoutrements of urban life. It bespeaks a

⁶⁵ Janzen, "The Church and the Urban Frontier", insert in MBH, XIII (Oct. 18, 1974), p. 35.

⁶⁶ See Leo Driedger, "Canadian Mennonite Urbanism: Ethnic Villagers or Metropolitan Remnant?" MQR, XLIX (July, 1975), 226-241.

⁶⁷ Peachey, "Early Anabaptism and Urbanism", p. 81. See also John E. Toews, "Where to, Mennonite Brethren...?" Christian Leader, XXIX (Jan. 6, 1976), p. 4. "To be Anabaptist necessitates the rejection of ethnicity as in any way determining Christian faith and Christian faithfulness."

worldview and a life-style which does not seek merely to conform to pressures of society. It dares to be radical; it dares to protest the conformity to a pagan society; it dares to be sectarian. It is not surprising that in the empirical observations, urbanization apparently was little threat to Anabaptism. It appears that the urban environment may provide a more congenial setting for vital Anabaptism.⁶⁸ However, there is not sufficient empirical evidence to demonstrate that urbanization has in fact achieved such re-vitalized Anabaptism.

Summary of the Fragility Hazards of Urbanization

The foregoing discussion has attempted to show how urbanization has increased the fragility of the religious commitment of Canadian Mennonite Brethren. It becomes apparent that urbanization does contribute to secularization, but it is by no means clear that the urbanization process seriously threatens the continuity of sectarianism, as Gibson Winter would intimate. Why sectarianism still persists becomes evident in a three-fold way.

First, understanding the process of urbanization and its particular occurrence in Mennonite Brethren history helps to explain the persistence of religiosity despite increased threat of erosion in recent times. The heterogeneous structures and dynamic processes implicit to urban residence account for accessibility to change and secularization. The increased freedom to choose and the plurality of life-styles from which to

⁶⁸ Ibid., p. 82.

choose results in greater voluntarism and more deliberate commitments. Moreover, the cultural qualities which constitute urbanity are not restricted to urban residence, as the residents of rural nonfarms indicate. Whether one understands secularization negatively, as a loss of religious commitment, or positively, as increased freedom, urbanization has contributed to secularization of Canadian Mennonite Brethren, especially since World War II. For example, from 1951 to 1971 the percentage of urban church membership doubled from 22 to 44 and by 1975 was at least 50. Although urban mentality lags behind urban residence, secularization has, no doubt, posed as a threat to an increasingly fragile religious commitment.

Next, the empirical data further disclose both increased secularization in some religious components and stubborn persistence in other variables. As expected, urbanization correlates positively with one's socio-economic status--the larger cities attract the more educated, the skilled and professional, and those with highest incomes. The correlation with religious variables is less unambiguous. The practice of religion, as measured by devotionism and associationalism, is less rigorous in urban than rural residence. Particularly in general orthodoxy and fundamentalist orthodoxy, it is the resident of the large city and the rural nonfarm whose beliefs are more relativized. Yet in the Anabaptist belief variable, the city residents are stronger than the rural. In the realm of ethics, it is the personal moral issues which urbanization relativizes, but not so in the social ethics, where urbanization makes no significant differences. Interestingly, the rural farm and small city residents are akin in religious beliefs and practice, even as rural non-

farm resembles more the large city resident. Residence in urban areas, therefore, tends towards secularization but is no guarantee of the same.

Finally, important to understand why sectarianism persists despite the secularizing effects of urbanization is a religious movement's self-conscious response to such urbanization. Initial fears and perceived consequences with physical, psychological, social, and ideological implications were counter-balanced by increasing awareness of an urban frontier which offered new freedoms and increased opportunities. Anxiety gave way to confidence, retreat from dangers was replaced with acceptance of the encounter with new challenges, and fragility hazards were viewed as potential sectarian strengths. Urbanization does indeed enhance secularization, but it also provides a stimulus that can reinforce fragile structures and eroding beliefs. Whether it will produce the evidence which will bear out the more positive assertions of recent Canadian Mennonite Brethren leadership remains a question for the future.

XII

OCCUPATIONAL CHANGE AND REORIENTATION

For most Canadian Mennonite Brethren in the second half of this century, the move to the city meant not only the abandonment of the farm residence but the adjustment to a new occupation.. With the new urban generation, there was a marked occupational change. The grandparents of the generation now coming of age usually were immigrant farmers of the mid-twenties or the offspring of American settlers of the early decades of this century. Many of these, now elderly people retired in the city, continued to be farmers for the duration of their working days. For some, it meant vocational change, for others it required the reorientation that urban residence brings with it. The parents of this present generation had their moorings in rurality, but chose occupations suited to urban residence. For them the rural-urban shift necessitated occupational change in addition to the usual adaptations to urban residence. The effects of occupational change are probably most noticeable among this group of parents, many of whom have acquired the life-style of the "secular city". The new generation is largely urban and has naturally assimilated those qualities of urban living which their parents consciously sought to imbibe. The present chapter focuses on the secularizing impact of such change in occupations which accompanies the shift from rural to urban residence.

The order of these chapters--education, urbanization, occupation--

represents a causal relationship. It is conceivable that there first could have been an occupational change (such as from farm to factory), which required the move to the city and which then also offered educational opportunities (by extension or adult education). No doubt, this could be documented. It is also conceivable that the move to the city could come first, (on account of immigration or bankruptcy during the depression), which was then followed by either vocational change or education within the city. This chapter assumes the more probable course of history for most Canadian Mennonite Brethren of the mid-century decades: from a rural background, they came to the city to study with possibly a change of occupation in mind; eventually, they lost their rural ties and adopted an occupation requiring urban residence. The occupation, thus, follows both education and urbanization. All the while, the religious person needs to respond to the changing life-styles and the plurality of worldviews to which such education, urbanization, and occupation expose him. Before exploring the consequences of such change and reorientation, it may be well to survey further the background to this change.

1. Some Background Perspectives

Two perspectives will furnish further background to understand the empirical documentation which then follows and to interpret the degree of secularization. The first is historical, while the second is more psychological and analytical.

Historical Considerations

Canadian Mennonite Brethren have a unique historical background which helps explain the large-scale shift from rural to urban vocations.

Loosening the moorings (pre-1925). For those whose moorings were deeply rooted in rurality because of their settlement in Manitoba and Saskatchewan in the early decades of the century, the occupational shift came less abruptly. With the immigration in the 1920's, the Canadian Mennonite Brethren membership tripled in number, and the majority were, therefore, not only immigrant in background but had experienced political revolution, socio-economic upheaval, and spiritual renewal.¹ Their agrarian village moorings in Russia had been thoroughly uprooted through these crises. Moreover, their choice of becoming farmers in Canada was determined largely out of economic necessity. Despite their survival of the depression, the payment of their Reiseschuld, and their favorable progress in farming, their moorings in rurality had been loosened and as a people they were readily prepared to opt for a change in the predominant vocation.

Breaking the boundaries (1925-50). For a few Mennonite Brethren, the break with the rural village took place with immigration in the mid-twenties. A number of families settled in Kitchener and Winnipeg.² For

¹Supra, pp. 127-28, 130-31.

²E. K. Francis observed that "the majority of Winnipeg Mennonites were of the Russlaender group, a considerable proportion of whom had belonged to the urban rather than rural classes in the Old Country. These, of course, had an understandable desire to remain in the city upon their arrival, despite all restrictions imposed on them by the immigration authorities, or to drift back to the metropolitan area as soon as these restrictions no longer applied to them" (In Search of Utopia, p. 249).

others the early years on an isolated farm or homestead in the newly adopted land proved to be too demanding. They too left for the city.³

The Mennonite Collegiate Institute of Gretna attracted still others, especially those who had been teachers in Russia, and these, after a year of normal school training, became teachers in rural Manitoba. The principal of the private school at Gretna, H. H. Ewert, depicted the difficulty faced by such immigrant teachers in an appeal for financial help in which he notes, in May of 1925, that twenty persons had already been assisted. He explains,

A number of them did not only arrive in Canada deprived of all, but have made debts to expedite their immigration.

These teachers have prepared themselves for their vocation through long years of study, and it is their heart's desire to serve in this vocation in their new home. Moreover, they must learn the official language which requires two to three years of study. But where will they find the means? They are poor as church mice and cannot save in such unfavorable conditions in Canada despite their willingness to work. Foreign workers are not readily hired by factories, and in a few months' time one can earn only a little on the farm. It would take many years for such a teacher with a family to save sufficient to attend school for several years. In the meantime, he would be too old to learn a new language well.⁴

The determination of the few to become teachers is but prophetic of the many in the next generation who chose this profession. During the depression and drought of the 1930's, some farmers abandoned their farms in their struggle for economic survival.⁵ World War II proved to be a

³Supra, p. 408. Note the reasons given by E. K. Francis, In Search of Utopia, p. 210.

⁴See H. H. Ewert, "Die Lage der kuerzlich aus Russland eingewanderten Lehrer", MR, XLVIII (May 27, 1925), p. 7.

⁵E. K. Francis notes the observation of Professor Dawson in his

further event which helped to unsettle Mennonites. Many otherwise farm-bound young men, as conscientious objectors, served in alternative service camps removed from kith and kin. Others joined the non-combatant medical corps or even the army. A goodly number of these CO's, once released from duties, had acquired other occupational goals than farming. A number of today's ministers, teachers, professors, business administrators, and doctors are such former CO's.⁶ Most Mennonite Brethren were still rural in residence by 1950, but numerous families had already settled in larger cities, and many young people had broken their ties with their fathers' farming occupation.

Exploring new horizons (1950-75). In a study of six congregations of the General Conference Mennonites in central United States, J. Lloyd Spaulding discovered that in the decade 1946 to 1956 the percentage of non-farming occupations increased from 40 to 53.⁷ As a result of a study of General Conference Mennonites in 1960, Leland Harder observed that "when the members of a sect group leave the farm, they tend to move into non-manual occupations more frequently than into manual. Moreover, within the non-manual group, members of the sect gravitate toward the profes-

Group Settlements: Ethnic Communities in Western Canada in 1936, namely, that Mennonites better than other ethnic groups met the economic landslide by reverting to an economy of self-sufficiency and that they made the transition more quickly and more painlessly than others. Dawson asserted, "There is no doubt that this adaptability is of great advantage to them in weathering periods of economic stress." See In Search of Utopia, p. 217.

⁶ See George Derksen, "Christian as Construction Worker", MO, V (February 20, 1959), p. 5, in which a Winnipeg construction manager is depicted as "from forest service as conscientious objector to head of a construction firm building a house per day".

⁷ Paul Peachey, The Church in the City, p. 77.

sional category much more frequently than to the proprietor, clerical, or sales categories".⁸ Similar trends prevail among Canadian Mennonite Brethren. Evidence supports Cornelius Krahn's observation that "the first acceptable occupation of rural Mennonites was usually the teaching profession, which was followed by nursing, the healing physician and gradually other occupations".⁹ Although fragmentary, the documentation for Mennonite Brethren is significant.

Reporting to the Canadian Conference in 1955, Peter Bargaen noted that of 619 graduates of Mennonite Brethren private high schools (excluding Eden Christian College, for which the data were not available), information about their occupation was supplied for 449 graduates as follows: teachers - 194; nursing - 35; medicine - 19; engineering - 9; farming - 25; business - 45; missions - 4; housewives - 32; studying at University - 32; studying at College - 11; studying in Bible schools - 43.¹⁰ This study indicated that 44% of the graduates became teachers and only 6% farmers in the early 1950's. In the same year, Abe Konrad made reference to over 100 Mennonite public school teachers in British Columbia.¹¹ Two years later, Frank Froese reported that 91 of the 448 students in the Manitoba Provincial Normal School were Mennonites, of whom 96% were from

⁸ Leland Harder, The Quest for Equilibrium, p. 246.

⁹ Cornelius Krahn, "Research on Urban Mennonites", ML, XXIII (October, 1968), 190.

¹⁰ Peter Bargaen, "Bericht ueber die Hochschulen unserer Konferenz", YB, 1955, p. 11.

¹¹ Abe Konrad, "B. C. Teachers' Witness Expands", MO, I (Sept. 21, 1955), p. 3.

outside of Winnipeg.¹² This trend to teaching was further documented in 1969 by the twenty-fifth anniversary publication of Mennonite Brethren Bible College which provided a vocational breakdown for 472 of the 565 graduates as follows: teachers - 257; pastors - 68; missionaries - 55; nurses - 19; housewives - 18; others - 55.¹³

The occupational shift to other than teaching vocations becomes evident from several further sources. In 1963 the Mennonite Brethren Herald featured a series of nine testimonies by laymen on "how to live their faith in their vocation".¹⁴ These testimonies by a research scientist, retail merchant, high school teacher, secretary, musician, educational administrator, medical doctor, nurse, and engineer are indicative of the vocational penetration of Mennonite Brethren into their host society. The extent to which numerous vocations are represented in church leadership becomes apparent from the 1963 delegate breakdown for the Canadian Conference at Herbert, Saskatchewan.¹⁵ Of 358 delegates, 110 were farmers, 68 pastors, 44 public school teachers, 38 businessmen, 22 retired, 19 laborers and clerks, 13 professionals (other than teachers), 10 Bible school teachers, and 34 not indicated.¹⁶ More precisely, analy-

¹² Frank Froese, "Teaching Attracts Mennonites", MO, III (June 21, 1957), p. 2.

¹³ Twenty-fifth Anniversary Publication of Mennonite Brethren Bible College, 1944-1969 (Winnipeg, MBBC, 1969), p. 60.

¹⁴ MBH, II (March 8, 1963, to May 17, 1963).

¹⁵ It should be noted that South Saskatchewan is largely rural and local representation is proportionately the heaviest at these annual conferences.

¹⁶ MB, 1963, p. 128.

sing the vocations of those in the 66-member Council of Boards (including all boards of Canadian Mennonite Brethren Conference), John H. Redekop found no farmer, but, instead, 24 educators, 19 pastors, 12 businessmen, 2 mission directors, 2 students, and 1 each for lawyer, retired minister, civil servant, public relations, and hospital administrator.¹⁷ Noting the 51 vocations represented among the 400 members of his congregation, F. C. Peters asserted that not only was the age of occupational conformity over, but that such specialization and diversification had created a multiplicity of worlds in which "the secularization process began reaching into the church".¹⁸

Motivation for Vocational Change

It is virtually impossible to document the reasons which motivated Mennonite Brethren to enter the wide variety of vocations. A change is usually legitimated by recourse to "fulfilling the will of God in his life", as Leslie Stobbe piously explained his own shift from being editor of the Mennonite Observer to becoming a teacher.

... Teachers enter the pastorate, pastors enter teaching, medical doctors become full-time Bible teachers, businessmen enter into an evangelistic ministry, chemists become missionaries, successful public workers enter a radio ministry--all are changes that often raise questions. Yet until results and the experience of the years prove otherwise, we cannot but accept these as from the Lord. If the person making the change is sincere and really

¹⁷ John H. Redekop, "The Council of Boards", MBH, XIV (March 7, 1975), p. 8.

¹⁸ F. C. Peters, "Two Worlds", Voice, XX (July, 1971), 21-23.

desirous of fulfilling the will of God in his life, who are we to doubt the advisability of the change?¹⁹

Despite the failure to disclose ~~all the reasons~~ which prompt such change in their vocational life, several educators have speculated on the reasons why many chose to become teachers. These reasons are mainly three-fold.

The economic reason. There is no doubt that, despite the modest remuneration of teachers in the 1950's, the security provided by a steady income lured many to the profession. Just at the time when hundreds of Mennonite Brethren were entering the teaching profession, educator J. H. Quiring presented the "challenge of the public school" as "a field of service with adequate remuneration".²⁰ Quiring realized that "if anyone is governed by the profit motive in the choice of his profession, he will most likely not go into teaching.... The Christian teacher is not governed by the profit motive but rather by the service motive".²¹ At the same time, he recognized that even the teachers "have to provide for themselves and their dependents. A Christian teacher must have a field of service and he must be able to make a living. These two go together".²² The predominance of the economic motive among teachers was admitted by one young teacher in 1956, who exhorted his colleagues, "Young teachers are sometimes much too anxious about salary, modern conveniences, fringe

¹⁹ Leslie Stobbe, "When Change Comes...", MO, V (Aug. 21, 1959), p.2.

²⁰ J. H. Quiring, "The Challenge of the Public School", Voice, I (May-June, 1952), 15.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid.

benefits, etc. But where are the willing lives that God wants to use in these remote areas?"²³

The social reason. A more subtle reason, explicitly stated by only a few, is the possibility that teaching leads to upward social mobility. The educational requirement and the added prestige, together with financial security, provided for many a higher socio-economic status than their parents had enjoyed. Indeed, for many teaching became a stepping-stone to higher education and even further vocational change. For example, William Schroeder remarked to his fellow-teachers, "... Many teachers are less missionary-minded than mercenary-minded, and so regard teaching as an easy stepping-stone to another profession."²⁴ Teaching was but the first step in their vertical mobility.

The religious reason. Most prominent in the stated reasons is the religious factor. J. H. Quiring alluded to several such religious reasons in his five-fold challenge to the Christian teacher. The influence he can exercise upon children is of paramount significance. "The public school teacher gets the children when they are still teachable, pliable, and easily influenced."²⁵ In addition, the teacher provides leadership in the community. Quiring observed,

There have also been instances where teachers have silently and

²³ Abe Konrad, "Missionary-minded Teachers Wanted", MO, II (June 25, 1956), p. 10.

²⁴ William Schroeder, "The Teacher as a Missionary", MO, V (Dec. 4, 1959), p. 10.

²⁵ Quiring, ibid., p. 15.

unobtrusively prepared the soil for the establishment of a mission in communities that were without a gospel ministry.²⁶

Moreover, Quiring argues, it is through his personality that the Christian most influences the young lives. It is the role of the teacher as a "witness" or "missionary" that ostensibly caused many to choose this vocation. In his guidelines to choosing a profession,²⁷ J. A. Toews asked Mennonite Brethren young people in 1955, "Does this profession provide opportunities for a positive Christian witness?"²⁷ In his address in 1959 to his fellow Christian teachers in Manitoba, William Schroeder emphasized that, in addition to the influence upon the student and the community, is the "missionary outreach beyond our Mennonite circles".²⁸ Educator Abe Konrad reported such an expansion of witness in British Columbia through the teaching profession.

These teachers are going to the isolated fishing villages and logging communities along the rugged coastline of the Pacific from Vancouver to Port Simpson. They go to the farming areas and the mining camps in the Kootenay and Okanagan Valleys and among the Cascade Mts., even teaching among the notorious Doukhobors. They go north to the ranchlands and grain-growing areas of the Caribou and the Peace River. And they go to the fur-trapping areas of the northern rivers and up to the rim of the Arctic Circle.... They declare it is the "inner compulsion" to serve the Lord in a special way that motivates their going.²⁹

No doubt, similar reasons have motivated Mennonite Brethren young people to enter other vocations, be they nursing, medicine, business, law, or

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ J. A. Toews, "Choosing a Profession", Voice, IV (July-August, 1955), 10. Also printed in K-J, XI (Sept.-Oct., 1955), pp. 3-4.

²⁸ William Schroeder, ibid., p. 10.

²⁹ Abe Konrad, "B. C. Teachers' Witness Expands", MO, I (Sept. 21, 1955), p. 3.

the service occupations. Mennonite Brethren seemingly had gained a new understanding of Luther's conception of "the calling", that is, "the valuation of the fulfilment of duty in worldly affairs as the highest form which the moral activity of the individual could assume. This it was which inevitably gave every-day worldly activity a religious significance...."³⁰

2. Empirical Observations on Occupational Distribution and Variables of Religiosity

Numerous specific observations indicate occupational change among Canadian Mennonite Brethren in the last half century; yet, in order to measure the degree of shift from the farming occupations to others, precise, empirical documentation for two or more separate periods of time is lacking. However, the Church Member Profile does provide empirical data for the occupational distribution of Mennonite Brethren in 1972 and enables one, consequently, to establish some tentative generalizations about the religiosity of different occupational groups.

Occupational Variation among Canadian Mennonite Brethren

While the cross-tabulation of church members by sex and occupation does not instantly reflect the implications of such variables upon religiosity, the male-female occupational roles become clearer, and this distribution of roles does have religious implications. For example, a woman

³⁰ Max Weber, The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism, p. 80.

who is employed has more exposure to certain influences of society, and her dominant role in the household is very likely to change. Kauffman and Harder observe that when Mennonites leave the farm, they tend to go into business and professional occupations.³¹ Table XII-1 indicates such occupational distribution of Canadian Mennonite Brethren.³² Among the employed, the professional and technical workers are, in fact, the largest single group with about 14% of the total membership. Together with the business occupations, they constitute about one-fifth of the total membership. The next largest group among the employed is the farmers with about 13%. The sales and clerical workers together with the craftsmen and foremen comprise about 12%. Interestingly, service workers, machine operators, and laborers together constitute but 8.5% of the total membership. Those not officially employed, such as housewives and students, on the other hand, make up almost half the membership. Total rural residence was earlier shown to be 49.9%. Even the strictly rural farm residence of 30.1% is still in excess of twice the number of farmers by occupation (twice, in order to include the wives as rural residents). In other words, a number of those in rural residence have other than farming occupations. The traditional male-female roles are still largely observed, however, since none of those listed as business owners or managers, craftsmen, laborers, and farmers were women. Yet, half of the sales and clerical

³¹ Kauffman and Harder, AFCL, p. 60.

³² The occupations listed represent United States census categories rather than Canadian simply because the Church Member Profile, while including Canada, was American based. Each respondent was asked to indicate his or her present chief occupation. A retired or unemployed respondent was asked to indicate the former occupation.

Table XII-1

Distribution of Church Members by Sex and Occupation

OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORIES	PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF MEMBERS		COLUMN PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL
	MALE	FEMALE	
Professional and technical workers*	79.2 n=38	20.8 n=10	14.1 n=48
Business owners and managers	100.0 n=18	0.0 n=0	5.3 n=18
Sales and clerical workers	50.0 n=10	50.0 n=10	5.9 n=20
Craftsmen and foremen	100.0 n=21	0.0 n=0	6.2 n=21
Farm owners and managers	100.0 n=44	0.0 n=0	12.9 n=44
Service workers	60.0 n=6	40.0 n=4	2.9 n=10
Machine operators	73.3 n=11	26.7 n=4	4.4 n=15
Laborers (farm and nonfarm)	100.0 n=4	0.0 n=0	1.2 n=4
Housewives	0.0 n=0	100.0 n=108	31.8 n=108
Students	40.4 n=21	59.6 n=31	15.3 n=52
TOTAL	50.9 n=173	49.1 n=167	100.0 n=340

SOURCE: Church Member Profile, 1972.

*LEGEND: Occupational categories were further elaborated in the questionnaire as follows:

Professional or technical worker (minister, physician, teacher, social worker, engineer, librarian, educator, scientist, etc.)

Proprietor, manager, or official (business owner or operator, department manager, official of public or private business or agency, etc.)

Clerical and sales worker (office worker, clerk, salesman, postman, etc.)

Craftsman or foreman (carpenter, mechanic, die cutter, tailor, etc.)

Service worker (barber, beautician, cook, guard, policeman, restaurant waiter, fireman, janitor, etc.)

Machine operator (truck or bus driver, press operator, welder, seamstress, factory worker, etc.)

Laborer (farm laborer, construction work helper, car washer, etc.)

workers, almost half of the service workers, about one-fifth of the professionals, and 60% of the students are female. Thus, the sex role among white-collar occupations is in a state of flux. With this change there will likely be a change in religious attitudes and beliefs as well. Such possible change will now be tested.

Occupational Distribution and Measures of Religiosity

To determine the differences in the effect of occupations upon religion, similar measures of religiosity are employed in the present as in the previous two chapters. As in chapter eleven, the questions used for the items measuring the variables of religion are abbreviated to single words or phrases.

Occupational distribution and the practice of religion. Table XII-2 indicates the cross-tabulations for occupational distribution and measures of devotionism and associationalism, referred to in this study as the practice of religion. It would appear that in devotionism, housewives, professionals, and farmers rank the highest--in that order--, while craftsmen, businessmen and laborers rank lowest. In associationalism, professionals, students, housewives, farmers and businessmen rank highest with laborers, clerical and service personnel the lowest. The cumulative effect in the practice of religion seems to be as follows: professionals and housewives rank highest, followed by farmers and students; and the laborers, clericals, and craftsmen rank lowest. Such data lead one to generalize about the tendency of different occupations to secularization. Professionals, possibly, rank highest in the practice of religion because of their leadership skills and prior selectivity of those with commitment,

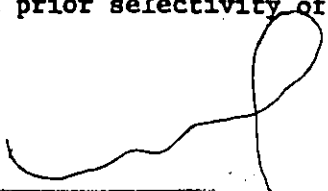


Table XII-2

Occupational Distribution and the Practice of Religion

ITEMS MEASURING PRACTICE OF RELIGION	PERCENTAGE COLUMN RESPONSE									
	PROF.	BUS.	CLER.	CRFT.	FARM	SERV.	OPER.	LAB.	HSWF.	STUD.
DEVOTIONALISM										
Prayer	86.3 n=44	84.2 n=16	81.0 n=17	81.8 n=18	84.4 n=38	70.0 n=7	93.8 n=15	75.0 n=3	91.6 n=98	86.8 n=46
Bible study	88.2 n=45	68.4 n=13	85.0 n=17	68.2 n=15	86.7 n=39	80.0 n=8	75.0 n=12	75.0 n=3	89.8 n=97	77.4 n=41
Closeness to God	60.8 n=31	47.4 n=9	47.6 n=10	45.5 n=10	62.8 n=27	60.0 n=6	62.5 n=10	66.7 n=2	64.5 n=69	50.9 n=27
Seeking God's will	80.0 n=40	68.4 n=13	70.0 n=14	61.9 n=13	66.7 n=28	80.0 n=8	62.5 n=10	50.0 n=2	79.4 n=85	60.4 n=32
RANK ORDER SCALE	31	15	20	9	27	21	24	16	36	19
ASSOCIATIONALISM										
Church attendance	86.3 n=44	89.5 n=17	66.7 n=14	81.8 n=18	81.4 n=75	77.8 n=7	81.3 n=13	75.0 n=3	83.2 n=89	90.6 n=48
S. S. attendance	64.7 n=33	57.9 n=11	28.6 n=6	50.0 n=11	66.7 n=30	40.0 n=4	56.3 n=9	25.0 n=1	68.9 n=73	88.7 n=47
Mid-week services	45.1 n=23	15.8 n=3	23.8 n=5	40.9 n=9	43.2 n=19	30.0 n=3	25.0 n=4	25.0 n=1	41.3 n=45	71.7 n=38
Leadership post	88.2 n=45	73.7 n=14	57.1 n=12	57.1 n=12	53.5 n=23	50.0 n=5	60.0 n=9	25.0 n=1	51.9 n=56	46.2 n=24
RANK ORDER SCALE	34	25	11	22	26	14	20	8	27	32
TOTAL RANK ORDER	65	40	31	31	53	35	44	24	63	51

SOURCE: Church Member Profile, 1972.

and housewives on account of their greater religious sensitivity or their seclusion from the "secular" world. Farmers appear to be less secularized, and, surprisingly, students are actively involved despite their academic pursuits. Such religious vitality among students augurs well for the

religious persistence of the sect. As in other studies, the blue-collar groups rank lower in the practice of religion.

Occupational distribution and religious beliefs. Table XII-3¹ summarizes the cross-tabulations for occupational distribution and measures of religious beliefs. In general orthodoxy, the machine operators and laborers are conspicuously the highest, followed by housewives, while students are somewhat lower, followed by business and professionals. Interestingly, in the case of Jesus' resurrection, His personal return, and the reality of a personal devil, there is virtually total belief, the students being the principal group with some lack of certitude. Not surprising, those who rate highest in fundamentalist orthodoxy are machine operators and housewives, followed by farmers and laborers. Those who rate lowest are the professionals and sales and clerical personnel, followed by the business managers. Again, it is astonishing to note how nearly total is the belief in the inspiration of the Bible and in the virgin birth of Jesus, the students again being the major exception. As expected, for the Anabaptism variable there is much greater diversity and less assent. Farmers and machine operators rank highest, followed by professionals. The students, here, rank lowest. Rather ironic is the observation that, while the question on church discipline elicits rather high favorable response (87.0%) for the Anabaptism measures, only 57.5% of Canadian Mennonite Brethren agree or strongly agree that "Jesus expects Christians today to follow the pattern which he set in his own life and ministry, including such things as putting evangelism above earning a living, and deeds of mercy above family security". Summarizing the above responses to the variables of belief, one notes that machine operators

Table XII-3

Occupational Distribution and Religious Beliefs

ITEMS MEASURING RELIGIOUS BELIEFS	PERCENTAGE COLUMN RESPONSE									
	PROF.	BUS.	CLER.	CRFT.	FARM	SERV.	OPER.	LAB.	HSWF.	STUD.
ORTHODOXY										
Deity of Jesus	90.2	94.7	95.2	95.5	97.8	100.0	100.0	100.0	98.1	96.2
	n=46	n=18	n=20	n=21	n=44	n=10	n=10	n=10	n=106	n=51
Belief in miracles	96.1	94.7	100.0	95.5	95.5	90.0	100.0	100.0	99.1	96.2
	n=49	n=18	n=21	n=21	n=42	n=9	n=16	n=4	n=107	n=51
Jesus' resurrection	98.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	98.1	92.5
	n=50	n=19	n=21	n=21	n=44	n=10	n=16	n=3	n=105	n=49
Jesus' return	98.0	94.7	95.2	100.0	97.8	100.0	100.0	100.0	99.1	98.1
	n=50	n=18	n=20	n=22	n=44	n=10	n=16	n=4	n=108	n=52
Personal devil	98.0	100.0	90.5	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	96.2
	n=50	n=19	n=19	n=22	n=45	n=10	n=16	n=4	n=109	n=51
RANK ORDER SCALE	15	13	18	22	20	24	31	31	27	9
FUNDAMENTALISM										
Inspiration/Bible	96.1	94.7	81.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	99.1	92.5
	n=49	n=18	n=17	n=22	n=45	n=10	n=16	n=4	n=108	n=49
Virgin birth	96.1	94.7	100.0	100.0	97.7	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	96.2
	n=49	n=18	n=21	n=22	n=42	n=10	n=16	n=4	n=109	n=51
Six-day creation	13.7	47.4	23.8	50.0	68.2	60.0	75.0	100.0	72.2	35.8
	n=7	n=9	n=5	n=11	n=30	n=6	n=12	n=4	n=78	n=19
Universal flood	84.3	84.2	90.5	95.5	97.8	100.0	100.0	100.0	98.2	84.9
	n=43	n=16	n=19	n=21	n=44	n=10	n=16	n=4	n=107	n=45
Eternal punishment	80.4	84.2	71.4	81.4	86.7	80.0	87.5	75.0	92.6	86.8
	n=41	n=16	n=15	n=18	n=39	n=8	n=14	n=3	n=100	n=46
RANK ORDER SCALE	13	15	13	26	30	28	37	31	35	19
ANABAPTISM										
Following Jesus	62.7	36.8	65.0	50.0	70.5	40.0	53.3	75.0	58.3	47.2
	n=19	n=7	n=13	n=11	n=31	n=4	n=8	n=3	n=63	n=25
Against infant baptism	96.1	94.7	90.0	77.3	86.7	80.0	87.5	100.0	86.9	86.8
	n=49	n=18	n=18	n=17	n=39	n=8	n=14	n=4	n=93	n=46
Church discipline	90.2	100.0	70.0	100.0	97.7	90.0	100.0	75.0	88.9	66.0
	n=46	n=19	n=14	n=22	n=42	n=9	n=16	n=3	n=96	n=35
Non-resistance	74.5	57.9	57.9	63.6	80.0	50.0	75.0	50.0	67.9	49.1
	n=38	n=11	n=11	n=14	n=36	n=5	n=12	n=2	n=74	n=26
Non-swearing of oaths	84.3	73.7	60.0	90.9	93.2	90.0	93.8	50.0	78.0	73.6
	n=43	n=14	n=12	n=20	n=41	n=9	n=15	n=2	n=85	n=36
RANK ORDER SCALE	36	25	24	27	38	18	38	25	27	12
TOTAL RANK ORDER	64	53	55	75	88	70	106	87	89	40

Source: Church Member Profile, 1972.

are almost consistently the most conservative in religious beliefs. Does their reliance on well-built machines result in a firm commitment to religious belief, or is it that they are simply not exposed to other viewpoints? Housewives, farmers, and laborers come next. The category of "housewife", of course, includes only about two-thirds of the total number of females who responded (108/167), excluding those in the professions and sales and clerical workers. In beliefs, it is the students who are distinctly lowest, followed by business and clerical occupations. It appears, at this point, that the blue-collar occupations are the more conservative (less secularized) in religious beliefs despite their lower scores on religious practice.

Occupational distribution and ethics. Table XII-4 shows the results of cross-tabulating occupations with measures of ethics. Responding to those personal, moral issues traditionally viewed as taboo among Mennonite Brethren, the service occupations were most conservative, followed by machine operators and laborers, again the blue-collar class. The lowest in rank were the students, followed by clerical and professional categories (the white-collared). In social ethics, a high score for which represents a more liberal ethical stance, the students rank highest, followed by a cluster of professional, clerical, service occupations and machine operators (a mixture of white-collar and blue-collar). The lowest level was noted among business managers, farmers and housewives. The overall effect of balancing the conservative, personal ethical measure with the more liberal, social ethical measure is the absence of great extremes. Yet, despite the leveling effect, service workers and machine operators tend to be least secularized, while business managers and sales and clerical

Table XII-4

Occupational Distribution and Ethics

ITEMS MEASURING ETHICS	PERCENTAGE COLUMN RESPONSE									
	PROF.	BUS.	CLER.	CRFT.	FARM	SERV.	OPER.	LAB.	HSWF.	STUD.
PERSONAL										
Drinking moderately	29.4 n=15	36.8 n=7	28.6 n=6	52.4 n=11	75.6 n=34	90.0 n=9	60.0 n=9	25.0 n=1	66.4 n=71	30.8 n=16
Smoking tobacco	78.4 n=40	73.7 n=14	66.7 n=14	100.0 n=22	86.7 n=39	100.0 n=10	86.7 n=13	75.0 n=3	86.7 n=91	54.7 n=29
Adult-rated movies	28.0 n=14	21.1 n=4	38.1 n=8	68.2 n=15	75.6 n=34	70.0 n=7	86.7 n=13	66.7 n=2	62.0 n=67	30.2 n=16
Premarital sex	94.0 n=47	100.0 n=19	90.5 n=19	90.5 n=19	97.7 n=43	100.0 n=10	100.0 n=16	100.0 n=4	99.1 n=105	90.6 n=48
Social dancing	44.0 n=22	52.6 n=10	61.9 n=13	59.1 n=13	79.5 n=35	90.0 n=9	86.7 n=13	100.0 n=4	78.5 n=84	35.8 n=19
RANK ORDER SCALE	16	19	14	27	36	43	38	28	31	12
SOCIAL										
Race relations	58.8 n=30	47.4 n=9	61.9 n=13	52.4 n=11	37.8 n=17	70.0 n=7	73.3 n=11	50.0 n=2	48.6 n=53	84.9 n=45
Social welfare	37.3 n=19	26.3 n=5	33.3 n=7	45.5 n=10	26.7 n=12	44.4 n=4	33.3 n=4	25.0 n=1	40.2 n=43	49.1 n=26
Anti-Communism	60.8 n=31	15.8 n=3	14.3 n=3	18.4 n=4	16.7 n=7	0.0 n=0	25.0 n=4	25.0 n=1	3.7 n=4	24.5 n=13
Labor unions	2.0 n=1	5.3 n=1	9.5 n=2	0.0 n=0	22.2 n=10	20.0 n=2	7.1 n=1	25.0 n=1	19.4 n=21	3.8 n=2
Capital punishment	23.5 n=12	10.5 n=2	38.1 n=8	14.3 n=3	4.4 n=2	11.1 n=1	7.1 n=1	0.0 n=0	6.4 n=7	34.0 n=18
RANK ORDER SCALE	32	17	30	28	20	31	30	24	22	39
TOTAL RANK ORDER	48	36	44	55	56	74	68	52	53	51
SOURCE: Church Member Profile, 1972.										

personnel are most secularized. Again, there appears to be a marked difference between the blue-collar and white-collar occupations.

Summary of Empirical Findings

Table XII-5 summarizes the totals of the scales for each measure of religiosity. If these scales constitute true measures of religiosity, then of the ten occupational groups measured, the machine operator is the most religious, followed by the housewife and the farmer. It may well be that these groups represent those least exposed to the changes in society. If a lack of a high rating constitutes secularization, then among the

Table XII-5

Summary of Scales of Occupational Distribution and Measures of Religiosity

VARIABLES OF RELIGIOSITY	TOTALS OF RANK ORDER RATINGS									
	PROF.	BUS.	CLER.	CRFT.	FARM	SERV.	OPER.	LAB.	HSWF.	STUD.
PRACTICE OF RELIGION										
Devotionalism	31	15	20	9	27	21	24	16	36	19
Association-alism	34	25	11	22	26	14	20	8	27	32
SUB-TOTALS	65	40	31	31	53	35	44	24	63	51
RELIGIOUS BELIEFS										
Orthodoxy	15	13	18	22	20	24	31	31	27	9
Fundamentalism	13	15	13	26	30	28	37	31	35	19
Anabaptism	36	25	24	27	38	18	38	25	27	12
SUB-TOTALS	64	53	55	75	88	70	106	87	89	40
ETHICS										
Moral Issues	16	19	14	27	36	43	38	28	31	12
Social ethics	32	17	30	28	20	31	30	24	22	39
SUB-TOTALS	48	36	44	55	56	74	68	52	53	51
TOTALS	177	129	130	161	197	179	218	163	205	142

SOURCE: Church Member Profile, 1972.

occupational groups, the business owners and managers are the most secular, followed by sales and clerical personnel and student groups. The results, although not unambiguous, do suggest that the white-collared occupations are more secularized. As a result, one concludes that the occupational change from rural to urban areas has enhanced secularization. A closer analysis of this secularization process is, therefore, in place.

3. Reorientation and Secularization

The occupational change that accompanied the shift from rural to urban residence did expose the urbanite to new erosive and secularizing forces. At the same time, the urban resident was being fortified to resist the secularization and through his new vocation penetrate society with his Christian witness. The analyst must, therefore, note both the disruptive effects of vocational change as well as the countervailing, synthetic forces which arrest the secularization process.

Secularizing Effects of Occupational Change

If secularization is viewed positively as freeing man from the rule of the sacral order and allowing him to choose God personally, then such freedom also allows other choices. Consequently, the secularizing effects of occupational change which accompanied the move to the city have both positive and negative consequences.

Residential mobility and religious defection. Residential mobility, necessitated by vocational change or promotion, provides the church member with new opportunities to improve his lot economically, to enter

into new experiences within the religious community, and to influence his new neighborhood and associates at work. Frequently, however, the residential shift from one location to another has given occasion for religious defection. John Redekop poses the question as follows:

Why is it that so many of our church members, including some who for years have clung tenaciously to every big and little point in our M. B. doctrine, are so ready to cast all denominational attachments overboard for a better job? The slightest promotion seems to justify a move to a town where there is no M. B. church.

It bothers me to see someone who just a few years ago gladly pledged acceptance of our denominational doctrine, suddenly, and apparently with little hesitation, sever all connections.³³

Table XII-6 compares the annual transfers-in with the transfers-out for Canadian Mennonite Brethren over a period of twenty years, 1954 to 1974.³⁴

It appears that the Canadian Mennonite Brethren are very much caught up in the "circulation of the saints" syndrome.³⁵ For example, in 1964 when there was a net loss in membership, the transfers-out exceeded the transfers-in by 340. In 1969, when there was a high net gain in membership, the transfers-out were somewhat fewer than transfers-in.³⁶ Also, an increasing

³³ John Redekop, "The Apparent Irrelevance of Doctrine", MBH, III (June 5, 1964), p. 2.

³⁴ Table XII-6 does not include all the membership data for an analysis of the total growth. Here the comparison is on transfers into the church with transfers out of the church.

³⁵ Reginald W. Bibby and Marlin B. Brinkerhoff, "The Circulation of the Saints: A Study of People Who Join Conservative Churches", (Sept., 1973), 273-282. The authors' study of proselyte-minded churches of a Western Canadian city suggest that growth occurs through a circulation process because of the mobility of members across denominational lines within the evangelical churches. The findings show that 72% of the membership additions came through reaffiliation, 18% through birth-type conversions, and 9% through proselyte-type conversion.

³⁶ Referring to the years just prior to 1974, Kansas Mennonite

Table XII-6

A Comparison of Transfers-in with Transfers-out for Canadian
Mennonite Brethren from 1954 to 1974

CATEGORY	1954	1959	1964	1969	1974
Transfers out					
- to M. B. churches	647	769	976	580	735
- to non-M. B. churches	30	105	136	204	160
- to no churches	--	--	--	49	102
Total transfers-out	677	874	1112	833	997
Transfers-in	606	819	772	839	798
Difference in totals	71	55	340	-6	199
Net gain or loss in membership	+234	+302	-76	+465	+215

SOURCE: YB, 1954, 1959, 1964, 1969, 1974.

number are released without joining any church at all (the increase is from 49 in 1969 to 102 in 1974).³⁷ Defection to other denominations need not be viewed as secularization in a negative sense, but using residential mobility as an occasion to withdraw from participation in a religious community could be interpreted as a loss of faith, which, if not occasioned by mobility, becomes overt at such a time. The Board of Spiritual and

Church pastor, Peter Funk, noted that transfers to non-General Conference churches were 30 to 50 percent greater than transfers into General Conference churches. See Lois Barrett Janzen, "Mennonites Leave Church for Many Reasons", The Mennonite, LXXXIX (Feb. 2, 1974), pp. 88-89.

³⁷ Prior to 1969 there was no category for release to no church at all, yet some apparently left, as statistician D. D. Duerksen noted in 1967. "Since officially the conference, to my knowledge, has never taken a stand permitting the release of members apart from a release to another denomination, I have not listed these under a separate category. However, in the category of 163 members who joined other denominations, 31 members who are simply released are included" (See YB, 1967, p. 131).

Social Concerns has repeatedly wrestled with the concern over the loss of membership.³⁸

Increased leisure and decreased commitment. It appears that with the change from rural to urban occupations, more leisure time emerges. The Puritan life-style, marked by unremitting toil and disinterest in recreation, changed with the move to the city and the orientation to a new vocation. In fact, as F. C. Peters observed, a strange reversal occurred. "Men of thought are working while men of brawn have leisure."³⁹ Until recently, therefore, leisure meant opening the door to the temptations of the devil. In 1963, David Ewert depicted such a Puritan emphasis among Canadian Mennonite Brethren, quite antithetical to leisure. He observed,

There is much of this spirit still evident in the thinking of our church. People who can hold down two jobs, who can work 16 hours a day--preferably with brawn rather than with brain, who can get by with little sleep, who never take a holiday, who have "drive", who can "produce", are the saintlier sons of God. Instead of admitting they are enslaved, frequently, to the almighty Dollar, or to the taskmaster Prestige, and so are driven to the limit of their resources, they might piously claim to be "redeeming the time".⁴⁰

Sermons appropriately provided guidelines on the use of leisure.⁴¹

³⁸ See YB, 1949, p. 96; 1960, pp. 153-154; 1971, p. 11.

³⁹ F. C. Peters, "I'm Tired, I've Been Resting All Day!" MBH, IV (Nov. 26, 1965), p. 6.

⁴⁰ D. Ewert, "The Problem of Leisure", Voice, XII (July-Aug., 1963), 7.

⁴¹ One of the Conference sermons in 1961 was entitled, "Das Heiligsleben in der Freizeit" (YB, 1961, p. 246). A summary of the sermon indicates the ethical imperatives placed upon such leisure. "Wir muessen mit Entschiedenheit das Gute wollen und das Boese meiden. Wir sollen uns hohe ethische Ziele stellen, wir muessen uns ueben das Gute vom Boesen zu

Even after the need for leisure was recognized, rigorous guidelines were suggested, for leisure was still viewed as a "problem".⁴² In 1959, H. R. Baerg, on the one hand, asserted, "No one questions the need of rest for minds which have been over-taxed, and for bodies which have been overstrained,"⁴³ yet, on the other hand, argued, "It certainly is a great mistake to follow amusement and pleasure and even play for its own sake.... recreation means the re-creating, re-supplying, waste-repletion where there has been depletion. Just as soon as what we call amusement becomes an end, it is perverted."⁴⁴ Rigorous guidelines were, hence, provided for the "right use of leisure".⁴⁵ More recently, there has been a greater openness to both recreation and the arts. Realizing the possible misuse of such forms of leisure, cautions were again freely expressed.⁴⁶ Increasingly, the creative potential of man has been recognized. Theolo-

scheiden und uns persoenlich fuer unsere Freizeit Gott verantwortlich wissen. Deshalb sollten wir auch unsere Freizeit dem Dienste fuer dem Herrn widmen."

⁴²D. Ewert, *ibid.* The same article was later reprinted under the title, "The Christian Use of Leisure", *MBH*, VI (May 19, 1967).

⁴³H. R. Baerg, "The Right Use of Leisure", *Voice*, VIII (May-June, 1959), 9.

⁴⁴*Ibid.*, p. 10. David Ewert similarly viewed leisure with a measure of sternness. He stated, "Leisure, for the Christian, cannot be merely leftover time; it is too important and too serious to be so lightly regarded.... To redeem time is to transform time" (*Ibid.*, p. 6).

⁴⁵Baerg suggested four guiding principles: let the word of God be our guide; avoid questionable amusements; do not recreate or vacation at the expense of worship with God's people; put every action to a very rigid test (and he indicates twelve such tests). See *ibid.*, pp. 12-13.

⁴⁶See Walter Unger, "God's Gift of Recreation", *MBH*, XIII (May 31, 1974), pp. 2, 3, 8, in which he provides the following guidelines: obey in matters plainly stated; seek edification; avoid enslavement; maintain priorities; and, consider the brother and the brotherhood.

gian John Regehr explains,

Creativity is more than busy-work, more than a hobby. The creative thrust is the image of God in man pushing him towards self-fulfilment. Such a person doesn't retire--he only changes jobs.⁴⁷

Yet, the possible conflict between the Christian artist and the expectations of the church are keenly felt. Mennonite Brethren writer, Katie Funk Wiebe laments,

Faith and art are not always compatible bedfellows....

The whole process of creativity is still sometimes questionable in the church despite the fact that faith and creativity are closely linked in God's economy. The Christian's duty is to live creatively. Creativity is his natural birthright....

Yet the church continues to ask whether the artist is justified. Certainly our churches have gotten along without the species for more than a hundred years in America quite well. Our Mennonite heritage is singularly weak in the creative arts; we have too few painters, sculptors, composers, writers and poets. Why the resistance to such a person?⁴⁸

As more Canadian Mennonite Brethren venture into new horizons of the arts and of recreation, one can expect both a greater understanding of the significance of leisure and also continued caution in view of the erosive potential to religious commitment.

Arresting the Secularization Process

Precisely because of the varied effects of occupational change, whether manifest in residential mobility or in the access to leisure, or in the many other changes in values that accompany such shifts in vocation,

⁴⁷ John Regehr, "Creativity and Advancing Years", MBH, XII (Feb. 9, 1973), pp. 4, 5.

⁴⁸ Katie Funk Wiebe, "Faith and Art: A Compatible Team?" MBH, III (June 28, 1974), pp. 2-4, 30.

deliberate attempts have been made to arrest the erosive effect of secularization and capitalize upon the opportunities which the new vocations presented.

The socialization of youth. Some two decades ago, Leslie Stobbe, editor of Mennonite Observer, observed both the occupational change and the resulting trend to materialism with its secularizing consequences.

... No more do the farmer's sons automatically settle on a quarter of land nearby to carry on the traditional way of life. His sons and daughters may be doctors, nurses, teachers, engineers, salesmen, office workers, businessmen, labourers and factory workers...

The adjustment in family and church life is great. Yet the churches have offered but little assistance, except such as can be done in a casual way. If, however, we want to stop the trend to materialism and to a life of ease and comfort in order to increase spiritually, we will have to make a much greater effort...

Unless we take the initiative now in this field we will lose still more ground than has already been lost.⁴⁹

In the following year, Stobbe strongly recommended attending Bible school or Bible college to arrest the tide of materialism manifested in such questions as, "Where can I earn the most money? Where do I receive the best security? How can I advance quickly up the ladder of success?"⁵⁰ Young people were not only encouraged to fortify themselves with Biblical training for their vocation, but given guidelines in choosing the appropriate vocation. Typical was the advice of G. D. Huebert, "Never should a profession be chosen without the Lord's guidance and a thorough self-

⁴⁹ L. Stobbe, "A Step in the Right Direction", MO, III (April 5, 1957), p. 2.

⁵⁰ L. Stobbe, "An Important Decision", MO, IV (May 2, 1958), p. 2.

examination as to one's God-given talents. It is more respectable to do a little thing well and with honor than to do a big thing poorly and reap dishonor."⁵¹ In the same vein, J. A. Toews addressed the Canadian Conference in 1961 on "Das Heiligungsleben im Beruf" and elaborated his concern in several articles in The Voice.⁵² The ultimate objective of any vocation was viewed as glorifying the name of God and promoting the cause of Christ; the wise choice of vocation would exclude a profession detrimental to the Christian life, but rather provide occasion for nurture of Christian fellowship and the opportunity to witness; and the high standards of honesty, faithfulness, and usefulness would result in the "plus factor" which the Christian brings to his vocation.⁵³ Such thorough counsel on the purpose of life's calling, the importance of choosing the right vocation, and the standards which constitute the Christian's work habits fortified young people and arrested the rampant tide of materialism that accompanied the success in new vocational ventures.

The penetration of society. The secularization process was arrested, however, not merely through defensive fortification. Mennonite Brethren were challenged, as well, to capitalize on the opportunities to witness

⁵¹G. D. Huebert, "Choosing a Life's Vocation", MO, VII (April 21, 1961), p. 2. See also, Rudy Wiebe, "Vocation: How Do I Decide?" MBH, I (Sept. 7, 1962), pp. 5-7.

⁵²J. A. Toews, "Das Heiligungsleben im Beruf", YB, 1961, p. 244. See Voice, X (Sept.-Oct., and Nov.-Dec., 1961).

⁵³Toews, "Consecration as Related to our Vocation", Voice, X (Sept.-Oct., 1961), pp. 3-6, and (Nov.-Dec., 1961), pp. 3-6. Toews illustrates the "plus factor" by suggesting, "He is prepared to go beyond the letter of the law, he is willing to render service beyond the demands of duty, he is ready to walk the second mile."

to their faith which such occupational penetration of society permitted. As earlier indicated, counsel was given to choose those vocations which would allow one to witness in the work itself, as well as in the community where one works.⁵⁴ Such counsel led many to choose the teaching profession. Abe Konrad observed already in 1955 that

During the last few years the Mennonite young people of B. C. have caught a new vision. Seeing the great possibilities for witnessing to the lost as public school teachers in the north-land, an increasing number of the over 100 Mennonite public school teachers in B. C. are going east and north.⁵⁵

However, the "vision" extended to other vocations as well, as editor Harold Jantz indicated in his encouragement to become "footloose".

... There are scores of communities that are opening up in many parts of Canada as power, lumbering, mining or manufacturing industries move in. Fort St. John, Prince George, Thompson, Grand Rapids, Hamilton (now Churchill) Falls, Esterhazy are only a few. Often, unfortunately, it is the roughest element of the population that is the first to respond to the new work opportunities and the high wages. This is the opportunity for the church to bring in a relevant and radiant witness through Christian doctors, nurses, teachers, engineers, labourers and various other service workers. These can become the core for a meaningful, spiritual church fellowship and a strong community witness....⁵⁶

The exhortation to disperse was soon followed by the need for a retreat for vocationally and professionally differentiated groups in order to share ideas on "how to relate the simple (yet inexplicable) Christian

⁵⁴ J. A. Toews tells of his encounter with a young Mennonite whose intent was to become a policeman. Toews persuaded him rather to become a teacher "to spend life in the prevention of crime instead of in the punishment of crime", for "a teacher would make a more vital contribution to both church and state than an officer of the law" (Ibid., Sept-Oct., 1961, p. 6).

⁵⁵ Abe Konrad, "B.C. Teachers' Witness Expands", MO, I (Sept. 21, 1955), p. 3.

⁵⁶ Harold Jantz, "Footloose", MBH, IV (Feb. 12, 1965), p. 3. . .

truth to everyday life".⁵⁷ John Redekop explains,

In earlier years, when practically all MB's were part of a recognizable rural way of life, such specialized function would probably have been superfluous. However, times have changed ... when it comes to occupational interests and to problems encountered in the attempt to relate Christianity to our daily jobs we are in basically different situations and should acknowledge it. ... Some of the groups that come to mind are: business executives, school administrators, medical doctors, sales personnel, elected public officials, elementary school teachers, high school teachers, college and university professors, contractors, artists and writers, and finance and banking officials....⁵⁸

The variety of vocational pursuits became a diverse means of penetrating society with a Christian witness. What was initially feared to be secularizing in a negative sense, that is, the erosion of one's religious commitment, became secularizing in a positive sense, that is, a liberation to choose deliberately the vocation one desired and then to use it to express one's Christian convictions. The reorientation following the shift from rural to urban vocations was secularizing in its consequences, but such secularization was not an unmitigated evil.

Summary of the Secularization Impact of Occupational Change

Living in the city and having penetrated society in a wide variety of occupations; Canadian Mennonite Brethren of recent decades resemble more closely their Anabaptist forebears of the sixteenth century than their grandparents earlier this century. Initially there were concerns about urban residence and the pursuit of non-rural vocations. Eventually,

⁵⁷ J. Redekop, "Let Us Retreat--Professionally", MBH, IV (Sept. 17, 1965), p. 2.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

however, the occupational shift proved to be more of an asset than a liability for their religious vitality. Secularization in the sense of decline and defection occurred, but more significant was the secularization process which led to a freeing from rurality and a penetration of all segments of society. Secularization in such a positive sense enhanced religious commitment and stimulated sectarian persistence.

The political, economic, and even religious upheavals of the decade prior to the large immigration of the mid-twenties has seemingly loosened the moorings of Mennonite Brethren in rurality. In the 1930's and 1940's it was the depression, new educational opportunities, the beginning of the drift to the cities, climaxed by the upheaval of World War II, which ended the predominantly rural vocations. The decades after the mid-century mark a large-scale shift to other than farming occupations, with teaching as the most prominent choice. Important in their choice of teaching were the economic security, the upward mobility, and the witness opportunity that this profession offered.

Empirical data indicate that, among the employed, the white-collar occupations constitute some 25% of the total membership, the professional and technical workers being the largest single vocational group. Farm owners and farm managers constitute some 13% of the total membership. Service workers, machine operators and laborers make up but 8.5% of the total membership; housewives and students, almost one-half. Cross-tabulations of different occupations with the varying measures of religiosity suggest that the machine operator is the most religious, followed by the housewife and the farmer. Moreover, the business owners and managers are the most secular, followed by sales and clerical workers and then students.

It would appear that white-collar occupations are more secularized. Among the white-collar occupations, however, the professionals rated the highest in religiosity (excluding the housewives).

Mennonite Brethren have recognized both the erosive effects as well as the challenge to penetrate society with a Christian witness that such a shift to the non-farming vocations brings. The shift in occupations has resulted in large-scale residential mobility accompanied by defection to other denominations instead of transferring membership to another Mennonite Brethren church. Furthermore, the Puritanical distaste for personal indulgence, characterizing the rural Mennonite Brethren background, changed to an appreciation for recreation and the arts which the leisure of the new occupations permitted. A wholesale defection and secularization has been arrested through the conscious attempt at socialization of youth to understand the significance of the calling. Not only were the young people fortified for the urban vocations, they were encouraged actively to penetrate a variety of vocations and disperse to diverse geographical locations. The potential defection and disinterest in religion has, thus, been sublimated to sectarian loyalty and missionary energy. Once again, the dialectic of sacralizing and secularizing forces produces a religious vitality that, despite some loss, results in sectarian persistence.

XIII

ECONOMIC ASCENDANCY AND VERTICAL MOBILITY

The caricature of the Mennonite Brethren immigrant of the 1920's and that of a typical, Canadian Mennonite Brethren today constitutes a marked contrast. Known for his few earthly possessions and frequently sizeable Reiseschuld, the average Mennonite Brethren was among the economically deprived and, because his immigrant status compelled him to be a farmer, he was cast into a lower-class structure and belonged to a religious movement with an introverted sectarian stance which had little appeal to the outsider. Fifty years later, the average Mennonite Brethren has gained an impressive record of respectability. He lives in his own house in the city and, educated beyond the level of his average fellow citizen,¹ he is successful in a prestigious vocation and belongs to a church known for its extensive educational institutions, its sophisticated international relief and mission programs, and which can boast of numerous millionaires. There is no question that with the rapid economic ascendancy, there has been an accompanying upward social mobility. No doubt, such economic prosperity and vertical mobility have affected the sectarian stance of the Canadian Mennonite Brethren. Chapter thirteen examines the degree to which such environmental change has secularized the movement.

¹Kauffman and Harder, AFCL, indicate that Mennonites compared favorably with the average educational level of the population of United States as a whole, but are ahead in college attendance (see p. 59).

1. Background Factors to a Study of Religion and Economics

The rise to economic prosperity of Canadian Mennonite Brethren is not unique to the history of sectarian movements. Social analysts invariably include the economic factor in their analysis of a religious movement.

Precursors in the Study of Sectarian Religiosity and Economics

The impact of such environmental change upon religion and, in turn, the influence of religion in shaping the economy has been a frequent subject of analysis among sociologists. Most popular is Max Weber's The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism in which, to counteract the economic determinists of his day, Weber called attention to the spirit of dedication and commitment to work which marked Protestantism generally and Calvinism and Puritanism in particular.² The asceticism of the sixteenth century Anabaptists--their refusal to bear arms and accept office in the service of the state, their antagonism to an aristocratic way of life, their conduct in worldly callings, and their practice of church discipline³--characterized the avoidance mentality of the sectarian Mennonite Brethren in Canada in the mid-twenties of the present century. Prominent in Weber's analysis is the importance of the influence of ideas

²Max Weber, The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism, chapter four, "The Religious Foundations of Worldly Asceticism", pp. 95-154. Weber refers here to four movements--Calvinism, Pietism, Methodism, and Baptist sects. In his treatment of the Baptist sects, he makes frequent references to continental Anabaptism, especially in his documentation. See also his notes, pp. 254-258.

³See Weber, ibid., pp. 150-154.

(in this case, religion) upon men's behaviour (in this instance, economic activity). Varying interpretations of Weber have shown that the connection need not be causal. Instead, his central contribution is that "men's actions are to be understood in terms of their own goals and the means which appear to them to be available".⁴ For this reason, it will be necessary in this chapter to look more closely at the motives and the context in which Canadian Mennonite Brethren developed economically.

While Weber dealt with the influence of religion upon economics, Richard Niebuhr in his classic, The Social Sources of Denominationalism, treated the change that environment places upon a religious movement. He maintained that a pure sect-type religion is always transient, part of the change occurring because of the upward social mobility to which sectarianism contributes and the resulting loss of hostility to the world.⁵ This chapter will test Niebuhr's hypothesis that upward mobility causes loss of sectarianism and conformity to the church-type denomination from which the sect once separated.

Bryan Wilson has shown that only some sects, especially conversionist sects, are susceptible to the denominationalizing process because of their accommodation to urban and industrial populations for the purpose of recruitment.⁶ Other sects have, in fact, successfully withstood the denom-

⁴Susan Budd, Sociologists and Religion (London: Collier-Macmillan, 1973), p. 62. See also, Robert Bellah, Beyond Beliefs, pp. 53-63.

⁵H. Richard Niebuhr, The Social Sources of Denominationalism, pp. 17-21.

⁶Bryan Wilson, Patterns of Sectarianism, pp. 30-33, 36-42.

inationalizing process despite their upward mobility. This chapter will show that, despite Will Herberg's thesis that Protestantism is a sanction for the American values of individualism, activism, efficiency, and self-improvement,⁷ Mennonite Brethren have cherished both these values and their religious separateness. The findings of this study are more in agreement with Gerhard Lenski's thesis that

when men who have been trained from early childhood in different social systems and have internalized differing sets of values are exposed to common stimuli, the result does not have to be convergence in attitudes, values, or behavior. Apparently the stimuli may activate tendencies which previously lay dormant, and thus produce larger, instead of smaller, differences in behavior.⁸

Thus, the environmentalist position which explains economic behavior solely in terms of the social situation of the individual and the group is seen to be untenable. Chapter thirteen suggests that in spite of the economic ascendancy and vertical mobility, and the accompanying secularization, Mennonite Brethren have retained their vitality as a sectarian group.

Factors Giving Rise to Economic Ascendancy among Canadian Mennonite Brethren

If the contrast depicted above⁹ is in fact true, then the context in which such radical change occurred needs further to be explained.

⁷Will Herberg, Protestant, Catholic, Jew (New York: Anchor Books, 1960), pp. 99-135.

⁸Gerhard Lenski, The Religious Factor (New York: Anchor Books, 1963), p. 114.

⁹Supra, p. 472.

Several factors have contributed to the rise of the economic well-being among Canadian Mennonite Brethren.

The frontier spirit. It is an indisputable fact that the base for the attitudes to economics among Canadian Mennonite Brethren was established by the settlers prior to the big immigration of the mid-1920's. On the one hand, a minority from among the early settlers of the West Reserve in Manitoba joined the Mennonite Brethren at the turn of the century. Yet these Mennonite Brethren had never assumed a rigorous stance against modernity as had, for example, the Kleine Gemeinde, for whom

It was wrong to take pride in material possessions and consequently the shining brass buckets that came with the horse-harnesses and later even the chrome-plated lamps and radiator caps on the automobiles were painted black, and new inventions like the telephone, top buggies, bicycles, and window curtains were also forbidden at first until they were more commonly in use and no longer status symbols.¹⁰

Instead, Mennonite Brethren became the urbanizers in the Winkler area and were forerunners in establishing an outpost in Winnipeg.¹¹ On the other hand, American Mennonite Brethren settled in Saskatchewan early in this century. No doubt, the frontier spirit, characterized by freedom, egalitarianism, individualism and selectivity, as depicted by Richard Niebuhr,¹² helped to shape the economic attitudes of these settlers. For example, already in 1915 the Conference was alerted to the need to reserve suitable land for Mennonite settlements in view of the immigrants anticipated after

¹⁰Quoted by Frank Epp, Mennonites in Canada, 1786-1920, p. 292.

¹¹Epp, ibid., p. 298.

¹²Niebuhr, ibid., pp. 136-138.

the war.¹³ Immigrants in the mid-1920's did not enter a state of economic vacuity. A significant base had already been established.

The immigrant influx. The economic motive was certainly prominent among the immigrants who settled in Canada in the 1920's. Unlike the Mennonite migrations of 1874 to 1878, this migration did not consist of wholesale transfers of compact colonies, but immigrants came from many settlements and walks of life and required mutual assistance and radical adjustment among themselves in order to survive economically. The qualities they possessed would be reflected in their economic aspirations. Hans Mol calls attention to the importance that the attainment of the economic goal has for the social integration of the immigrant.¹⁴ While for many immigrants the initial social status meant a degradation from the status held in Russia, the economic opportunities provided the incentive for rapid upward mobility.¹⁵ The depression, however, provided a severe test for many of the Russian immigrants, and their failure to achieve their economic goal added to the stress of their social integration. Nonetheless, from the outset, the industry, honesty, and dependability of these immigrants was lauded. In 1925, the Saskatoon Guardian

¹³YB, 1915, p. 24. The acquisitive motif was not the only expression of their economic spirit. In 1922 the Conference chose to send a representative to Russia to investigate the need to provide relief. See YB, 1922, p. 31. Mutual aid was becoming an important expression of their economically viable state.

¹⁴H. J. Mol, Churches and Immigrants, p. 51.

¹⁵See, for example, an article by the Manager of the Canadian Colonization Association in Winnipeg, T. D. F. Herzer, "Die Zuckerrueben Industrie und ihre Bedeutung fuer den Westen Canadas: Einige praktische Ratschlaege fuer die neu-kanadischen Farmer", MR, L (March 16, 23, 1927).

welcomed the new immigrants. It stated,

Canada has no more industrious, honest and respected citizens than some of those who bear the name of Mennonites, and if these newcomers ... are willing to abide by our laws and learn our language, they should be accorded a hearty welcome.¹⁶

In a similar vein, the Nordwesten, German periodical favorably disposed to the Mennonites, commended the immigrants for their work habits, their ambition, their frugality, and honesty.¹⁷ Thus, the immigration of the mid-twenties added significantly to the economic incentive for all Canadian Mennonite Brethren. The immigration of post-World War II from Europe and more recently from South America has witnessed a similar industry and ability to become economically prosperous.

The work ethic. The Protestant ethic which characterized Mennonites in their settlement in Prussia¹⁸ continued to mark their business

¹⁶ Quoted by E. K. Francis, In Search of Utopia, p. 208.

¹⁷ Quoted by the MR, XLIX (May 26, 1926), p. 5. "Diese Mennoniten, die alle aus dem bolschewistischen Russland kommen, wo sie meistens durch Arbeit, Fleiss, und Sparsamkeit zu Wohlstand und Reichtum gekommen waren sind ... gute und fleissige Landwirte.... Wir brauchen solche Leute, um ein starkes arbeitsfreudiges und loyales Volk aufzubauen.... Und es spricht Baende fuer die Ehrlichkeit und der Fleiss der Ansiedler, dass die Kreditoren im grossen ganzen nichts zu klagen haben.... Es sollen noch an 80,000 Mennoniten in Russland sein und wir hoffen dass die Meisten dieser guten deutschen Farmer nach Canada kommen werden zu ihrem eignen Wohl und zum Nutzen und Segen ganz Canadas."

¹⁸ Discussing the Calvinistic combination of piety and business, Weber remarked, "Even more striking ... is the connection of a religious way of life with the most intensive development of business acumen among those sects whose otherworldliness is as proverbial as their wealth, especially the Quakers and the Mennonites.... That in East Prussia Frederick William I tolerated the Mennonites as indispensable to industry, in spite of their absolute refusal to perform military service, is only one of the numerous cases which illustrate the fact...." See Protestant Ethic, p. 44.

acumen to the present. The stereotype of hard work and dependability has characterized both the offspring of the early settlers who emigrated from Russia to Kansas, as it has the more recent waves of immigrants. A Kansas pastor relates the following incident:

An industrialist from Buhler told me that if a person looking for a job in New York says he's a Mennonite from a farm in Kansas, he's hired on the spot. That's the stereotype of dependability and hard work. Now he (the industrialist) wishes he hadn't left the Mennonite church.¹⁹

A descendant of this earlier migration, P. C. Schroeder, who lived in Grande Prairie, Alberta, in the mid-twenties, capitalized on this stereotype when he appealed to the immigrants coming into Canada at that time to accept the challenge of frontier settlement. He lured the Mennonites through such appeals as the following:

With God's help, industry, and frugality one can make a good living, for the earth is the Lord's here as well, and His blessings extend to this place, for His mercy has no end.²⁰

At the time of the first Canadian Conference session conducted in Alberta, held at Coaldale in 1939, Dr. W. H. Fairfield, Superintendent of Dominion Experimental Farm at Lethbridge, and Hon. W. Buchanan, Senator, spoke appreciatively of the Mennonite settlers in Canada.²¹ At that occasion, P. C. Hiebert, Mennonite Central Committee representative from United States gave the following tribute to the Mennonite settlers of the previous

¹⁹Lois Barrett Janzen, "Mennonites Leave Church for Many Reasons", The Mennonite, LXXXIX (Feb. 5, 1975), p. 88.

²⁰Peter C. Schroeder, "Clairmont, Alta", MR, XLVII (Sept. 17, 1924), p. 9. It was the lure of Mr. Schroeder through the MR that inspired my own father, an immigrant of 1926, to settle in the Peace River district. See M. Hamm, Aus der Alten in die neue Heimat, p. 72.

²¹YB, 1939, pp. 6, 7.

decade:

I first met members of this congregation and representatives of other Mennonites during my sojourn in Russia about seventeen years ago, when I found them in abject poverty, in the throes of cruel famine, and almost at the point of despair. Today I find them a confident, industrious, God-fearing people....

When they came to Canada some ten years ago they brought practically nothing but their thrifty habits, their sterling character, their religion and their will to work; today they constitute prospering communities and a group of thrifty and loyal citizens of this great Dominion.... Judging from their accomplishments here and elsewhere and their general recognized merits, I sincerely congratulate Canada upon the acquisition of such citizens to the commonwealth, a people of such industry, such character, and such sterling qualities and piety....²²

Despite these eulogies, such an ethic is not necessarily innate to Mennonites. It is, in fact, taught and fostered through the unique circumstances of migrations which Mennonites have repeatedly undergone. The systematic socialization of such an ethic was apparent until recent times. On the one hand, there has been the constant incentive to be faithful in the tedious tasks of life which receive little, if any, acknowledgment.²³ On the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of one of the most successful businesses among Canadian Mennonite Brethren, William DeFehr, son of the founder, acknowledged,

Honest, hard toil does pay off in the long run. Laying groundwork in a business takes time, not instant success. Integrity and fair play have combined to establish a business fairly well insulated against the ups and downs of the economy.²⁴

²² Ibid., p. 8.

²³ See G. D. Huebert, "Work without Glory", MO, VII (Aug. 18, 1961), p. 2, and "Work that Counts", MO, VII (Oct. 27, 1961), p. 2.

²⁴ Mennonite Mirror, "50 Years of a Family Business", V (Nov., 1975), p. 13.

While hard work was commended, a balance between doing and being was likewise recommended, as Paul Erb's editorial from the Gospel Herald reminded Canadian Mennonite Brethren in 1958.

Adam had to work even before the primal curse.... Paul taught that those who did not work should not eat.... Labor is a means to an end, rather than an end in itself. And some people make labor a virtue, so that the harder they work, the more virtuous they think they are....

We need a balance between being and doing. But still our main point is that work is a good thing. We are not kind to ourselves when we carve out a career of leisure and ease.²⁵

A biblical understanding of work has been called for. F. C. Peters explained to the readers of the Mennonite Brethren Herald,

Our secular occupations are to be regarded not as ends in themselves but as means to the service of the Kingdom. They have Christian value only in so far as they can be made means to the end of the gospel. It is in this way that a Christian man, having regard to the challenge of his divine vocation, must consider his position as lawyer, mechanic, or surgeon.

Perhaps we have elevated certain occupations too much. We have made them ends in themselves and people have begun to take a sacramental view of work.²⁶

In a subsequent article, Peters justified the capitalistic spirit.

²⁵ Paul Erb, "What's Wrong with Work?" MO, IV (Aug. 8, 1958), p.

2.

²⁶ F. C. Peters, "Work--Biblical View", MBH, IV (Aug. 6, 1965), p. 8. In a more recent article, "Brother, Your Work is Not Your Calling", Peters argued, "God intended us to work.... Man was commanded to work before the Fall. Work as such is not the judgment of God and a workless world is unbiblical.... But this does not say that work is our calling as Christians. When the Bible uses the word 'calling' (vocation), its reference is to God who summons us to something. Calling, or vocation, then is to participate in the proclamation and furtherance of the gospel. This makes every Christian a minister as our Lord came to minister. The job is simply the context in which one responds to the call of God." MBH, X (Aug. 27, 1971), pp. 2, 3.

God has commanded man to "subdue the earth." Industry and business, the production and distribution of goods, comes under this command. Therefore, the manufacturing and distribution of goods is right in principle.

The businessman can feel he is serving God and his fellowman in the business world....

The working man should see himself as a contributor to the product that is being manufactured or to the service rendered. He shares the same satisfaction as the employer in meeting human need....²⁷

Socialization includes not only emphasis upon the importance of work, but also upon the limitations of work. Already in 1963, Rudy Wiebe perceived that work in itself would not bring prosperity. .

In the brief span of one generation we have prospered in Canada. We have been able to build fine churches, schools, homes, and support great mission efforts.... This is due to God's blessing upon us. We have worked hard, but we would be foolish to forget that the very essence of Canada and her resources have been the means of this blessing.²⁸

In 1967, Charles Hostetter stressed the need for temperance in work when he observed that "we generally despise the lazy person and honor the one who works excessively hard", and lamented, "We deplore every other type of addict, but we promote the work addict".²⁹ Despite this attempt to balance doing with being and to recognize the limitations of work, the work ethic has been constantly upheld.

The cult of acquisitiveness. The independence and freedom nurtured

²⁷F. C. Peters, "Toward a Theology of Work", MBH, IV (Oct. 1, 1965), p. 8.

²⁸Rudy Wiebe, "Gratitude for Canada", MBH, II (March 15, 1963), p. 3.

²⁹Charles Hostetter, "Work Addiction", MBH, VI (Dec. 8, 1967), pp. 5, 6.

by frontier settlement, the economic deprivation encountered by immigrant refugees, and the persistent industry fostered among a God-fearing people--all contributed to a cult of acquisitiveness for which Canadian Mennonite Brethren have become known. Few were satisfied with renting farms or houses; they bought their own.³⁰ Few became factory workers or laborers; they preferred to establish their own business. In recent years, many who began as carpenters or laborers have developed their own construction firms and entered the development and real estate enterprises. Others demonstrated the acquisitive spirit in their acquire of professional and graduate training. Their ambition (Strebsamkeit) coupled with industry has led to a materialism and affluence quite contrary to their sixteenth-century Anabaptist ancestors or their twentieth-century forebears. In a research study of value judgments and attitudes of Mennonite young people, Frank C. Peters discovered that among the three large Mennonite denominations, Mennonite Brethren young people manifested a greater appreciation for material possessions and values.³¹

Such materialism was not only perceived by their leaders, but cautioned against. Leslie Stobbe, in 1957, lamented as follows:

In a day when people want to acquire an automobile, a house and furniture (including TV) in the shortest time, this excuse "I'm a breadwinner, you know" is being heard more and more. The urge to possess, to have comforts, to enjoy pleasures, is making the "breadwinner" work overtime or take extra jobs in the evenings....

³⁰ The Church Member Profile indicates that 87.7% of Canadian Mennonite Brethren own their homes; this compared with 62.9% for United States families in 1970. See Kauffman and Harder, AFCL, p. 63.

³¹ F. C. Peters, "The Local Church--And Cultural Influences", MBH, II (Jan. 18, 1963), p. 7.

Working on such a schedule there is not much time for the children.... So he misses out on worship with his children, and they learn to worship his god--materialism.³²

Two years later, G. D. Huebert similarly warned in the same periodical that "an unchecked and sinful ambition is dangerous and it even leads to destruction. If, however, the 'eagerness to achieve' is sanctified and directed by the Lord, it will lead to a blessed and useful life".³³ The cult of acquisitiveness, while not totally unchecked, has significantly enhanced Mennonite Brethren economic ascendancy. What effect this has had upon their religiosity needs then to be examined.

2. The Findings of the Empirical Studies

Before ascertaining whether or not affluence results in decreased religiosity, it may be useful to associate levels of income of Canadian Mennonite Brethren with other variables of social change. How are the more affluent to be identified in terms of residence, education, and occupation?

Associating Levels of Income with Non-religious Variables of Social Change

It was earlier shown that one's rural-urban residence does indicate something about those who have the lowest and highest incomes: those below \$6000 per annum in 1971 being predominantly rural (47/79), and

³²G. D. Huebert, "Sanctified Ambition", MO, V (Nov. 27, 1959), p. 2.

³³Leslie Stobbe, "Only a Breadwinner?" MO, III (Jan. 25, 1957), p. 2.

those above \$12000 per annum being predominantly urban (47/76).³⁴ Table XIII-1 indicates the distribution of church membership by education and income. About 88% of those who have a maximum of grade school education are in the lower two levels, while about 54% of those who have partly or

Table XIII-1

Distribution of Church Membership by Education and Income

EDUCATIONAL LEVELS	ROW PERCENTAGE FOR LEVELS OF INCOME FOR 1971		
	BELOW \$6000	\$6000-\$11999	ABOVE \$12000
Grade school	41.1 n=30	46.6 n=34	12.3 n=9
High school	22.8 n=31	53.7 n=73	23.5 n=32
College	37.8 n=14	29.7 n=11	32.4 n=12
Graduate/professional	13.7 n=7	41.2 n=21	45.1 n=23
TOTALS	n=82	n=139	n=76

SOURCE: Church Member Profile, 1972.

fully completed high school are in the middle range of income (with those below and above the middle range equally distributed). Moreover, while those who have only partly or fully completed college are almost equally distributed in the three income levels (although the highest percentage is under \$6000), those who have graduate or professional training are decidedly in the middle or upper category of income. There is an obvious contrast in income between those with only grade school education and those with gradu-

³⁴ Supra, pp. 416-17. See Table XI-5, p. 416 for details.

ate/professional training.

Table XIII-2 provides the distribution of church membership by occupation and income. White-collar occupations tend to be in the higher income brackets. While about 47% of professionals are in the middle range of income, 43% are in the upper levels of income. Similarly, about 47% of those in business and management positions are in the middle range, with some fewer (37%) in the upper levels. A somewhat larger percentage of

Table XIII-2

Distribution of Membership by Occupation and Income

OCCUPATION	ROW PERCENTAGE FOR LEVELS OF INCOME FOR 1971						
	BELOW 3000	3000- 5999	6000- 8999	9000- 11999	12000- 14999	15000- 19999	20000- OR MORE
Professionals	0.0 n=0	10.2 n=5	22.4 n=11	24.5 n=12	20.4 n=10	18.4 n=9	4.1 n=2
Business	0.0 n=0	15.8 n=3	26.3 n=5	21.2 n=4	26.3 n=5	5.3 n=1	5.3 n=1
Clerical	5.9 n=1	23.5 n=4	17.6 n=3	35.3 n=6	5.9 n=1	11.8 n=2	0.0 n=0
Craftsmen	0.0 n=0	9.1 n=2	45.5 n=10	27.3 n=6	9.1 n=2	4.5 n=1	4.5 n=1
Farmers	29.5 n=13	25.0 n=11	20.5 n=9	13.6 n=6	2.3 n=1	2.3 n=1	6.8 n=3
Service workers	0.0 n=0	37.5 n=3	50.0 n=4	12.5 n=1	0.0 n=0	0.0 n=0	0.0 n=0
Machine operators	6.3 n=1	12.5 n=2	37.5 n=6	18.8 n=3	18.8 n=3	0.0 n=0	6.3 n=1
Laborers	25.0 n=1	25.0 n=1	25.0 n=1	25.0 n=1	0.0 n=0	0.0 n=0	0.0 n=0
Housewives	10.5 n=9	15.1 n=13	25.6 n=22	20.9 n=18	14.0 n=12	8.1 n=7	5.8 n=5
Students	12.0 n=3	24.0 n=6	16.0 n=4	20.0 n=5	12.0 n=3	8.0 n=2	8.0 n=2

SOURCE: Church Member Profile, 1972.

sales and clerical workers (53%) falls into the middle income range, with fewer (18%) falling into the upper levels. Most craftsmen (73%) are in the middle range, with some 18% in the upper range. Most farmers (55%) come into the lowest income group, yet with a few (11%) among the highest. Service workers, machine operators and laborers usually fall into the lower or middle ranges of income, with a few machine operators ranked among the higher levels. Surprisingly, the largest number of housewives (47%) ranked themselves in the middle range of income, with 25% below the middle range and 28% above. Likewise, students demonstrated a surprisingly high level of income, with 28% in the highest levels, 36% in the middle range, and 36% in the lower levels.

The most affluent among Canadian Mennonite Brethren seem to be those resident in cities, having received graduate or professional training, and being in the professional or business occupations. The least affluent or economically deprived tend to be those with no more than a grade school education, and occupationally ranked as laborers or service workers. It will be interesting, then, to discover whether or not economic deprivation can be positively correlated with greater religiosity, or if affluence results in loss of religious vitality.

Associating Levels of Income with Variables of Religion

To determine whether or not affluence results in a loss of religious vitality, the same measures of religiosity are used as in the preceding chapters. As in chapters eleven and twelve, the questions used to measure the components of religiosity are abbreviated to single words or phrases.

Levels of income and the practice of religion. Table XIII-3 shows the cross-tabulations for the primary levels of income and measures of devotionism and associationalism, referred to here as the practice of religion. The differences in percentage response for various levels of income are minimal in items measuring devotionism, the greatest differ-

Table XIII-3

Levels of Income and the Practice of Religion

ITEMS MEASURING RELIGIOUS PRACTICE	PERCENTAGE COLUMN RESPONSE FOR LEVELS OF INCOME		
	BELOW \$6000	\$6000-11999	ABOVE \$12000
DEVOTIONALISM			
Prayer	88.9 n=72	82.9 n=116	85.3 n=64
Bible study	83.8 n=67	82.1 n=115	81.3 n=61
Closeness to God	68.8 n=55	55.8 n=77	52.0 n=39
Seeking God's will	72.7 n=56	73.2 n=101	66.7 n=50
SUB-TOTAL OF RANK ORDERS	10	8	5
ASSOCIATIONALISM			
Church attendance	78.5 n=67	82.0 n=114	82.7 n=62
Sunday school attendance	63.4 n=52	62.6 n=87	61.8 n=47
Mid-week services	39.0 n=32	38.1 n=53	42.1 n=32
Leadership post	53.8 n=44	65.2 n=90	67.6 n=50
SUB-TOTAL OF RANK ORDERS	7	7	10
TOTAL OF RANK ORDERS	17	15	15

SOURCE: Church Member Profile, 1972.

ences between the low and high levels of income appearing in "closeness to God" and "seeking God's will", where the affluent rate lower. The differences would suggest that the affluent tend to rank lower in terms of devotionism. However, in the measures of associationalism, the affluent rank higher in three of the four items, particularly in "church attendance" and in "leadership". Applying the simple rank order scale used in the previous chapters one observes that the two groups of measures balance each other out. Looking at the measures separately, one would conclude that the economically deprived are the more religious in devotionism, while the affluent appear more religious in associationalism.³³ It may, however, be argued that emphasis upon administrative status and activism associated with religious participation is really a secular use of religion.

Levels of income and religious beliefs. Table XIII-4 indicates the cross-tabulations for levels of income and measures of religious beliefs. In the items measuring general orthodoxy the differences are too minimal to be significant. What differences occur would suggest that the middle range income group is the most orthodox, with the affluent possibly a little more so than the less affluent. In the items measuring fundamentalist orthodoxy, there is a similar response with the middle range income group as the most orthodox, but with the affluent a little less orthodox, especially in the view on "six-day creation". In Anabaptism, the differences are more significant, with the highest levels of income responding

³³Susan Budd, Sociologists and Religion, p. 111, makes a similar observation for both Britain and United States.

Table XIII-4

Levels of Income and Religious Beliefs

ITEMS MEASURING RELIGIOUS BELIEFS	PERCENTAGE COLUMN RESPONSE FOR INCOME		
	BELOW \$6000	\$6000-11999	ABOVE 12000
ORTHODOXY			
Deity of Jesus	96.3 n=78	96.4 n=135	94.7 n=72
Belief in miracles	96.3 n=77	96.4 n=134	97.4 n=74
Jesus' resurrection	96.3 n=77	98.5 n=135	98.7 n=75
Jesus' personal return	97.6 n=80	98.6 n=138	97.4 n=74
Personal devil	96.3 n=79	100.0 n=140	97.4 n=74
SUB-TOTAL OF RANK ORDERS	7	13	10
FUNDAMENTALISM			
Inspiration of the Bible	95.1 n=77	97.9 n=137	96.1 n=73
Virgin birth of Jesus	98.8 n=79	97.1 n=136	98.7 n=75
Six-day creation	61.0 n=50	52.5 n=73	42.1 n=32
Universal flood	92.7 n=76	94.3 n=132	88.2 n=67
Eternal punishment	84.1 n=69	87.1 n=122	85.5 n=65
SUB-TOTAL OF RANK ORDERS	10	12	8
ANABAPTISM			
Following Jesus	67.9 n=55	46.4 n=64	68.4 n=52
Against infant baptism	88.8 n=71	86.4 n=121	94.7 n=72
Church discipline	91.3 n=73	89.2 n=124	89.5 n=68
Non-resistance	67.9 n=55	64.0 n=89	69.7 n=53
Non-swearing of oaths	79.0 n=64	79.1 n=110	85.5 n=65
SUB-TOTAL OF RANK ORDERS	10	6	14
TOTALS OF RANK ORDER SCALES	27	31	32

SOURCE: Church Member Profile, 1972.

most positively and the middle income group responding least favorably. As in the practice of religion, so also in the religious belief the over-all rank order scales balance each other out. One would simply have to affirm that in orthodox beliefs, the middle income group ranks a little higher, while in Anabaptism the most affluent rank a little higher.

Levels of income and ethics. Table XIII-5 shows the cross-tabulations for levels of income and measures of personal moral issues and social ethics. In the questions pertaining to those personal, moral issues traditionally held as taboo, those with highest levels of income were decidedly less rigorous. Yet in the social ethics, those with least income rated the lowest. The net result in the rank order scale was that the middle group rank highest. This table, however, does suggest the influence of wealth in shaping both personal and social ethics. Wealth tends to liberalize one's stand in personal moral issues (hence, the lower response), as well as make one more open to social issues (as indicated in the higher response), as long as individual enterprise and reward are not challenged.

Summary of Empirical Findings

The analysis of Canadian Mennonite Brethren church membership in terms of income reveals that those with highest incomes tend to live in cities, have likely received professional or graduate training, and probably belong to professional or business occupations. Table XIII-6 suggests that one cannot readily generalize about the religiosity of different income groups. At best, one can isolate the lower response of the more affluent in devotionism, fundamentalist orthodoxy,

Table XIII-5

Levels of Income and Ethics

ITEMS MEASURING ETHICS	PERCENTAGE COLUMN RESPONSE FOR INCOME		
	BELOW \$6000	\$6000-11999	ABOVE 12000
PERSONAL MORAL ISSUES			
Drinking moderately	61.7 n=50	53.6 n=74	42.1 n=32
Smoking tobacco	79.3 n=65	86.3 n=120	71.6 n=53
Adult-rated movies	56.1 n=46	58.4 n=80	40.8 n=31
Premarital sex	95.0 n=76	95.7 n=133	94.7 n=71
Social dancing	84.0 n=68	64.5 n=89	49.3 n=37
SUB-TOTAL OF SCALES	12	13	5
SOCIAL ETHICS			
Race relations	47.6 n=39	56.8 n=79	57.3 n=43
Social welfare	35.4 n=29	45.0 n=50	42.1 n=32
Anti-Communism	19.8 n=16	20.4 n=28	26.3 n=20
Labor unions	18.3 n=15	7.2 n=10	10.7 n=8
Capital punishment	9.8 n=8	17.5 n=24	13.3 n=10
SUB-TOTAL OF SCALES	7	11	12
TOTALS OF SCALES	19	24	17

SOURCE: Church Member Profile, 1972.

and personal moral issues (that is, one measure in each of the three groups). In this respect they tend to be more secularized. At the same time, in associationalism, in Anabaptism and in social ethics, they indi-

Table XIII-6

A Summary of the Scales of Levels of Income and Measures of Religiosity

VARIABLES OF RELIGIOSITY	TOTALS OF RANK ORDER RATINGS		
	BELOW \$6000	\$6000-11999	ABOVE 12000
PRACTICE OF RELIGION			
Devotionalism	10	8	5
Associationalism	7	7	10
SUB-TOTALS	17	15	15
RELIGIOUS BELIEFS			
General Orthodoxy	7	13	10
Fundamentalist Orthodoxy	10	12	8
Anabaptism	10	6	14
SUB-TOTALS	27	31	32
ETHICS			
Moral Issues	12	13	5
Social Ethics	7	11	12
SUB-TOTALS	19	24	17
TOTALS	63	70	64

SOURCE: Church Member Profile, 1972.

cate the highest responses and consequently appear to be more religious. Economic ascendancy does not necessarily mean increased secularization. Niebuhr's hypothesis that upward mobility brings a loss of sectarianism cannot be upheld. Nor does economic depravity necessarily vouch for greater religiosity. More, obviously, needs to be said about the consequences of Mennonite Brethren economic ascendancy.

3. Some Further Consequences of Economic Ascendancy

The empirical data based on the Church Member Profile help to provide a synchronic analysis of the effects of economic prosperity. The consequences of such prosperity viewed diachronically, that is, over a longer period of time, allow one to analyse change which occurs gradually and which cannot be measured through a single questionnaire. The following further analysis, more diachronic in nature, includes both the consequences which have a direct bearing upon secularization, because of the upward mobility, as well as those which have arrested the secularization trend through the utilization of economic strength for religious purposes.

Effects of Economic Prosperity upon Social Class

The comparison of Canadian Mennonite Brethren of the first quarter of this century with those of recent times shows a significant climb in educational attainment, a radical shift from rural to urban occupations, and a marked increase in income, affecting thus the three usual components of socio-economic status--education, occupation, and income. The result has been a gradual change in social class. This upward mobility has been of two types, mainly of individuals who achieved these desireables, but also of the sect as a whole. Regardless of their status in the old country, immigrants are usually forced to start on the lowest rung of the social ladder.³⁵ Where this class background is of a higher status, the immigrant will be especially astute in changing his status through attain-

³⁵ Hans Mol, Churches and Immigrants, p. 32.

ment of several or all of the above components. In the meantime, however, the low-status sect has provided the appropriate environment for his unprivileged position. This explains the loss to the sect of some members who attain a higher status before the sect as a whole has changed. In such instances, the advancement of individuals simply exceeds that of the social institution.³⁶ Besides the tendencies of individuals to rise in status, there is also the gradual acquisition of enhanced status by the whole movement. Not only does a whole movement enhance its social class as the majority of its members become wealthier and participate in the cultural pursuits of society in general,³⁷ but more specifically, as Liston Pope observed in Gaston County, as a few members of a sect prosper and become its leaders, the sect loses the members of the lower economic class replacing them with members from a higher strata. Pope explains,

Though at any given moment of transition the rising sect is associated especially with one economic group, it does not necessarily carry that group as it moves on.... A denomination inclines to move and to settle down with its few leaders who become community leaders also, leaving behind the masses of its members and of society. Its position on the scale of transition from sect to Church follows closely after the economic fortunes of its more influential members; its religious character changes as the economic status of its leaders improves. From reflecting the needs of a large group of people, it comes to sanction the position of its more respectable members simply because their position, sanctioned also by the whole weight of existing culture, enables them to control the particular religious institution.³⁸

³⁶ Milton Yinger proposes that many individual adherents are helped, by the self-disciplines that the sect encourages, to improve their own status, while at the same time this sect is irrelevant to the social and cultural causes that continue to create such unprivileged individuals. See Scientific Study of Religion (New York: Macmillan Co., 1970), p. 309.

³⁷ H. Richard Niebuhr, Social Sources of Denominationalism, p. 20.

³⁸ Liston Pope, Millhands and Preachers, pp. 119-120.

Vertical mobility occurs, hence, both on an individual as well as on a group level, the former preceding the latter.

The consequences of such upward social mobility among Canadian Mennonite Brethren are worthy of note. First, it appears that there is an increase in class cleavage. The existence of a class distinction between Mennonites in Russia and their Russian neighbors is an acknowledged fact.³⁹ Such distinctions continued even in Canada, despite their own lower class identity as an immigrant people. Editor Leslie Stobbe in 1959 chided Mennonites for their obvious class distinctions in Russia which were continued in Canada.

While there were those in Russia who strove not only to help them economically and socially, the vast majority certainly did not consider them as equal and as such worthy of respect. Simply said, we looked down on them--and our treatment reflected that attitude.

Our feeling of superiority is not restricted to those of slavie origin (the Doukhobors, for example), but it extends to any whose social, economic and educational standard is not on a level with ours. Who does not remember the derision heaped on oriental buyers and sellers, especially the Chinese, when he was a child?

For years the Jews have been disliked--in Mennonite communities also. Even today, we catch ourselves evidencing very real racial prejudice towards the Jews, in spite of our great interest in their national progress.⁴⁰

³⁹ Writing in MR in 1928, Peter Klassen muses on the role of Mennonites who remained in Russia, suggesting they have an opportunity to compensate for class distinctions held for one hundred years prior. "Was will Gott? Will Gott vielleicht doch, dass wir in Russland das nachholen, was wir ueber ein Jahrhundert versaeumt haben: Dem russischen Volk wirklich Bruder zu werden? Haben wir nicht sie in ihrem Elend liegen lassen, aeuserlich und innerlich?" MR, LI (Jan. 4, 1928), p. 4.

⁴⁰ Leslie Stobbe, "Prejudice not Restricted to the South", MO, II (Nov. 15, 1957), p. 2.

More recently, John Redekop lamented the unwholesome increase in class distinctions.

... Increasingly we seem to be accepting a basically Marxist view of class cleavages if not of class antagonisms.... As the income, occupational, educational, and general status differentiation grows in our brotherhood, some basically unchristian attitudes and behavior patterns are growing as well.

The wealthy tend to isolate themselves.... Those whom we might describe as financially poor tend to avoid socializing with Christians who are more well-to-do.... The broad middle classes mix quite freely among themselves although even here vocational grouping and exclusiveness is common.... From a purely sociological perspective, that makes sense....

And thus the barriers grow.⁴¹

The religious implications of such class distinctions are obvious, as Redekop continues to show.

Too readily we have bought the non-Christian perspective that what a person has is more important than what a person is, and that a person's economic profession outranks his spiritual profession. To accept one another as brothers and sisters, as one in the spirit, and to relate honestly and easily with those whom non-Christians would describe as "different," that, I suggest, constitutes real Christian class. More real Christian class and less class consciousness is what the church and the world both need.⁴²

A second consequence of such vertical mobility, related to the first, is that the integrity of the group suffers. In his plea for "Christian class consciousness", Redekop lamented the loss of homogeneity. "The traditional pattern of general social homogeneity which I recall from my childhood in a Mennonite Brethren setting seems to be dissipating

⁴¹J. H. Redekop, "Christian Class Consciousness", MBH, XIV (Sept. 19, 1975), p. 12.

⁴²Ibid.

rapidly."⁴³ E. K. Francis makes a similar observation concerning the Mennonites of Manitoba, namely, they were "more successful in advancing economically than in preserving their social institutions".⁴⁴ The result has been a considerable defection in membership.⁴⁵

A third consequence of such upward mobility is the accentuated value placed on worldly success. In a prize-winning speech before Mennonite youth in 1956, Ferdinand Pauls viewed prosperity as the greatest problem for Mennonites. Among the problems posed by Pauls was that Mennonite homes idealize secular vocations, as a result of which "the cream of youth" shuns theological training.⁴⁶ In a similar vein, Paul Erb, editor of the (Old) Mennonite Gospel Herald, berated the Mennonite community in a guest editorial in the Mennonite Observer for such selfish "status seeking". "It is all pretty silly, and sad, and un-Christian. Jeremiah tells us not to seek great things for ourselves".⁴⁷ Such success was lauded, for example, by George Derksen, in his account of "A Christian in the Construction Business" in which a former conscientious objector in forest service had become head of a construction firm building a house per day.⁴⁸ As Susan Budd notes, "... The saved make good workmen, if not good

⁴³Redekop, ibid.

⁴⁴E. K. Francis, In Search of Utopia, p. 110.

⁴⁵Supra, pp. 461-62.

⁴⁶Ferdinand Pauls, "Mennonites and Prosperity", MO, I (Mar. 9, 1956), p. 8.

⁴⁷Paul Erb, "Status Seeking", MO, V (June 26, 1959), p. 2.

⁴⁸Derksen explains, "Rising up the hard way" Mr. Krahn's story is one of success through everyday Christian living". See George Derksen,

entrepreneurs."⁴⁹ No doubt, it could also be argued conversely that the value placed on worldly success results in upward mobility.⁵⁰

A final consequence is the loss of what Weber called "inner-worldly asceticism" (innerweltliche Askese).⁵¹ No longer is there the same emphasis upon individual control and achievement, moral respectability and sobriety. Instead there is socialization of the dominant values of society as Benton Johnson observed of the Holiness sects.⁵² Harold Fallding speaks of a tendency for sects to mellow with the social acceptance they enjoy or the accommodation to the world that accompanies their socialization of dominant values.⁵³ Such mellowing of the sectarian is not always the case, however, as the instance of the Canadian Mennonite Brethren suggest.

"A Christian in the Construction Business", MO, V (Feb. 20, 1959), p. 5. See also the account of J. I. Dyck of North Kildonan, Manitoba, who in twenty years of gradual growth progressed "from almost nothing to Western Canada's largest manufacturer of garden tools". MO, III (Nov. 7, 1958, p. 5.

⁴⁹Susan Budd, Sociologists and Religion, p. 106.

⁵⁰Susan Budd points to the Seventh Day Adventists, who, despite stringent rules, have shown upward movement as a social group, because the sect values worldly success. Ibid., p. 105.

⁵¹Weber, The Protestant Ethic, pp. 139-194. By this Weber meant asceticism practiced within the world as contrasted with auserweltliche Askese which withdraws from the world, as in a monastery.

⁵²Benton Johnson, "Do Holiness Sects Socialize in Dominant Values?" Social Forces, XXXIX (1961), pp. 309-316.

⁵³Harold Fallding, Sociology of Religion, pp. 153-54.

Effects of Economic Prosperity upon the Sectarian Stance

Sociologists of religion have repeatedly shown that as sects achieve a greater degree of economic and social security, they not only tend to transform themselves into bodies of greater social respectability, but also shift on the continuum from sect to church. In other words, they lose their sectness. This chapter suggests that a religious movement can still retain its sectness despite the loss of the inner-worldly asceticism and the assimilation of the dominant values of society. The effect of prosperity upon the sectarian position needs, then, further to be examined. Russell R. Dynes has, for example, hypothesized that "sectness" is associated with low socio-economic status, and "churchness" with high.⁵⁴ As indicated earlier, Niebuhr argued that

By its very nature the sectarian type of organization is valid for one generation.... As generation succeeds generation, this isolation of the community from the world becomes more difficult. Furthermore, wealth frequently increases when the sect subjects itself to the discipline of asceticism in work and expenditure; with the increase of wealth the possibilities for culture also become more numerous and involvement in the economic life of the nation as a whole can less easily be limited. Compromise begins and the ethics of the sect approach the church type of morals. As with ethics, so with the doctrine, so also with the administration of religion.... So the sect becomes a church.⁵⁵

Despite this trend which has been observed in numerous sects,⁵⁶ there can

⁵⁴Russell Dynes, "Church-Sect Typology and Socio-Economic Status", American Sociological Review, XX (Oct., 1955), pp. 550-60.

⁵⁵H. Richard Niebuhr, Social Sources of Denominationalism, p. 20.

⁵⁶E. D. C. Brewer, "Sect and Church in Methodism", in Religion, Culture, and Society, L. Schneider, ed., pp. 471-82. See also Benton Johnson, "Do Holiness Sects Socialize in Dominant Values?" Social Forces, XXXIX (1961), pp. 309-316; and Walter Muellder, "From Sect to Church", in J. Milton Yinger, ed., Religion, Society, and the Individual, pp. 480-488.

also be upward mobility without the concomitant denominationalizing. Bryan Wilson has shown that established sects in England, such as the Christadelphians, Salvation Army, and various Brethren groups, have grown stronger with age.⁵⁷ The Mennonite Brethren Church is some 115 years old, three generations of which have continued to flourish in Canada. The highly sectarian response on the empirical tests of religious beliefs and practice, simultaneous with the increased upward mobility, suggest that Canadian Mennonite Brethren have not succumbed to the church-type religious movement. No doubt, the factors of religious continuity, surveyed in chapters five to nine, especially the strongly delineated cognitive and normative boundaries and the deliberate socialization through weekly worship and formal instruction, account for the persistence of the sectarian stance despite the vertical mobility.

Effects of Economic Prosperity upon the Stewardship of Resources

Whereas the effects of economic prosperity upon social class and upon the sectarian stance both fall into the purview of secularization, and hence, impede the continuity of sectarianism, the following two effects strengthen the religious movement both in its centripetal thrust of amassing and utilizing its resources, as well as in its more centrifugal concern of confronting and changing society. Affluence has not only given individuals economic security, it has also enlarged the church's material assets. John A. Toews reminds his readers that these material assets

⁵⁷ Bryan Wilson, Sects and Society (London: Wm. Heinemann, Ltd., 1961).

can be both a blessing and a curse. He writes,

Material progress and prosperity in the life of a brotherhood has the potential for either blessing or curse. Money invested in the salvation of man, wealth dedicated to the expansion of Christ's kingdom, material means used for the alleviation of human need and suffering--all this can be a great blessing. But when wealth is used for self-indulgence and self-glory, it constitutes a grave spiritual danger and undermines the effective witness of a church. In Russia, many Mennonite Brethren viewed the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 and the subsequent confiscation of all property as God's judgment on Mennonite materialism. May history not have to repeat itself in America.⁵⁸

In a twofold manner Canadian Mennonite Brethren have attempted to avert crass materialism and its accompanying curse. First, there has been instruction and exhortation on giving to the work of the church. For example, in 1957 and 1958, in just over one year's time, three separate editorials appeared in the Mennonite Observer on the subject of stewardship.⁵⁹ Leslie Stobbe not only acknowledged a twelve-fold increase in giving by Canadian Mennonite Brethren from 1938 to 1956,⁶⁰ he also called for a "basic education program on stewardship in our local churches and upon an individual basis. Pastors, Sunday school teachers and youth workers need to band together to saturate our church membership in stewardship teaching".⁶¹ Similarly, Harold Jantz more recently cautioned, "Our

⁵⁸ John A. Toews, HMBC, p. 338.

⁵⁹ Leslie Stobbe, "That Money Question", MO, III (June 28, 1957), p. 2; "As the Lord Has Prospered", MO, III (Nov. 22, 1957), p. 2; "Balanced Church Giving", MO, IV (July 18, 1958), p. 2.

⁶⁰ Stobbe, "As the Lord Has Prospered", p. 2.

⁶¹ L. Stobbe, "That Money Question", MO, III (June 28, 1957), p. 2. It should be noted that stewardship is not restricted to management of funds. It applies to the whole of life--the body, the mind, and the personality. See F. C. Peters, "Stewardship of the Total Person", Voice, XI (Sept.-Oct., 1962), 5-10.

society not only practices greed as a first principle of its existence, it also cultivates the attitude that it is not responsible for the welfare of others".⁶² At a special study conference, on "The Church, The Word, and the World", Professor Leonard Siemens of the University of Manitoba analysed the failure in giving by Mennonite Brethren and provided the following biblical principles for giving: not optional but voluntary, proportionate to income, regular and systematic, abundant and cheerful, and simply and without ostentation.⁶³ The result of such teaching and preaching is that 47% of Mennonite Brethren (in United States and Canada) give 10% or more and 32% give at least five but less than 10%; this compares to 40% and 26%, respectively, for (Old) Mennonites and 29% and 34% for General Conference Mennonites.⁶⁴ The per member giving from 1938 to 1959 had increased from \$13.41 to \$125.50,⁶⁵ and by 1974 it had increased to \$310.68.⁶⁶ And yet, as Canadian Mennonite Brethren statistician George Epp notes, the annual per member contributions to Missions/Services do not keep up with the annual personal disposable income.⁶⁷

⁶²Harold Jantz, "Our Materialistic Society", MBH, VI (Oct. 27, 1967), p. 2.

⁶³Leonard Siemens, "The Christian and His Material Possessions", insert in MBH, XIII (Oct. 18, 1974), pp. 21-27.

⁶⁴Kauffman and Harder, AFCL, p. 238. The amounts are based on the 1971 giving pattern. On stewardship performance scales, Mennonite Brethren ranked 7.5%, (Old) Mennonites 6.8%, and General Conference Mennonites 5.8%.

⁶⁵GCRYB, 1960, p. 104.

⁶⁶GCRYB, 1975, p. 174.

⁶⁷George Epp, "What the Statistics Tell", MBH, XIII (Mar. 22, 1974), p. 27.

A second attempt to avert materialism is in the careful disposal of the resources that are in fact mobilized. Who consumes the amassed wealth? Is it directed to the local church operating budget, new facilities, overseas missions, or to the starving world? On the one hand, interim editor Klassen argued that "if we build a church that is generally 'cheaper' than the very homes we live in, is this not robbing God of the glory due Him in this regard?"⁶⁸ On the other hand, editor Jantz lamented the materialistic attitude apparent in the construction of new churches. "We have often been tempted to build great monuments to our pride."⁶⁹ A decade earlier, Leslie Stobbe had made a plea for "balanced church giving" in which other than local needs receive attention. He noted,

Giving for church construction has more than doubled during the last three years. Giving for local church needs has increased by one-third, while giving for foreign missions has increased by less than one-third. At the same time giving for conference-operated schools has remained static and conference publication work is being neglected almost altogether.⁷⁰

John Redekop extended the vision to the Third World. He argued,

In this land of abundance and often overabundance; in this land where so many of us have our petty tastes pampered and catered to; in this land plagued by both over-production and over-consumption; in this wonderful land it is a good thing for us, its inhabitants, to remind ourselves periodically of the plight of our fellowmen in the other countries.⁷¹

⁶⁸ Peter Klassen, "Turning the Sod", MBH, III (May 15, 1964), p. 3.

⁶⁹ Harold Jantz, "Our Materialistic Society", MBH, VI (Nov. 10, 1967), p. 2.

⁷⁰ Leslie Stobbe, "Balanced Church Giving", MO, IV (July 18, 1958), p. 2.

⁷¹ John Redekop, "A Starving World", MBH, III (April 24, 1964), p. 2.

Wealth, therefore, has not necessarily corrupted. While Canadian Mennonite Brethren expose themselves to the secularizing effects of affluence, they have also capitalized on the strengths that such affluence offers.

Effects of Economic Prosperity upon Social Reform

Prosperity may indeed lead to greater self-indulgence, but it can also contribute positively to the promoting of social reform. Contrary to the manner in which the social gospel seemed to emerge in Canada prior to the 1920's, which, as Richard Allen suggests, was more through currents of thought and action than through the response to domestic urban and industrial problems,⁷² among Canadian Mennonite Brethren the emergence of the "social passion" is directly related to the problems of its fellow-believers. Prior to the immigrant influx of the 1920's, the Kanaedier had supported relief efforts of Mennonite Central Committee in 1920 and became part of the Mennonite Board of Colonization in 1922 to assist in immigration and settlement. Subsequently, these agencies were instrumental in helping Mennonites with the Reiseschuld, conscientious objectors in time of war, coordinating mutual aid as in hospitalization, mental health and burial assistance; and providing welfare to Mennonites overseas.⁷³

However, it was only with the increased urbanism, occupational change, and affluence that new problems were exposed and that there were new economic resources to assist in the solution of these problems. For

⁷²Richard Allen, The Social Passion: Religion and Social Reform in Canada 1914-28 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1971), p. 9.

⁷³Supra, p. 357.

example, in 1956 Leslie Stobbe sensed these problems which came with social change.

During the last decades more and more Mennonites have moved from the farm to the town or to the big city. A fair percentage of them have invested their capital in some business venture. They have shown that the same industry and thrift that characterizes the average Mennonite farmer also pays off in business. They have proved that Mennonites can grow wealthy through prudent management and sound business practices.

We must face the fact, however, that a modern business venture brings with it many problems that the grain grower or the dairy farmer does not meet. Not only are there more employees, but the relationship between business, the rivalry and competition, and the effort to please a fickle public create new and complex situations for the businessman.⁷⁴

In 1965, F. C. Peters acknowledged the varied responses of Mennonite Brethren to labor unions and frankly stated, "The fact of the matter is that many--and I would venture to say the majority--of Mennonite Brethren labourers who are not working for themselves belong to a union."⁷⁵ As a prominent leader of the denomination, he then stated that he did not object to union membership as such, but that each membership pledge should be carefully read to see whether or not it conflicted with the Christian's conscience. Again in 1968, John Redekop presented a forceful paper on "The Christian and Labor Unions" to the Conference on Discipleship and Evangelism in Winnipeg. Here he argued that unions have a place in our society and that there will be tensions for the Christian in the ethical-social relationships with non-Christians in society.⁷⁶

⁷⁴ Leslie Stobbe, "Towards a More Consistent Testimony", MO, II (Feb. 10, 1956), p. 2.

⁷⁵ John H. Redekop, "The Christian and Labor Unions", insert in MBH, VII (June 28, 1968), pp. 10-11.

⁷⁶ F. C. Peters, "Mennonite Brethren and Labour Unions", MBH, IV (Nov. 5, 1965), p. 8.

But it is not the editors, theologians and professors alone who responded to these social problems that arise with modernization. Influential and well-to-do Christian businessmen also have addressed themselves to such involvement. Henry H. Block, founder and president of one of Canada's largest real estate agencies, read a paper on "The Power of Influence in Business" at a pastors'-laymen's conference in Winnipeg in 1969. He not only legitimated the work ethic and accumulation of wealth, but spoke of influence through the role of the employer, through the exercise of personal power and ownership, and through stock investments. Block stated,

I am not always (most often not) in sympathy with the Trade Union movement but do feel that many employers exploit those who are in their employ. Perhaps the Christian employer has to go that extra mile in order to protect his Christian witness.⁷⁷

Another businessman, Rudolph Dyck, has courageously challenged the values commonly held--the popular perception of man, the bigness of success, and the survival of the fittest--which prevent a "comprehensive view of oneself as a servant of mankind with whatever means are at one's disposal". Dyck argues,

A total reversal from the usual values is what this is all about, coupled with a purpose for living. I am convinced that many of our most pressing problems--unemployment, inflation, pollution, work stoppage and overdevelopment can ultimately be attributed to failure at this point.⁷⁸

It was the willingness of businessmen to go that "extra mile" and their

⁷⁷ Henry H. Block, "The Power of Influence in Business", Voice, XIX (Oct., 1970), 20.

⁷⁸ Rudolph Dyck, "Being Christian in Business", MBH, XIII (May 17, 1977), pp. 4, 5, 30.

fundamentally different value-system which led to the formation of the Mennonite Economic Development Associates through which they contributed their expertise and financial resources to provide long-range solutions through industrial development, expansion of markets, and development of transportation facilities in the Third World countries.⁷⁹ And so the prosperity of Canadian Mennonite Brethren was bringing about social and economic reform both within Canada and in the Third World.

Economic ascendancy brought with it vertical mobility. The secularizing impact of such upward mobility, however, was mitigated by the strength which such prosperity lent both to assist financially in religious causes at home and overseas, as well as to initiate reform centred in the very value-system which itself had enhanced prosperity. Secularization was both accelerated and arrested by the economic ascendancy of Canadian Mennonite Brethren, and the tension provided an impetus to the sectarian movement further to persist.

Summary of the Secularizing Impact of Economic Ascendancy

The study of social analysts of the reciprocal relation between economics and religion finds ready application among Canadian Mennonite Brethren. Weber's thesis that religion affects economic behavior found illustration not only among sixteenth-century Anabaptists but also among twentieth-century Mennonite Brethren. Yet, Niebuhr's analysis, however

⁷⁹ Mennonite Economic Development Associates was first established in 1951 when six businessmen flew to Paraguay to survey possibilities for, and lend support to, smaller projects like cotton gins and oil (peanut) presses. Canadians joined this investment corporation in 1961. By 1962 it had grown to 35 members. See F. Epp, Mennonite Exodus, pp. 433, 435.

astute, cannot fully be illustrated by Mennonite Brethren, because sectarianism persisted beyond the second generation. Wilson's assertion that some sects can withstand the denominationalizing process and Lenski's findings that one can be socialized to withstand total convergence in attitudes, values and behavior explained the stubborn resistance by Canadian Mennonite Brethren to at least some of the secularizing effects of economic prosperity.

The seeds for such prosperity were implanted by the frontier spirit of early Mennonite settlers, and the beginnings were accelerated by the several waves of immigrants since 1920's. The work ethic has been a most tenacious motivating force, and the tendency to acquire economic assets has further contributed to the affluent state which could have serious secularizing consequences.

Empirical data reveal that the most affluent tend to be residents of cities, have usually received graduate or professional training, and likely belong to professional or business occupations. Despite these marks of material prosperity, the most affluent are not necessarily the least religious. It appears that the economically deprived have higher ratings in devotionalism, fundamentalist orthodoxy, and personal, moral issues. The affluent, at the same time, reveal higher responses in associationalism, Anabaptism, and social ethics. Neither group, the least affluent or the most affluent, can be said to be more religious, for each group excels in some of the measures of religiosity.

A further examination of the consequences of such material prosperity over a longer period of time indicates a decided upward social

mobility with the usual results of class cleavage, accentuated values on worldly success, and a loss in inner-worldly asceticism. While there may be some mellowing of sectarianism, as such, Mennonite Brethren have not shifted wholly to the right on the sect-church continuum, but the sectarian stance has persisted. This persistence can be explained in two further effects of prosperity--the ability to, and actuality of, using the material resources to promote religious causes, including assistance beyond one's own congregation and taking the initiative to reform the secularized, economic structures of society. These latter effects not only demonstrate Weber's notion that religion motivates economic activity, but they also suggest that religion has the vitality to overcome the secularizing effects of economic prosperity.

XIV

ASSIMILATION AND IDENTITY CRISIS

Canadian Mennonite Brethren are presently undergoing a crisis of identity. The discussion of the preceding chapters, ten to thirteen, helps to explain the current dilemma. The components of social change--education, urbanization, occupational advancement, and economic ascendancy--have exercised considerable secularizing stress upon the religious movement. Yet, the impact has not been unambiguously secular in the sense of producing a unilinear loss of faith or decrease in religious commitment. Education leads to increased differentiation in one's symbol system, but it also positively frees man to make his religious choices and commitments personally. Urbanization tends to relativize the most conservative beliefs and morals, but it also confronts a religious movement with new opportunities for exerting its influence. Occupational change opens new worlds which make one susceptible to new secularizing hazards, but such change with its enhanced penetration of society has also been more of an asset than a liability for religious vitality. And while economic affluence may have mel- lowed sectarian obstinacy, the secularizing effect has been arrested through rigorous socialization. The sacralizing processes, dealt with in chapters five to nine, have guarded the movement against excessive adaptability to such change. However, no single component of change has exercised such an insidious effect as assimilation itself. The tension generated by the dialectic of secularizing and sacralizing forces has been accentuated as the

sectarian, immigrant movement gradually assumed the beliefs, attitudes, and behavioral patterns of its host society, making it even more difficult to be in the world while refusing to be of the world. Chapter fourteen concerns itself with this final component of social change and the resulting identity crisis.

Such variables of social change, however, cannot really be treated in isolation. All the while that changes in education, rural-urban residence, occupation, and economic status were taking place, the process of cultural diffusion has been at work. This chapter tests the degree to which assimilation, to which the other variables of social change contribute, has led to a loss of faith and examines the viability of sectarianism in the face of the resulting identity crisis.

1. Assimilation and Its Evidence

Because the identity crisis is so closely related to the assimilation of the immigrant group, it will be helpful to analyse more closely the process of cultural diffusion and to be apprized of the historical and empirical data which explain the effects, and then to examine the identity crisis.

The Process of Cultural Diffusion

To recognize the sociological and psychological dynamics involved in the interaction between the dominant and minority groups of society is to understand somewhat the complexity of the process of cultural diffusion.

The continuum from conflict to convergence. The process of assimilation is perhaps best conceptualized by a continuum ranging from conflict

with the dominant or host society at the one pole to total convergence at the other. Usually one views assimilation from the perspective of the dominant society, that is, the degree to which attachment to the host society has been achieved and one speaks in terms of social rejection or social acceptance. Total convergence, thus, represents the final state of assimilation, although the process leading to this state is also called assimilation. Kovacs and Cropley, however, have drawn attention to the simultaneous process of detachment or estrangement from the ethnic ways of an immigrant group with the resulting state of alienation, that is, "a state of estrangement from psychological props which, when shared by members of ethnic groups, make the world easily understandable and impart a sense of identity and belonging to the individual".¹ Viewed from the perspective of the ethnic group, then, the process of convergence with the ways of the dominant society can also be seen as a process of alienation with the removal of the psychological props and the resulting identity crisis. To view the process from one perspective alone, however, may lead to an ethnocentric interpretation. Kovacs and Cropley conclude that demands for excessively complete and rapid assimilation may cause otherwise avoidable traumatic experiences.² The interplay of the psychological and sociological forces at work becomes quite obvious. For example, Hans Mol explains that a foreign church may hinder social integration, but at the same time facilitate personal integration. "The foreign church by being

¹M. L. Kovacs and A. J. Cropley, "Assimilation and Alienation in Ethnic Groups", Canadian Ethnic Studies, IV (No. 1-2, 1972), 14.

²Ibid., p. 21.

a home away from home is an effective antidote to the forces of personal disorganization and provides the immigrants with a sense of belonging and security necessary to his mental well-being."³ Sociologist E. K. Francis demonstrates this understanding when he suggests that "the aim of a rational immigration policy should be the integration of all ethnic components into the social body of the nation at the least cost in human suffering, rather than their assimilation at any price and with maximum speed".⁴ Perhaps the intensity of the current identity crisis among Canadian Mennonite Brethren results from too sudden and too excessive a shift on the continuum from conflict to convergence.

Distinguishing between acculturation and assimilation. The process of adjustment or adaptation in order to minimize conflict and maximize convergence has variously been referred to as accommodation, acclimatization, amalgamation, acculturation, and assimilation. While the last two terms, and particularly "assimilation", are employed in this study, the first three warrant brief consideration. Park and Burgess deal exhaustively with the concept of accommodation and describe it as a process of adjustment to prevent or reduce conflict, control competition, and maintain a basis of security in the social order for persons and groups of divergent interests.⁵ Needless to add, accommodation of one kind or another will always need to occur when two cultures meet. Acclimatization is a form of

³ Hans Mol, Churches and Immigrants, p. 30.

⁴ E. K. Francis, In Search of Utopia, p. 6.

⁵ R. E. Park and E. W. Burgess, Introduction to the Science of Sociology, pp. 303-360.

accommodation which has to do with adapting to climatic conditions widely different from those to which a group was accustomed.⁶ No doubt, the first generation of Canadian Mennonite Brethren required a radical adjustment to climate in their move from the mild Black Sea area to the continental extremes of the Canadian prairies. There is no evidence, however, that such a change in climate had adverse effects upon their religious commitment. Amalgamation has reference to the fusion of races through intermarriage.⁷ Such miscegenation, although rare among Canadian Mennonite Brethren, no doubt accelerates the process of assimilation between the parties which intermingle and especially among their offspring.

Acculturation, a term favored by anthropologists, has been defined by Redfield, Linton, and Herskovits as comprehending "those phenomena which result when groups of individuals having different cultures come into continuous first-hand contact, with subsequent changes in the original cultural patterns of either or both groups".⁸ Important to note is the reciprocal influence whereby the cultures of both groups are modified. Immigrants, hence, both accommodate themselves to their host society and also contribute culturally and modify it. As Milton Gordon notes, the term designates one dimension in the meeting of peoples: cultural behavior.⁹ Nothing is said about social relationships, the degree or nature of "struc-

⁶ Ibid., p. 311.

⁷ Ibid., p. 362.

⁸ Milton M. Gordon, Assimilation in American Life: The Role of Race, Religion, and National Origin (New York: Oxford University Press, 1975, p. 61.

⁹ Ibid., p. 62.

tural" intermingling, or the question of group self-identification. E. K. Francis made a special point of distinguishing between acculturation and assimilation, the former referring to the acceptance of culture traits from the larger society and the latter referring to the transference of individual members of a minority into the host society with permanent loss to the ethnic group.¹⁰ He seems to have failed to include the reciprocal influence of the host society and the immigrant group. However, Francis applies the concept to Mennonites rather successfully in explaining their shift on the continuum from conflict to convergence. He explicates,

In reality, acculturation may frequently be but a device by which a minority adjusts itself to the large society as a group, so that both conflict and absorption are successfully avoided. In this case group members participate simultaneously in many activities of the large society--particularly in its economy--as well as in the ethnic community which continues to function as a distinctive locality group. Portions of the traditional culture and of the culture of the greater society form a workable combination which, however, remains unstable. When a crisis suggests a re-evaluation of the compromise, the process of acculturation may even be reversed and the ethnic group may seek a solution by reviving traditional behavior patterns. This is precisely what happened in the case of Manitoba Mennonites.¹¹

Mennonite sociologists, Calvin Redekop and Leland Harder, have observed a similar distinction between acculturation and assimilation, but caution against confusing assimilation with secularization. Redekop states,

¹⁰ Francis, In Search of Utopia, p. 275.

¹¹ Francis, ibid., p. 217. The context of Francis' discussion is the larger Mennonite community in Manitoba, especially the descendants of the 1874 immigrants. Nonetheless, the principle would apply to the Mennonite Brethren immigrants who came from Russia as well. For them, an example is the response to television. See supra, pp. 172-73.

Acculturation denotes a process of accepting strange cultural elements. Assimilation means accepting the basic values underlying these cultural elements. Secularization means the exchange of sacred and profane values as desirable.¹²

Exchange of one cultural system for another does not necessarily mean secularization, as Mennonites have sometimes been prone to think.¹³

Harder explains, "Unlike acculturation, assimilation may result in secularization; but like acculturation, assimilation does not inevitably spell secularization".¹⁴ Canadian Mennonite Brethren today appear to have successfully acculturated to their dominant society without having totally assimilated the value system and having withstood in a measure the secularizing effects.

Perhaps no one has so thoroughly studied American assimilation as Milton Gordon. In his discussion, Gordon begins with Park and Burgess' definition of assimilation as

... a process of interpenetration and fusion in which persons and groups acquire the memories, sentiments, and attitudes of other persons or groups, and, by sharing their experience and history, are incorporated with them in a common cultural life.¹⁵

¹²Calvin Redekop, "Patterns of Cultural Assimilation among Mennonites", Proceedings of the Eleventh CMECP, 1957, p. 101. Redekop illustrates the difference by suggesting that adopting modern farm machinery is acculturation, while attending non-Mennonite schools will lead to assimilation since a different value system will be learned. Should new values be adopted which conflict with Mennonite norms of belief and ethics, then secularization occurs.

¹³Paul Peachey, The Church in the City, pp. 68f., has noted that Mennonites have interpreted the anxieties inherent in acculturation as religious issues.

¹⁴Leland Harder, "The Quest for Equilibrium in an Established Sect", p. 307.

¹⁵Park and Burgess, ibid., p. 360.

To this, he adds Park's modifications which stress the social or structural relationships and the variable of discrimination. "Assimilation has not taken place ... until the immigrant is able to function in the host community without encountering prejudiced attitudes or discriminatory behavior."¹⁶ Gordon isolates numerous variables of assimilation, but particularly cultural or behavioral (defined earlier as "acculturation"), identificational (development of a sense of peoplehood based exclusively on the host society), and structural (the large-scale entrance into cliques, clubs, and institutions of the host society, on a primary group level).¹⁷ Gordon sees structural assimilation as the key variable.

For, if plural cultures are to be maintained, they must be carried on by subsocieties which provide the framework for communal existence--their own networks of cliques, institutions, organizations, and informal friendship patterns--functioning not only for the first generation of immigrants but for the succeeding generations of American-born descendants as well.¹⁸

Gordon further develops three theories to explain American assimilation. "Anglo-conformity" demanded the complete renunciation of the immigrant's ancestral culture in favor of the behavior and values of the Anglo-Saxon core group; the "melting pot" theory envisaged a biological merger of the Anglo-Saxon people with other immigrant groups and a blending of their respective cultures into a new indigenous American type; and "cultural pluralism" allowed for the preservation of the communal life and significant portions of the culture of the later immigrant groups within the

¹⁶ Gordon, Assimilation in American Life, p. 63.

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 70.

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 158.

context of American citizenship and political and economic integration into American society.¹⁹ It is cultural pluralism which is particularly suited to the preservation of Mennonite sectarianism. Gordon explains this possibility.

The presumed goal of the cultural pluralists is to maintain enough subsocietal separation to guarantee the continuance of the ethnic cultural tradition and the existence of the group, without at the same time interfering with the carrying out of standard responsibilities to the general American civic life. In effect, this demands keeping primary group relations across ethnic lines sufficiently minimal to prevent a significant amount of inter-marriage, while cooperating with other groups and individuals in the secondary relations areas of political action, economic life, and civic responsibility.²⁰

While ethnicity has largely disappeared, there are still some evidences of its sacralizing hold.²¹ The following historical overview will indicate how Mennonite Brethren have successfully assimilated structurally, much in the manner which Gordon articulates, to ensure the continuity of their sectarian stance.

A Brief Overview of Canadian Mennonite Brethren Assimilation

Two caveats are in place about the following historical survey: the first concerns its brevity and the second its arbitrary periodization. To facilitate brevity, only the most suggestive historical incidents are included and the documentation is highly selective. Not only is the division of the half-century into three generations somewhat arbitrary, but

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 85. For an extended discussion, see pp. 84-159.

²⁰ Ibid., p. 158.

²¹ Supra, chapter six.

the appellations are also somewhat restrictive; yet both are intentional. The demarcations of time are not meant so much to define rigidly the boundaries between generations (for there will be much overlapping) as they are to suggest cross-sectional perspectives of separate generations for the purposes of comparison.²² And the suggested titles indicate predominant processes of assimilation rather than comprehensive designations.

First generation (1925-45): accommodation despite conflict. On the continuum from conflict to convergence, the first generation (those who immigrated in the 1920's) encountered the anticipated conflict of any immigrant group. Yet, accommodation took place from the outset. Three events stand out during these years. The first is the settlement itself of the newly-landed immigrants with the concomitant clash of cultures and initial adjustments. The conflicts had to do with land and livelihood, with acclimatization to new lows in temperature, and learning of a new language. As yet, there was no ideological conflict such as the earlier immigration of Old Colony Mennonites had faced with regards to education.²³ Instead, The New Outlook published a sympathetic article about the Russlaender, stating, "They are keen to pick up English, and their evident readiness to put off the old and put on the new does not serve to commend them to some of their Canadian brethren", and the Grain Growers' Guide

²²The significance of the generational division of time is confirmed by Leland Harder, "An Empirical Search for the Key Variable in Mennonite Reality", MQR, XLV (October, 1971), p. 349, who sees the inter-generational factor not as a key variable, but as a significant one.

²³See Leo Driedger, "Developments in Higher Education among Mennonites in Manitoba", Proceedings of the Sixteenth CMECP, 1967, pp. 62-64.

depicted the immigrant as progressive and eager to have schools.²⁴ One immigrant settler in Beechy, Saskatchewan, reflected on the severe climate and alluded to the difficulty of settlement, but felt compensated by the religious freedom he now enjoyed.²⁵ Another immigrant in a remote part of Manitoba, delighted in his own encounter with a new language and with the opportunity of his children to attend schools, intimated in his account of the "beginnings in Canada" of the "difficult times" that others like him must endure in the initial years.²⁶ These early settlers were accommodating themselves, however, despite their own awareness of being culture-carriers²⁷ and their consciousness of the assimilation dangers²⁸ to which their new environment might expose them. The religious vitality which

²⁴Quoted by E. K. Francis, In Search of Utopia, p. 208.

²⁵Joh. D. Huebert, MR, LI (Jan. 18, 1928), p. 9. After mention of the -35° F. cold spell, he writes, "Doch wir sind zufrieden, wenn in der Luft nur nicht die Rote oder schwarze Fahne weht. Es ist ja hier auch nicht alles Silber ... jedoch fuehlen wir uns ganz wohl im Lande, wo Ordnung herrscht. Wir sind Gott dankbar fuer unsere Obrigkeit.... Wir haben auch einen Ort, wo wir uns sonntaeglich zu Gottesdiensten versammeln koennen."

²⁶G. Loewen, "Ein Anfang in Kanada", MR, LI (May 30, 1928), p. 11. "Aehnlich wie mir geht es auch den andern hiesigen Immigranten, die einstweilen, was das irdische Heim betrifft, keinen hoeheren Wunsch haben, als den, sie moechten sich auf ihren Farmen halten koennen, bis sie die erste schwere Zeit ueberstanden haben, worauf ihnen dann das Fortkommen hier nicht allzu schwierig scheint. Ich moechte aber nicht einen jeden raten herzukommen. Erstens denen nicht, die ein starkes Verlangen in sich haben, reich zu werden, denn dazu bietet diese Gegendwenig Aussicht."

²⁷See G. G. Wiens, "Die Neueingewanderten als Kulturtraeger", MR, XLVIII (July 15, 1925), p. 10.

²⁸One settler in the Grande Prairie district of Alberta warned immigrants planning to come of the difficulties to be encountered. Then he concluded, "Die Gefahr der Assimilation ist hier gross. Darum, lieber Immigrant, bedenke erst alles, ehe Du Dich auf dem weitem Weg begibst." See H. Kornelsen, "Grande Prairie", MR, XLIX (Aug. 18, 1926), p. 9.

marked these immigrants fortified them in their isolation and led them to find a kindred group with whom to worship and to meet their social needs.

A second noteworthy event is the depression of the 1930's. Crop failures, low prices, and burgeoning debts led many to abandon their farms in Saskatchewan and find employment in cities or resettle in the garden lands of the Fraser Valley or peninsular Ontario. Such dispersion from the isolated Prairies to more populated communities led to increased exposure, acculturation, and eventual assimilation. Except for testing and often strengthening their religious commitment, the depression did not produce immediate, secularizing trends.²⁹ It did, however, result in the eventual dissolution of a number of congregations across the Prairies. As indicated above,³⁰ such residential mobility had its own religious toll.

A third experience of conflict for the first generation was World War II. The ideological test of the movement's non-resistant stance has been outlined in chapter five.³¹ The failure of some Mennonite Brethren to take a conscientious objector's stand indicated some erosion of this religious distinctive, but led to increased efforts after the war to teach the doctrine more comprehensively. Despite some concessions³² to the host

²⁹For an account of an immigrant's recollection of his experiences during the depression, see M. Hamm, Aus der Alten in die Neue Heimat, pp. 104-106. He proudly declared that he never requested relief help from MCC nor welfare payments from the government for which he would have been eligible.

³⁰Supra, p. 462.

³¹Supra, pp. 175-78.

³²Illustrative of the need to make some concessions is the exhortation of one anonymous writer, who identifies himself simply as "Ein

society during these first years, the conflicts but highlighted the rigorous religious commitment of Canadian Mennonite Brethren.

Second generation (1945-65): acculturation and alienation. For the children of the early immigrants, the process of acculturation was somewhat easier, yet resulted in casualties of alienation which disrupted the cohesiveness of the religious community. Again, three events are highlighted to illustrate the accelerated tempo of acculturation following World War II together with the expected hazards of alienation. The first of these has to do with the major components of social change--the sudden interest in higher education, the rapid urbanization, the entrance into a new vocational world, and the resulting affluence--as analysed in chapters ten to thirteen. By mid-century the effects of the first three of these was especially noticeable. Expressions of dismay resounded from two of its most stalwart leaders, A. H. Unruh and B. B. Janz. Unruh lamented that "slowly the flood of conformity with the world and secularization infiltrate through the broken dams, and we can identify our time as a period of the breakthrough of the transmitted tradition in the Mennonite Brethren Church".³³ In his analysis, Unruh pointed to six factors which contributed to the breakthrough: the influence of other (church) associations, the direct influence of the world, the opposition to "unrec-

Schulmeister". He appeals for an inner identification with the newly adopted country, in addition to meeting formal requirements for becoming a citizen. "Lieber Leser, bist Du als Immigrant in dieses Land gekommen und hast Dein Untertanerversprechen feierlich vor Gott und Menschen abgegeben, so werde auch dem Herzen nach ein Buerger dieses Landes und dann erst darfst Du hoffen, in diesem Lande wirklich feste Wurzel zu fassen." MR, LVI (Dec. 6, 1933), p. 3.

³³ A. H. Unruh, "Das Durchbrechen der ueberlieferten Ordnung in der Mennoniten Bruedergemeinde", Voice, II (July-Aug., 1953), 12.

essary strictness, failure to understand youth, the lack of self-evaluation among leaders, the laxity and worldliness of many church members. At the same time, Unruh recognized both the liberating possibilities of this "breakthrough" and proposed numerous ways to withstand the evil consequences of such a "breakthrough".³⁴ Janz presented an analysis of the Mennonite Brethren Church to the annual session of the Canadian Conference. In doing so, he assessed its strengths and its liabilities. Among the liabilities ("schwersten Schattenseiten unserer Konferenz"), he included materialism (with its craving for pleasure, ambition, and amusements), the love of the world among youth, the problem of language, and laxity in church discipline.³⁵ For these leaders, not only assimilation, but also the secularizing effects of assimilation, had accompanied the acculturative process.

Another major occurrence for the second generation was the language transition.³⁶ Church leaders who analysed the developments of the Canadian Mennonite Brethren scene in the 1950's and 1960's showed an awareness of this "language problem".³⁷ B. B. Janz, however, did not view the transition in language as a problem warranting a major crisis.³⁸ Nonethe-

³⁴ Ibid., pp. 12-17.

³⁵ B. B. Janz, "Die Konferenz Botschaft", YB, 1954, pp. 10-15.

³⁶ For a more elaborate discussion, see supra, pp. 221-25.

³⁷ See William Schmidt, "The Development of the Canadian M. B. Church", YB, 1960, pp. 158-59.

³⁸ B. B. Janz, ibid., p. 14. "Das Sprachenproblem in unsern Gemeinden in Kanada ist eine sehr ernste Sache, kann den aeltern Geschwistern viel Schmerzen und der Gemeinde manche Leichtfertigkeit unter Umstaenden bringen. Es brauchte aber nicht ein Problem fuer eine Krisis zu sein,

less, it was a major factor in the acculturation process, but change in language did not really retard the religiosity of the movement. Conducting services wholly in English allowed the churches to become a "community church" in fact, rather than a church serving but one ethnic subcommunity.

A third event worthy of note for the second generation is the centennial celebration of the Mennonite Brethren Church, which precipitated reflections on the impact of assimilation. At the special celebration in Reedley, California, at the time of the General Conference session in 1960, several incisive statements in Conference sermons drew attention to the effects of the acculturation process. Referring to changes in language, vocation, and urbanization, J. A. Toews asserted,

The above changes provide new opportunities for an effective evangelistic outreach; they also provide occasions for the disastrous inroads of materialism and secularism. Can we unite as a brotherhood on ethical principles to keep out the floodtide of worldliness? A church that conforms to the world has no message that will transform the world!³⁹

B. J. Braun characterized the Mennonite Brethren of 1960 as subject to the threat of complacency ("too aloof to kingdom involvements"), of materialism ("too involved"), and of worldliness ("too busy for primary

wenn alles andere gesund und geistlich mit weiser Steuerung zu regulieren, wohlgemerkt, wenn beide Seiten geistlich sind. Hier soll man sehr sachte gehen, aber nimmer kurz uebers Knie brechen."

³⁹J. A. Toews, "Christ's Challenge to Re-Orientation and Restoration", GCYB, 1960, p. 6. In an article in The Voice, Toews similarly lamented the loss of biblical separation. See "Unsere Gefahren--die Gefahren der dritten Generation", Voice, VIII (May-June, 1959), 1, 2. "Es fehlen die innern geistliche und moralische Daemme um die Flut der Verweltlichung abzuhalten. Es besteht die starke Neigung in der dritten Generation, sich nicht nur kulturell und wirtschaftlich der Umgebung anzupassen, sondern auch auf sittlichen und religioesen Gebiet."

things").⁴⁰ And Lando Hiebert lamented the lost generation, indicating something of the accompanying alienation.

Through urbanization, higher professional education, the depression of the thirties, the late wars, and also a general worldliness, we have been deprived in our church membership in many of our families of brothers and sisters, sons and daughters, who have gone to other places where there would not be a Mennonite Brethren church. This generation is lost not so much in the sense of salvation, but lost to the potential dynamic of the Mennonite Brethren Church testimony in the nation and in the world.⁴¹

In a centennial publication, J. H. Quiring analysed the Mennonite Brethren at "the present" (1960) as increasing numerically, spreading and shifting geographically, prospering economically, standing firm doctrinally, and struggling ethnically. Quiring remarked, "Today complaints are pouring in that worldliness is wedging its way into our ranks.... One of the sinister wiles of the devil today is die Verharmlosung (making sin seem harmless) of that which is basically evil".⁴² Cornelius Wall alerted readers of The Voice to the particular significance of the fourth generation (since the inception of the movement), who, having become part of the accommodative process, determine whether the movement will endure. He explains,

The fourth generation of any association is therefore in a strategically, exceptionally important position. If it remains

⁴⁰ B. J. Braun, "An Examination of the M. B. Faith at the Turn of the Century", GCYB, 1960, p. 7.

⁴¹ Lando Hiebert, "Our Sacred Trust Is a Spiritual Thrust", GCYB, 1960, p. 12.

⁴² J. H. Quiring, "The Mennonite Brethren Church: An Analysis of the Present" in A Century of Grace and Witness, 1860-1960, ed. by Walter Wiebe, p. 77.

with the fundamentals which were established at the founding of the church and which were observed by the following generations, then it justifies the origin of the group and proves its viability.⁴³

These interpreters of the Mennonite Brethren movement at the time of its centennial sensed the accommodation to the "world", the fragility in membership, and the preoccupation with materialistic pursuits--all indications of secularization--but invariably expressed confidence in the viability of the movement, despite these threats to its continuity.

Third generation (1965-75): assimilation and convergence. What E. K. Francis predicted about the third generation has in fact become a reality. In 1954, he projected,

Sooner or later the Mennonites, too, would be absorbed into the general stream of Canadian life; hallowed traditions and customs would die away with the immigrant generation; at least their grandchildren would easily overcome the cultural lag in their mores and would embrace more up-to-date ideas; even attitudes towards religion would be modernized and religious taboos less restrictive, thus permitting more intimate conversation with and even conversion to other Protestant churches; English would become a primary means of communication, leaving their folk dialect a relic to be occasionally paraded by some old-timer before curious visitors or wide-eyed youngsters.⁴⁴

Looking at the decade or more ahead of him in 1966, that is, at the grandchildren of the immigrants, Mennonite Brethren leader, F. C. Peters, projected to the annual session of the Canadian Conference that there would be a greater proportion of older people, increased wealth, further urbanization, higher levels of education, and great lay leadership potential. "Our problems lie in the area of labour relations, of unions, and Menno-

⁴³ C. Wall, "Die Mennoniten-Brudergemeinde--eine biblische Gemeinde?" Voice, VIII (Nov.-Dec., 1959), p. 13.

⁴⁴ E. K. Francis, In Search of Utopia, p. 215.

nite Brethren have not yet begun to scratch the surfaces in some of these areas".⁴⁵ Reflecting on the Conference proceedings almost a decade later, John Redekop observed,

For better or worse, we are becoming more acculturated. We have accepted fully the language and idioms of the land. The delegates no longer give the impression of being a massive, traditional church council. We believe that the Holy Spirit still guides our deliberations, but we also have a parliamentary rule book and an official parliamentarian, no less!⁴⁶

Indeed, as these spokesmen intimate, the present generation represents a stage of structural assimilation in which there is little apparent conflict, because of the degree of acculturation, but much convergence. The conflict, however, is more inward and expresses itself in an identity crisis, as indicated below.

The implications of such structural assimilation are well stated by Harry Loewen in his article on "Winde des Wechsels". Loewen argues that it will not only require thorough acquaintance with current trends, but antiquated rules and practices will need to be changed. Moreover, diversity of opinion will need to prevail in secondary issues of belief and doctrine.⁴⁷ However, the assimilative convergence has brought about an identity crisis for both second and third generation Canadian Mennonite Brethren. Before examining this new search for identity and its current consequences, a further look at empirical data and the degree of international differences in religion needs to take place.

⁴⁵ F. C. Peters, "Faith of Our Fathers in the Day of Our Children", MBH, V (Sept. 9, 1966), p. 4.

⁴⁶ J. H. Redekop, "An Assessment", MBH, XII (Aug. 3, 1973), p. 11.

⁴⁷ Harry Loewen, "Winde des Wechsels", Voice, XV (Nov.-Dec., 1966),

Testing the Effects of Assimilation

Measuring the effects of assimilation is a rather difficult undertaking. First, because assimilation has to do with basic values underlying cultural elements, measuring degrees of assimilation is a much more subjective process than determining the stage of outward conformity. Moreover, because an empirical test of a controlled group could not be administered diachronically to represent the gradual effects of assimilation, a single questionnaire used for the Church Member Profile becomes the measure as it is applied to three distinctly separated age groups. Hence, the following measures of the effects of assimilation are based on the assumption that intergenerational differences in religious practices, beliefs, and ethics suggest differences in degrees of assimilation.⁴⁸

Generational differences and the practice of religion. Using the same measures of religion as in the preceding chapters and cross-tabulating the answers to specific questions from the Church Member Profile with distinctly separated age groups, one arrives at the following intergenerational responses to religion. Table XIV-1 reflects the generational differences and the practice of religion. The responses to measures of devotionism and associationalism are distinctly different. In devotion-

⁴⁸ For example, it is assumed that those aged 60 or more in 1972 (when the survey was conducted), most of whom were immigrants of the 1920's (at that time at least 12 to 14 years of age), are not as fully assimilated as those aged 40 to 50, most of whom were born of immigrant parents; and both of the first two generations are less fully assimilated than the third generation, aged 15 to 25 in 1972. See Leland Harder, "The Key Variable in Mennonite Reality", *MOR*, XLV (Oct., 1971), 349, who discovered that the intergenerational factor, while not the key variable, was of "vital significance", especially in the late 1960's.

Table XIV-1

Generational Differences and the Practice of Religion

ITEMS MEASURING RELIGIOUS PRACTICE	PERCENTAGE COLUMN RESPONSE FOR THREE GENERATIONS		
	AGE 60 OR MORE	40 TO 50	15 TO 25
DEVOTIONALISM			
Prayer	83.7 n=36	93.1 n=94	85.1 n=63
Bible study	90.2 n=37	92.2 n=94	79.7 n=59
Closeness to God	71.4 n=30	65.3 n=66	50.0 n=37
Seeking God's will	71.1 n=27	79.2 n=80	60.8 n=45
SUB-TOTAL OF RANK ORDERS	8	11	5
ASSOCIATIONALISM			
Church attendance	66.7 n=28	87.0 n=87	87.8 n=65
Sunday school attendance	41.5 n=17	74.5 n=76	73.0 n=54
Midweek services	34.1 n=15	44.6 n=45	62.2 n=46
Leadership post	38.1 n=16	74.0 n=74	47.9 n=35
SUB-TOTAL OF RANK ORDERS	4	10	10
TOTALS OF RANK ORDERS	12	21	15
SOURCE: Church Member Profile, 1972.			

alism, where surprisingly the second generation has the highest rating, followed by the first generation (except in "closeness to God", where possibly the advanced years make one feel "closer"), it is the third generation that is significantly less. In associationalism, the second and third generations rate decidedly higher than the first.⁴⁹ Whereas in

devotionalism, the third generation was consistently lowest, in associationalism the first generation was consistently lowest. This would momentarily not support the hypothesis that greater assimilation leads to more secularization. One might argue that in the case of the first generation the factor of physical vitality may be the intervening variable, and the lesser score on associationalism reflects decrepitude more than it does secularization.

Generational differences and religious beliefs. Table XIV-2 indicates the cross-tabulations of measures of religious beliefs and generational differences. Here there is a remarkably consistent pattern for the three groups of measures. The first and second generations rate somewhat higher (with the first exceeding the second, but not significantly so). The third generation is significantly lower. Contrary to other variables of social change reflected in chapters nine to thirteen, the measures of Anabaptism consistently follow the other responses. The total results support the hypothesis that assimilation leads to secularization, especially between the second and third generations. Whatever factors account for it--ethnicity, socialization, or leadership involvement--the second generation shows little secularization despite its degree of assimilation.

Generational differences and ethics. Table XIV-3 shows the cross-tabulations of measures of ethics and generational differences. Not sur-

⁴⁹ The results are in agreement with Lenski's findings in the Detroit area, who observed that church attendance increased with Americanization (the length of time in the United States). See The Religious Factor, pp. 43-48.

Table XIV-2

Generational Differences and Religious Beliefs

ITEMS MEASURING RELIGIOUS BELIEFS	PERCENTAGE COLUMN RESPONSE FOR THREE GENERATIONS		
	AGE 60 OR MORE	40 TO 50	15 TO 25
ORTHODOXY			
Deity of Jesus	100.0 n=42	97.1 n=99	93.2 n=69
Belief in miracles	97.6 n=41	97.0 n=98	95.9 n=71
Jesus' resurrection	100.0 n=41	100.0 n=99	93.2 n=69
Jesus' personal return	100.0 n=44	99.0 n=101	95.9 n=71
Personal devil	97.7 n=43	100.0 n=102	94.6 n=70
SUB-TOTAL OF RANK ORDERS	13	11	5
FUNDAMENTALISM			
Inspiration of the Bible	95.3 n=41	100.0 n=102	90.5 n=67
Virgin birth of Jesus	100.0 n=42	99.0 n=101	97.3 n=72
Six-day creation	77.3 n=34	53.0 n=53	35.1 n=26
Universal flood	95.5 n=42	95.1 n=97	86.5 n=64
Eternal punishment	84.1 n=37	89.1 n=90	82.4 n=61
SUB-TOTAL OF RANK ORDERS	13	12	5
ANABAPTISM			
Following Jesus	70.7 n=29	60.4 n=61	55.4 n=41
Against infant baptism	81.0 n=34	89.1 n=90	87.8 n=65
Church discipline	95.1 n=39	92.1 n=93	70.3 n=52
Non-resistance	85.7 n=36	73.5 n=75	47.3 n=35
Non-swearing of oaths	88.1 n=37	86.3 n=88	70.3 n=52
SUB-TOTAL OF RANK ORDERS	13	11	6
TOTALS OF RANK ORDERS	39	34	16

SOURCE: Church Member Profile, 1972.

prisingly, in personal and moral issues, reflecting traditional taboos among Mennonite Brethren, the elderly generation ranks highest, the grandchildren rank decidedly lowest, and the middle-aged group in-between. The differences are significant. In the more liberal, social ethics, consis-

Table XIV-3
Generational Differences and Ethics

ITEMS MEASURING ETHICS	PERCENTAGE COLUMN RESPONSE FOR THREE GENERATIONS		
	AGE 60 OR MORE	40 TO 50	15 TO 25
MORAL ISSUES			
Drinking moderately	70.5 n=31	58.0 n=58	28.8 n=21
Smoking tobacco	88.4 n=38	87.0 n=87	59.5 n=44
Adult-rated movies	63.4 n=26	59.4 n=60	31.1 n=23
Premarital sex	97.7 n=42	99.0 n=99	89.2 n=66
Social dancing	90.2 n=37	74.3 n=78	40.5 n=30
SUB-TOTAL OF RANK ORDERS	14	11	5
SOCIAL ETHICS			
Race relations	27.3 n=12	54.9 n=56	85.1 n=63
Social welfare	27.9 n=12	31.4 n=32	44.6 n=33
Anti-Communism	19.5 n=8	24.0 n=24	23.0 n=17
Labor unions	25.6 n=11	12.7 n=13	6.8 n=5
Capital punishment	9.5 n=4	13.7 n=14	33.8 n=25
SUB-TOTAL OF RANK ORDERS	7	11	12
TOTALS OF RANK ORDERS	21	22	17

SOURCE: Church Member Profile, 1972.

tent with the findings in earlier chapters, the tables are turned, with the older generation ranking lowest and the younger generation ranking highest on the social ethics scale. As a result, the totals in ethics are not so different, for the extremes mentioned above balanced each other out. One would conclude that in conservative ethical practices, assimilation leads to secularization.

Summary of Empirical Findings

Table XIV-4 summarizes the crude, rank order ratings as used in the previous chapters. The summary by itself (and it must be kept in mind that the rank order method tends to exaggerate minimal differences) would suggest that there is no secularization or loss of religiosity between the first and second generations, but a significant decline between the second and third. This conclusion calls into question Will Herberg's thesis that the grandchildren of immigrant forebears return to their ancestral religious faiths, after the second generation had disassociated itself from the more ethnic first generation, rejecting also the church with which the ethnic subcommunity was inextricably linked.⁵⁰ The findings of this study suggest that the second generation has retained its religious vitality and that the third generation is in fact, with the exception of associationalism, more secularized. The secularizing effects of assimilation are, thus, more apparent in the third generation than the second.

⁵⁰ Will Herberg, Protestant, Catholic, Jew, pp. 16-45. Herberg was supporting Marcus Hansen's "principle of third-generation interest" in that "what the son wishes to forget, the grandson wishes to remember". See Marcus L. Hansen, "The Third Generation in America", Commentary, XIV (Nov., 1952), 492-500.

Table XIV-4

A Summary of Scales of Generational Differences and Measures of Religiosity

VARIABLES OF RELIGIOSITY	TOTALS OF RANK ORDER RATINGS		
	AGE 60 OR MORE	40 TO 50	15 TO 25
PRACTICE OF RELIGION			
Devotionalism	8	11	5
Associationalism	4	10	10
SUB-TOTALS	12	21	15
RELIGIOUS BELIEFS			
Orthodoxy	13	11	5
Fundamentalism	13	12	5
Anabaptism	13	11	6
SUB-TOTALS	39	34	16
ETHICS			
Moral Issues	14	11	5
Social Ethics	7	11	12
SUB-TOTALS	21	22	17
TOTAL	72	77	48

SOURCE: Church Member Profile, 1972.

2. Identity Crisis and Its Consequences

Assimilation of Canadian Mennonite Brethren has produced paradoxical results. While convergence with society has resulted in some toll to religious vitality, as the empirical findings indicate, such assimilation by no means represents a substantial loss of faith. Especially among the second generation, and even among the third generation, there is evidence of surprisingly vigorous religious life. However, on account of the rapid

assimilation in recent decades, the tension of "being in the world but not of the world" has been accentuated and has contributed to the current identity crisis. As V. C. Nahirny and J. A. Fishman observed, despite acculturation, "the sons continued to remain acutely conscious of their ethnic identity".⁵¹ In the case of the present-day Canadian Mennonite Brethren, however, religious identity is no longer determined largely by external, cultural behavioral patterns, but by association with those within a culturally pluralistic world who have a similar ideological intent, despite the varying external features of ethnicity. It is left, then, to show how the present search for identity is taking place and what the consequences of the newly forged identity might be.

The Search for Identity

The present search for an identity, which allows for maximal convergence with society culturally with minimal concession ideologically, becomes apparent in numerous ways.

Reformulating the theological and ethical stance. Most important, it is marked by a deliberate rethinking and reformulation of doctrinal issues and ethical concerns. Already in 1952, almost as a precursor to the current theological reorientation, the editor of the Konferenz-Jugendblatt viewed the continuity of Mennonites not in terms of ethnic identity, but in terms of theological moorings.⁵² More recently, Elmer and Phyllis

⁵¹Vladimir C. Nahirny and Joshua A. Fishman, "American Immigrant Groups: Ethnic Identification and the Problem of Generations", Sociological Review, XIII, 1965, 311-325.

⁵²H. F. Klassen, "Wollen wir Mennoniten bleiben?" K-J, VIII (Jan.-

Martens have aptly pointed to this current tension. "Theologically, there are emerging tensions between individual Brethren with more liberal views and the orthodox majority. If ethics was the problem of the sixties, theology may well be the problem of the seventies".⁵³

The current rethinking of theological issues is marked, first, by a return to the Anabaptist and, more significantly, the New Testament positions.⁵⁴ It is important to the Anabaptist scholars to verify that the beginning itself of the Mennonite Brethren Church was characterized by this "return".⁵⁵ That such restorationist thinking does not result in a static view, but is current and dynamic, is suggested by New Testament theologian, John E. Toews, who maintains that Anabaptism calls us to "flesh out" our New Testament heritage. He avers, "Anabaptism means a profound commitment to take Jesus seriously in everyday life".⁵⁶ It is marked, in the second

Feb. 3, 1952), p. 1. Klassen explained, "Man verstehe aber richtig: Es handelt sich nicht um Deutsch oder Englisch, sondern um grundsatzliches Loslassen von der Stellung der Vaeter und der Gruender unserer Gemeinde."

⁵³ Elmer and Phyllis Martens, "Mennonite Brethren: Does the Name Fit?" Christian Living, XVII (Sept., 197), p. 9.

⁵⁴ Supra, pp. 147-51, elaborates this "restorationist thinking".

⁵⁵ J. A. Toews, "Die Ersten Mennoniten Brueder und Menno Simons: Hinweg von Menno, oder zurueck zu Menno?" Voice, VI (Nov.-Dec., 1957), 1-3. Toews concludes his article by emphasizing, "Die M. B. Gemeinde der Gegenwart steht in Gefahr diese historische Orientierung unserer ersten Brueder zu vergessen, und als Folge davon wertvolle geistliche Gueter zu verlieren. Um einen rechten Heilsbegriff und einen biblischen Gemeindebegriff festzuhalten, lasst uns immer wieder zurueck gehen zur Lehre des Neuen Testaments, sowie auch zu unserm treuen Lehrer derselben: Menno Simon."

⁵⁶ John E. Toews, "Where to, Mennonite Brethren ...?" The Christian Leader, XXXIX (Jan. 6, 1976), p. 2.

place, by warning against the foreign influences that have shaped our current theology. J. A. Toews maintained,

Our present identity-crisis is largely the result of our exposure to "every wind of doctrine" from various theological schools of thought. Our problem is perhaps not so much one of exposure to various theological views, as our indiscriminate acceptance of them.⁵⁷

In the third place, such theological reformulation is happening through careful restatement of the Confession of Faith⁵⁸ and through in-depth studies of particular doctrines which represent the distinctives of the denomination. For example, in 1965 Delbert Wiens showed how the traditional understanding and description of the conversion of adults, who had had a crisis experience, did not fit children who had been "converted" between the ages of five and ten. He admits, "Because we have a theology of conversion appropriate to adults but no adequate theology of Christian nurture, we know what to do with pagans but not what to do with our own children."⁵⁹ Victor Adrian responded, "... We need to be challenged to the creative task of expanding our theological heritage, searching the Scriptures in order to understand God and his relationship to men and the world."⁶⁰ More recently,

⁵⁷ J. A. Toews, "In Search of Identity", MBH, XI (Mar. 10, 1972), p. 3. For an elaborate and updated statement of such influences; see J. B. Toews, "Mennonite Brethren Identity in the Context of Changing Theological Influences", paper presented to the Symposium on Mennonite Brethren History, Fresno, May 1-3, 1975.

⁵⁸ The seventh revised draft of the Confession of Faith was adopted at the 1975 General Conference session in Winnipeg. See GCTB, pp. 7-16.

⁵⁹ Delbert Wiens, New Wineskins for Old Wine: A Study of the Mennonite Brethren Church (Hillsboro, Kansas: M. B. Publishing House, 1965).

⁶⁰ Victor Adrian, "Where Do We Go from Here?" MBH, V (April 29, 1966), p. 5.

in responding to Harold Lindsell's controversial Battle for the Bible, Mennonite Brethren theologians have cautiously articulated a stance concerning biblical authority in which they preserve the integrity of the traditional view of authority, but avoid the pitfalls of the fundamentalist position.⁶¹ Finally, in ethical matters, Mennonite Brethren are reinterpreting their stance in keeping with contemporary issues.⁶² It appears, then, that in the search for identity Mennonite Brethren are exploring a theology and an ethic which transcends ethnic boundaries.⁶³

Reconsidering the denominational designation. A further indication of the current search for identity is the question of denominational designation. In his article to the Mennonite Brethren Herald constituency, John A. Toews related the discussion of the name to the crisis in identity.

Mennonite Brethren are experiencing an identity crisis unprecedented in their history. Questions such as "Who are we?" and "What are we?" are surfacing in private discussions. The recent debate in our periodicals about the change of our denominational name is perhaps the clearest symptom of this crisis.⁶⁴

While some research has taken place on the impact of bearing such a design-

⁶¹See Howard Loewen, "Biblical Infallibility: An Examination of Lindsell's Thesis", Direction, VI (April, 1977), 3-18. See also David Ewert, "Book Reviews", Direction, VI (April, 1977), 39-40.

⁶²Supra, pp. 171-88.

⁶³Paul Peachey, "Identity Crisis among American Mennonites", MQR, XLII (Oct., 1968), 248, shows that the Mennonite identity cannot be explained anthropologically, as in the case of Durkheim who maintained that society was the source of the sacred. Instead, religious beliefs among Anabaptists preceded and led to religious communities and spread among populations ethnically heterogeneous.

⁶⁴J. A. Toews, "In Search of Identity", MBH, XI (Mar. 10, 1972), p. 2.

nation,⁶⁵ most of the discussion is based on opinions held by individuals. The frequency of this preoccupation with name is mentioned by H. F. Klassen in the Konferenz-Jugendblatt in 1952.⁶⁶ Particularly in the last decade the discussion has been acute. In 1969, columnist John Redekop broached the question in his allegory of the "Two Bottles" in which he strongly suggested an appropriate change in labels to avoid being misrepresented as Amish.⁶⁷ In a reply to Redekop, Professor Harry Loewen maintained that "Mennonite" is a "good label".⁶⁸ Again in 1971, Redekop contended that the name "Mennonite" was confusing and scared people off, and hence has lost its utility for evangelical Anabaptists.⁶⁹ This article sparked off a good bit of debate and Professor Victor Doerksen argued, "We are what we have become--heaven help us--and things would not be any different had our forefathers been called some other Schimpfname (like 'Abstainers'?)",⁷⁰

⁶⁵ See Peter M. Hamm, "A Study of the Reactions to the Name 'Mennonite Brethren' among Those Who Bear This Denominational Designation But Are of Non-Mennonite Background", paper presented at Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary, Fresno, California, May, 1964.

⁶⁶ H. F. Klassen, "Wollen wir Mennoniten bleiben?" K-J, VIII (Jan.-Feb., 1952), pp. 2-3.

⁶⁷ J. H. Redekop, "Two Bottles", MBH, VIII (Jan. 24, 1969), p. 10.

⁶⁸ H. Loewen, "A Good Label", MBH, VIII (Feb. 21, 1969), pp. 8, 20. In Redekop's reply to Loewen, he contends, "Let us keep the name Mennonite if it is meaningful and helpful in building our Lord's kingdom, but if it is not, let us at least be willing to consider alternatives." See "A Reply", MBH, VIII (Mar. 21, 1969), p. 10.

⁶⁹ J. H. Redekop, "Evangelical-Anabaptist but not Mennonite", MBH, X (July 9, 1971), p. 8. See also his "Response", MBH, X (Sept. 24, 1971), p. 8, and "Conference Debates: What's in a Name", MBH, X (July 23, 1971), pp. 2, 4.

⁷⁰ Victor Doerksen, "Why Be Ashamed?", MBH, X (Aug. 27, 1971), p. 9. (*Italics his.*)

and again he asserted, "We cannot slough off our history by changing our name; we can only add a potentially murky chapter by such an action".⁷¹

At the most recent Canadian Conference, Moderator F. C. Peters once again exposed the issue in his keynote address. Having himself at one time explained that "the Mennonite Brethren revival was meant to be a return to the Anabaptist vision rather than a deviation from it",⁷² he now told the delegates,

I'm at a point where I am asking whether the use of a name which has an ethnic connotation (as Mennonite Brethren) should not be reconsidered.... It is the biggest issue we have faced in fifty years.⁷³

It seems that for Canadian Mennonite Brethren Shakespeare's query, "What's in a name?", has more than just passing significance; instead, it is a reflection of their own struggle with identity.

Rediscovering the heritage. The crisis of identity is also particularly evident in the search for their roots. On the one hand, there is probing scholarship and Conference action which seeks to preserve their heritage. Already in 1945 and again in 1947, a first-generation scholar, A. H. Unruh, was requested to undertake the writing of history to preserve

⁷¹Victor Doerksen, "A Clarification", MBH, X (Oct. 22, 1971), p. 24. See also the letters by J. M. Schmidt, "Why Be Unbiblical?" MBH, X (Sept. 10, 1971), p. 10, and the reply by Harry Loewen, "Why Quarrel about a Name", MBH, X (Oct. 22, 1971), pp. 10, 24.

⁷²F. C. Peters, "The Early Mennonite Brethren Church: Baptist or Anabaptist?" Mennonite Life, XV (Oct., 1959), pp. 176-78. In 1960, he also stated, "To this day I am not convinced that our name is a real barrier", in "The Centennial Conference", MO, VI (Nov. 25, 1960), p. 2.

⁷³Harold Jantz and Allan Siebert, "Mennonite Name—Biggest Issue in Fifty Years", MBH, XVI (July 22, 1971), pp. 2-4.

documents that already had been written.⁷⁴ In 1960, a second-generation spokesman, Victor Doerksen, exhorted,

... Just as it was long overdue that church historians should credit the Anabaptists within the whole Reformation, so it is incumbent upon each generation of Mennonites—and perhaps especially Mennonite Brethren—to examine afresh the heritage which is our gift and our responsibility.⁷⁵

What Harold S. Bender and his associates contributed to the "recovery of the Anabaptist vision" among (Old) Mennonites during the mid-century decades⁷⁶ that J. A. Toews and A. J. Klassen, and others, are doing for Mennonite Brethren today.⁷⁷ J. A. Toews' completion of a history was followed by a special symposium on Mennonite Brethren history in 1976.⁷⁸ The search for roots is also marked by the establishment of historical societies and a new interest in archives.⁷⁹ Such renewed interest in heritage

⁷⁴See YB, 1945, p. 78, and YB, 1947, p. 169. Unruh's history, Die Geschichte der Mennoniten-Brudergemeinde, was completed in 1954.

⁷⁵Victor Doerksen, "The Question of Mennonite Origins", MO, VI (Sept. 23, 1960), p. 2.

⁷⁶See Guy F. Hershberger, The Recovery of the Anabaptist Vision: A Sixteenth Anniversary Tribute to Harold S. Bender, 1957.

⁷⁷Besides writing numerous articles in The Voice, Toews has authored True Nonresistance through Christ (1955), Alternative Service in Canada during World War II (1959), and A History of the Mennonite Brethren Church (1975). Klassen has edited numerous works, such as Revival Fires in British Columbia (1957), The Bible School Story (1963), The Church in Mission (1967), Consultation on Anabaptist Mennonite Theology (1970), and Documents of Mennonite Brethren History (1976); and he has written several theses which focus on Mennonite Brethren and Anabaptist themes: "Mennonite Confessions of Faith" (1964), "Mennonite Brethren Theology: 1860-1914" (1966), and "Discipleship in Anabaptism and Bonhoeffer" (1971).

⁷⁸The papers presented by a body of Mennonites scholars are currently being published.

⁷⁹The need for archives was already expressed by A. H. Unruh in 1943. See YB, 1943, p. 57. More recently, J. B. Toews, former president

resulted in a resolution by the Canadian Conference on "Mennonite Brethren Identity" submitted by the Board of Spiritual and Social Concerns in 1973. It first stated its concern as follows:

We confess that, as a result to exposure of various 'winds of doctrine', and due to the indiscriminate acceptance of views which are contrary to both the New Testament and the Anabaptist Vision, we have in recent years experienced an identity crisis. This identity crisis has manifested itself in a polarization of theological views (evangelism--social concerns) and in an alienation of our youth from the historic foundations of our faith.⁸⁰

Then followed a four-fold resolution of action "to clarify our vision and strengthen our witness".⁸¹

On the other hand, there are words of caution which guard against excessive historical preoccupation at the risk of progressive forward action. When the centennial celebrations of the beginning of the Mennonite Brethren church were in the headlines in 1960, a first-generation (of the 1920's immigration) pastor sought to examine the present in the light of the past.

... This church brought to her children a rich heritage which each generation must acquire as did our fathers, though not necessarily under similar circumstances. May we not ask then: Has our rugged "individualism" become unbridled in some respects? Are we separated because we are dedicated to God? Have we taken to isolationism from God's children instead of healthy separatism from the world? Do we still bear the zeal of missions for our neighbors, or are we only foreign missionaries? Is our church polity still a means of building the kingdom of God, or have our practices become shrines to us?⁸²

of Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary, has devoted much time to the promotion of interest in Mennonite Brethren history and in the collection of documents.

⁸⁰ YB, 1973, p. 9.

⁸¹ Ibid., pp. 9-10.

⁸² I. W. Redekop, "Our Christian Heritage", MO, VI (May 20, 1960).

In response to the building of a Mennonite museum, John Redekop maintained that "by glorifying our cultural peculiarity and ethnic separation, especially as it existed in the past, we are only making our evangelistic outreach more difficult".⁸³ Reflecting on the centennial celebrations of the 1874 immigration and of the 450th anniversary of the founding of Anabaptism, John E. Toews observed,

... We, together with other ethnic Mennonites, are hungry for our roots. We want to know where we have come from. We are losing our ethnic shame and beginning to feel good about being Mennonite. "Mennonite is beautiful." After centuries of inferiority feelings we have experienced a moment of liberation...⁸⁴

Instead, Toews reminded Mennonite Brethren readers,

The 450th anniversary founding of Anabaptism judges all forms of Christian ethnicity and calls for rebirth of a radical faith and a church that is true to Jesus and the New Testament.⁸⁵

Rediscovering the heritage cannot simply be interpreted, then, as ethnic preservation, but ideological reorientation.

Reaffirming denominational and national separateness. Finally, the search for identity is also apparent in the confusion pertaining to denominational and national loyalties. Paradoxically, out of the ambivalence comes an affirmation of identity, both of sectarian separateness and national independence. While there is little empirical basis to pinpoint a "peculiar constellation of symptoms which comprises the Mennonite real-

⁸³ John H. Redekop, "Museum or Missions?" MBH, III (June 19, 1964), p. 2.

⁸⁴ John E. Toews, "Where to, Mennonite Brethren ...?" Christian Leader, XXXIX (Jan. 6, 1976), p. 2.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

ity",⁸⁶ Mennonite Brethren have shown a measure of aloofness,⁸⁷ ethnic self-hatred,⁸⁸ and a sense of guilt⁸⁹ which has led to severe self-criticism and abandonment of their denominational loyalties. Rudy Wiebe admitted a sense of confusion and suggested that after three generations the Mennonite Brethren may have served the purpose for which they came into being.⁹⁰ When, as part of the 1960 centennial celebrations, there was a mutual confession by General Conference Mennonites and Mennonite Brethren of "many feelings, words, and deeds expressed by our fathers in an unbrotherly way" and the moderator of the General Conference pleaded for efforts "to explore ways in which we could develop closer fellowship in such areas where we live and work side by side",⁹¹ Mennonite Brethren affirmed their "distinct responsibilities as separate conferences". Even within the denomination there is strong nationalistic loyalty which makes the Canadian Conference reluctant to work at joint projects with United States.⁹² In his opinion column, John Redekop sensed in 1969 a "surpris-

⁸⁶Paul Peachey, "Identity Crisis among American Mennonites", MQR, XLII (October, 1968), p. 258.

⁸⁷Elmer and Phyllis Martens, ibid., p. 6. "Brethren tend to stand aloof.... We seem to be afraid of being swallowed up or dominated by other Mennonite groups."

⁸⁸Leslie Stobbe, "Our Reaction to Mennonite Ideals", MO, II (April 20, 1956), p. 2.

⁸⁹Frank C. Peters, "Your Question", Voice, XII (May-June, 1963), 22-24.

⁹⁰Rudy Wiebe, "The Meaning of Being Mennonite Brethren", p. 4. See also "MBs 'Make It'", Christian Living, XVII (Sept., 1970), p. 7.

⁹¹See "Centennial Study Conference of the Mennonite Brethren", MO, VII (Jan. 20, 1966), p. 2.

⁹²Supra, pp. 315-16, for a survey of the joint seminary history.

ingly widespread nationalistic identity which weakens our denominational unity".⁹³ Overtures to publish jointly a denominational periodical with United States are resisted by Canadians.⁹⁴ Despite the much questioning, indecision, and withdrawal on a personal level, Canadian Mennonite Brethren are reaffirming their separate identity both on a denominational and national level. The search for identity is not in vain. Out of the dilemma of uncertainty and crisis of identity new sectarian commitments seem to emerge.

The Consequences of the Crisis

What, then, are the consequences of this search for identity, and how is it strengthening sectarian commitment? While the outcome of the crisis is not yet fully known, it seems that the purging process is producing a newly forged identity which will lend even further continuity to the movement.

Purged of marginal commitment. Assimilation has, doubtlessly, had its toll in secularization. There has been an erosion of values and a loss of faith with the consequential accommodation to, and almost total convergence with, the dominant society. There has been ambivalence of loyalty, and once faithful Mennonite Brethren have now capitulated to syndrome of the "circulation of the saints"⁹⁵ and have become members of

⁹³J. H. Redekop, "Understanding the Brethren", MBH, VIII (Aug. 22, 1969), p. 10.

⁹⁴YB, 1971, pp. 46-47; and GCRYB, 1975, pp. 138-143.

⁹⁵Supra, pp. 461-62.

the Missionary Alliance, Associated Gospel, Baptist, Evangelical Free, and a whole range of Gospel churches. There has been a weariness, also, with ethnic seclusion and introverted mentality with a resulting self-hatred, alienation, and defection from any and all sectarian affiliation. But out of the searching and questioning, self-examination and reformulation, there is also emerging a new commitment to the ideals of the movement.

Contrary to S. D. Clark's caution that today's sect "remains a movement of the socially unattached, and the foot-loose of the community",⁹⁶ the purging of the marginally committed is resulting in a sect which is both socially attached and sure-footed. The tension of being both Mennonite and missionary is being resolved. As Clarence Hiebert stated, "The newly felt need to be missionary demanded a degree of adjustment, accommodation and assimilation in order to make a sharing of the Gospel in one's environment a possibility".⁹⁷ F. C. Peters appealed to the Canadian Conference in 1963 for a "balance between non-conformity and evangelism".⁹⁸ A new adherent, Tom Graff explained, "For me Mennonites does not mean social distinction: it is a way of living in God's grace."⁹⁹ The newly forged identity is free of inhibitions about the name, unapolo-

⁹⁶ S. D. Clark, Church and Sect in Canada, p. 433.

⁹⁷ Clarence Hiebert, "The Development of Mennonite Brethren Churches in North America", p. 8. Symposium on Mennonite Brethren History, 1976.

⁹⁸ F. C. Peters, "A Victorious Faith for a Challenging Future", MBH, II (Aug. 9, 1963), p. 3.

⁹⁹ Tom Graff, "Why I Became a Mennonite", MBH, XII (April 6, 1973), p. 3.

getic about being sectarian, and not intimidated to penetrate and witness to any sector of society. A new dedication to discipleship and missionary outreach characterizes the purged sect. The renewed commitment was well stated by Menno Shrag in a guest editorial in the Mennonite Brethren Herald.

General observations confirm that we Mennonites are today an exceedingly scattered people and far more involved in every facet of the world than is generally realized.

If our scattering and mingling ... is for joining the mainstream of humanity and to help bring about social, political, and economic betterment, we have a worthwhile goal. But considered from the Christian-Anabaptist point of view it is still an inadequate goal....

Only as our relationships become an expression of Christian discipleship does our involvement take on lasting meaning and purpose.¹⁰⁰

Purged of ethnic homogeneity. Besides purging the sect of ambivalent loyalties, a further toll of secularization is the purging of remnants of traditionally Mennonite ethnicity. Such remnants of ethnicity had been a helpful identity factor in retaining the cohesiveness of the movement.¹⁰¹ As a result of convergence with society, however, the ethnic remnants are also disappearing.

For the religious analysts, the remnants of ethnicity are a hindrance to the movement's ideological influence in society. Rudy Wiebe lamented as follows in 1970:

When the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (1963) or the Columbia Broadcasting System (1967) do TV shows on Mennonites they

¹⁰⁰ M. Shrag, "Dispersed and Involved", MBH, VI (Aug. 4, 1967), p. 3.

¹⁰¹ Supra, chapter 6, pp. 206-26.

show thousands of pictures backed by thousands of words but the name of Jesus or the witness of the church is not mentioned except by preachers. On the whole, we have remained ethnic in the eyes of the public. And often young people leave simply to get away from old-fashioned ethnicity ... rather than because the claims of Jesus Christ are presented too rigorously in our church.¹⁰²

Theologian John Howard Yoder argued that "Mennonitism is still a group which has been very effective in maintaining a separate cultural identity through a particular mode of life ... the identity which it is trying to maintain is still that of a cultural ethnic sect".¹⁰³ Canadian Baptist theologian, Jerald Zeman, warned Mennonites, "Unless you can shed the ethnic image, you will have difficulty growing and eventually surviving".¹⁰⁴ The secularizing effects of assimilation have facilitated a liberation from such hindrances.

With the liberation and the disappearance of Mennonite ethnic solidarity, the sixteenth-century Anabaptist ideal comes closer. John E. Toews reminded Mennonite Brethren of the proximity of this ideal.

Except for the problem of ethnicity the issues facing us are not different from those which confronted the 16th century Anabaptists. Then as now the great temptation is christianized conformity to a pagan society.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰² Rudy Wiebe, "The Meaning of Being Mennonite Brethren", p. 4.

¹⁰³ John Howard Yoder, "Anabaptist Vision and Mennonite Reality", in A. J. Klassen, ed., Consultation on Anabaptist Mennonite Theology, p. 20. This observation by Yoder has been contested by Leland Harder, "Key Variable in Mennonite Reality" (MQR, XLV, Oct., 1971, 331-351) on the basis of his empirical findings. See also Kauffman and Harder, AFCL, pp. 342-343.

¹⁰⁴ Dave Kroekær, "Catholic and Baptist Speak at Anabaptist Anniversary Celebration", Mennonite Reporter, V (Feb. 3, 1975), p. 5.

¹⁰⁵ John E. Toews, "Where to, Mennonite Brethren ...?", p. 6. (*Italics his.*)

Paul Peachey's question is a sobering challenge to Mennonite Brethren today. "As Mennonite ethnicity disappears, will the religious impulse be liberated once more, or will Mennonites simply exchange one conformity for another?"¹⁰⁶ Canadian Mennonite Brethren in the last quarter of the twentieth century face the dilemma of the Mennonite Community in Russia one century earlier, as depicted by E. K. Francis.

The Russian period of Mennonite history thus brings clearly to the fore the dilemma and utopian character of a sect. It must either suffer pagans and sinners to run the world, thereby preserving the purity of its ideals without putting them to the test, or it must, like Dostoyevski's Grand Inquisitor, accommodate itself to the stark realities of life in this world, thereby losing its original character. In the period between 1790 and 1870 the Mennonite sectarians in Russia had become a people whose conspicuous secular successes were bought at the price of institutionalization of religion and secularization of the inner life of the group.¹⁰⁷

The new identity which is being forged through the double purging process should help Mennonite Brethren in their dilemma to preserve their ideological purity and religious vitality as a sect while outwardly being assimilated to the dominant society. If secularization has meant some loss to the movement, paradoxically, it has also meant some gain, for the purging of the cohesive, external homogeneity is helping to restore a cohesive, internal homogeneity held together by ideological commitment alone. The result is a religious vitality which can continue despite ethnic heterogeneity. Original Anabaptism, adaptable to a heterogeneous environment, is thus restored for a structurally assimilated subsociety. As Milton

¹⁰⁶ Paul Peachey, "Identity Crisis among American Mennonites", p. 259.

¹⁰⁷ E. K. Francis, In Search of Identity, p. 27.

Gordon maintained, such subsocieties will endure beyond the first generation in a culturally pluralistic society.

Summary of the Consequences of Assimilation

In the dialectic of sacralization and secularization, assimilation stands out as a most significant component of social change for an ethnic community. Assimilation can best be conceptualized by viewing the process of cultural diffusion on a continuum from conflict to convergence, the final state of convergence being the end product of assimilation. Simultaneous to the process of assimilation is the alienation from the props of the ethnic group which imparted a sense of identity. Such removal of the props, especially when it is too rapid and too excessive, results in an identity crisis. It is also important to distinguish between acculturation (the process of simply accepting strange cultural elements, which might be quite external) and assimilation (the process of accepting basic values underlying the cultural elements). Secularization occurs when there is an exchange of sacred and profane values. Milton Gordon's theory of cultural pluralism, particularly, allows for the preservation of sectarian ideology.

At least three phases mark the assimilation of Canadian Mennonite Brethren from 1925 to 1975. The first generation encountered its severest conflict, socially, in the initial adjustments as immigrants, economically, during the depression, and ideologically, during World War II. The second generation rapidly acculturated in the decades after the war, but encountered casualties of alienation. Upward social mobility accelerated the assimilative process. Change of language, while culturally traumatic,

has but given the sectarian movement greater religious credibility, and centennial celebrations helped precipitate the identity crisis. The third generation in the last decade of study shows signs of convergence with the dominant society, thus, accentuating the identity crisis.

Empirical data, based on the response of different generational groups to variables of religiosity, suggest no loss of faith or secularization between the first and second generations, but a significant decline between the second and third generations. Herberg and Hansen's thesis that "what the son wishes to forget, the grandson wishes to remember" is called into question.

Despite the toll of assimilation on the third generation, the current identity crisis has consequences in secularization which augur well for the continuity of sectarianism. The search for an identity has generated a self-examination which is resulting in a reformulation of theological and ethical statements (an updating, as it were, without sacrificing the sectarian separateness), a reconsideration of the denominational designation (which does not mean a change necessarily), a rediscovery of the true, spiritual heritage (not confusing it with mere traditionalism), and a reaffirmation of denominational and national separateness. The consequence of the crisis of identity can then be summarized as a purging of marginal commitments (those who have ambivalent loyalties defect or are renewed in their commitment) and a purging of ethnic homogeneity (restoring the ethnic heterogeneity of sixteenth-century Anabaptism). The secularizing effect of assimilation, once again, has had both negative and positive effects. Despite the loss of faith and loss through defection, the membership continues to grow as the dialectic between

sacralization and secularization stimulates religious vitality. Canadian Mennonite Brethren seem to persist in their sectarianism in the face of seductive secularization.

CONCLUSION: THE VIABILITY OF SECTARIANISM

The foregoing thesis has attempted to combine a study of the sociology of religion with religious sociology, that is, to examine scientifically a sociological theory of religion and, at the same time, to analyse a religious movement in order better to understand it. To determine the degree of success achieved in this venture, this final chapter is meant to accomplish four purposes: to summarize the findings in an all-inclusive manner, to assess the support ascertained for the separate hypotheses, to respond to several of the principal spokesmen in the sociology of religion who concern themselves with sectarianism, and, finally, to suggest further research that could be helpful to achieve both ends referred to above.

1. The Summation of Findings

The thesis applies the Troeltschian church-sect typology to the Mennonite Brethren of Canada today. The shift or lack of shift on this church-sect continuum represents the degree of sacralization, which in turn reflects continuity, and the degree of secularization, which reflects change, in the religious movement. Viewing sectarianism simply as a movement of religious protest against or dissent from the social order, this thesis hypothesizes that sectarianism is a viable alternative where the processes of sacralization (the stabilizing quality of religion) and secularization (referring to religious decline and/or change) are in a

tionship. Expressed in sociology-of-knowledge terminology, where the strongly integrated and taken-for-granted plausibility structures begin to totter, the status of objective reality also disintegrates and the sectarian strength erodes. To avoid excessive accommodation in which decreased transcendence results in increased immanence in the symbol system, the sect takes a defensive stance in deliberately perpetuating essential plausibility structures at the ideological level of religious continuity. In other words, in order to ensure continuity the movement does not simply devise more structures or program more inspirational sessions, but wrestles with the applicability of its Anabaptist distinctives for the present time. Chapters one and two are concerned with such methodological and theoretical considerations.

A quick survey of the origins and the development of the sect prior to 1925, as chapters three and four attempt, intimated the repeated tension between dissent and accommodation. The Anabaptist-Mennonite movement itself, out of which the Mennonite Brethren emerged in 1860, represents a similar, rigorous separatism from a church which had become co-extensive with society and where, in keeping with its attempt to recapture the New Testament model, such factors as the purity of the church, voluntarism, and the separation of church and state became normative.

However, in subsequent generations the Anabaptist-Mennonite movement encountered a "routinization of charisma" and the prosperous, self-governing religious colonies in South Russia themselves became co-extensive with society. Consequently, the resulting transformation of a believers' church to a parish church led to the birth of the Mennonite Brethren. The vigor of the pious movement, tempered only briefly around the turn of

the century by success in terms of numerical growth, cultural achievements, and material prosperity, was restored by a religious revival which erupted in the midst of religious persecution, widespread epidemics, and famine following World War I and the Bolshevist Revolution. Large numbers of the purged sect emigrated to Canada in the mid-1920's and there joined the smaller beginning of Mennonite Brethren who had come from United States, themselves descendants of immigrants of the 1870's. The mid-1920's, therefore, constitutes the beginning of the more intensive study of the interaction of those forces which account for the persistence of sectarianism one-half century later: the tension between Kanaedier (partly assimilated) and Russlaender (newly arrived immigrants), between routinized charisma and revived sectarianism, between conversionists and introversionists, and between those eventually defecting from their Mennonite roots and those rediscovering their heritage--themes so common to the dialectic of integration and differentiation, basic to an identity theory of religion which explains such persistence.

Analysing the integrating side of the dialectic, chapters five to nine isolated those components of continuity which facilitated the sacralization of the movement. The more ideological, cognitive and normative boundaries have not only been delineated, but largely maintained. Empirical measures of belief indicate the highest scores in orthodoxy and evangelicalism, comparing favorably with Southern Baptists. In Anabaptism, they lag behind other Mennonite groups in several of the indices. Such retention of beliefs through one-half a century is explained in terms of its emphasis upon restorationist thinking, biblicist orientation, voluntarism, and separatism. Empirical measures of ethics indicate a more

restrictive life-style in personal issues than the General Conference Mennonites from whom they seceded. In social ethics, however, they generally fall behind. While in some issues Mennonite Brethren have refused to change their ethical stance, on other issues they have accommodated themselves to society, or remain open to several points of view. Despite some give and take, ethical decisions are not lightly made and the church is greatly influential in the shaping of the stance it adopts.

In the more biological and cultural spheres, the church has again successfully maintained a cohesiveness in family and group ethnicity despite rather rigorous erosion and change. Through largely endogamous marriages and emphasis upon the indissolubility of marriage, few separations and divorces occur. Moreover, at various levels of socialization, such as, study sessions, official statements, family periodicals, and family assemblies, attempts are made to offset the erosion caused by an industrial-urban society. For most of the half century, ethnicity has strongly contributed to the cohesiveness of the group, especially the common experience of immigration, the collective Reiseschuld, the retention of the Muttersprache, and the many commemorations. Only recently have the cultural components which made the group homogeneous been replaced by ideological ones which transcend and unite heterogeneous groups. The religious movement has been particularly conscious of the impact of change and the need to cohere religiously in spite of such change.

Analysing religiosity both psychologically on a personal level and sociologically on a group level, one can view conversion and charisma as consolidating the respective personal and sociological identities. Empirically, almost all Mennonite Brethren witness to a conversion experience.

Moreover, they continue to seek intense religious experiences subsequent to conversion and a rather active devotional life and personal witness. Sporadic renewals through revival have further brought vitality. Widespread involvement in leadership roles guarded against hierarchy; yet distinctly local and national leaders give its many organizational structures needed directives. Charisma is most apparent among the managerial and pastoral figures, who exercise influence in conference sessions or local churches. While societal change has enhanced such problems of leadership as those which relate to elitism, the role of the professional pastor, and the role of women, the emerging pattern is one which encourages congregational involvement together with professional leadership and increased, though restricted, involvement of women. Charisma has enabled the Brotherhood's notion of leadership to prevail.

The movement is further perpetuated by the careful socialization of its families and membership both through participation in weekly services and attendance at its various schools. Empirical measures of associationalism and participation yield very high scores, exceeding even the sect groups measured by Stark and Glock. Such regular assemblies provided occasion for worship, instruction, fellowship, and preparation for outreach. Increasingly tension accompanies the change that occurs in modes of worship, models of instruction, and the forms of fellowship and witness. Parochial training has been increasingly aggressive through the half century, in excess of one-half of Mennonite Brethren having attended its own high schools or Bible institutes. While interest in higher theological education has increased in the last three decades, the Christian liberal arts college finds little support among Canadian Mennonite Breth-

fen. Since each institution testifies to tensions unique to its own purpose and manner, such aggressive socialization does not occur without its inherent countervailing forces.

A final synthesizing component of integration are the structural networks and service agencies of the denomination. Serving as ideological, primary groups, the organizational structure of the Canadian Mennonite Brethren allows for both centripetal (the preserving of the old) and centrifugal (the recruiting of the new) forces to operate simultaneously without the former yielding to the petrification of an ingrown group and the latter to total assimilation with society. Conference structures at provincial, national, and international levels provide a covenant relationship of interdependence which allows the autonomy of the local church in local affairs while at the same time ensuring subordination of the local church to the larger body in decisions reached by this larger body and in matters crucial to faith and polity. While participation in conference sessions enhances fellowship and brotherhood and inspires further commitment and service, it also tends to promote elitism and bureaucratization through its centripetal hold. At the same time, however, these structures enable evangelism and service-oriented agencies to extend themselves beyond the denominational boundaries and guard against fragmentation despite the centrifugal tug.

Chapters five to nine have thus indicated that, despite the operation of countervailing, differentiating forces, the overwhelming impact of these components of religiosity was integrating and helped to sacralize the identity of Canadian Mennonite Brethren.

Analysing the differentiation side of the dialectic, chapters ten

to fourteen isolated those components of social change which particularly affected the continuity of the sectarian movement. Initial reluctance to change and persistent resistance to secularization have given way to extensive change and tacit approval to considerable conformity to the world. Education was discovered not only to enhance some variables of religiosity (such as devotionism and associationalism in the practice of religion and Anabaptist belief and ethics), but also to relativize fundamentalist and orthodox beliefs and personal ethics. Education does in fact lead to increased differentiation in the symbolic system, but by facilitating personal choice, it simultaneously encourages the voluntarism of Anabaptism. Urbanization similarly has its erosive effects, but also provides for new religious challenges. Most urban among Mennonite groups, Mennonite Brethren are being secularized through urbanization in both a negative and positive way. Not only is the practice of religion, as measured by devotionism and associationalism, less rigorous in urban than rural residence, but especially so in general and fundamentalist orthodox beliefs, as well as in personal, moral issues. Curiously, at the same time, the Anabaptist belief variable is enhanced by urban residence. Consciously Mennonite Brethren have faced their increasingly urban environment and have aggressively confronted it with their sectarian strengths.

The secularization accompanying occupational change seems to have promoted the continuity of the movement. While measures of religiosity suggest the machine operator to be the most religious, followed by the housewife and farmer, the shift to the non-farming occupations has enabled Mennonite Brethren to penetrate a much broader spectrum of society with their Christian witness. At the same time, increased residential mobility

and a new appreciation for the arts and leisure have caused considerable defection. Despite the loss, however, the change from the rural, farming vocation to the urban, non-farming occupations has given the sectarian movement increased credibility for survival in an otherwise hostile world.

Economic ascendancy, itself the result of the frontier spirit and work ethic accompanying the immigrant influx, has been shown to have a powerful secularization impact, yet not totally to the discredit of the movement. While the more affluent score lower in such measures of religiosity as devotionism, fundamentalist orthodoxy, and personal moral issues, at the same time in associationalism, Anabaptism and social ethics they have higher responses. Upward mobility does not necessarily mean loss of sectarianism, as Niebuhr has hypothesized. While economic prosperity does tend to increase class cleavage, places undue emphasis upon worldly success, and result in a loss of "inner-worldly asceticism", such prosperity also provides the resources to promote religious causes and to initiate reform of the secularized, economic structures which affect their fellow-believers and society at large.

Finally, the process of secularization is occurring in an on-going way through the assimilation of the predominantly immigrant group. It appears, however, that Canadian Mennonite Brethren have successfully acculturated to their dominant society without having totally assimilated the value system. Three phases characterize this shift on the continuum from conflict to convergence: the first generation prior to World War II made social and economic adjustments and encountered the ideological factor mainly when their pacifism was tested during World War II; the second generation suffered some casualties of alienation with the rapid social

change after World War II; the third generation suffered a greater loss of faith with its further convergence with the dominant society, and, particularly as a result of the rapidity of assimilation, has most seriously encountered an identity crisis. The crisis manifests itself in the articulation of a theology and ethic which transcends ethnic boundaries, in the rethinking of the denominational designation, the rediscovery of their roots, and reaffirmation of denominational separateness. The result of such purging of marginal commitment and ethnic homogeneity is a newly forged identity. Secularization through assimilation has undoubtedly meant some loss to the movement. At the same time, it suggests a gain as well, since it demonstrates the ability of the movement to survive within an ethnically heterogeneous society:

Chapters ten to fourteen have shown that the overwhelming impact of these components of social change has been a secularizing effect upon religion; nevertheless, the sectarian movement has persisted because of the deeply rooted sacralizing components that were simultaneously operative.

2. Ascertaining the Support of the Hypotheses

The thesis has postulated the viability of sectarianism. The support for such an hypothesis lies neither in upholding the synthetic process of sacralization, which ostensibly explains the continuity of the movement, nor in disclaiming the analytic process of secularization, which accounts for the gradual disintegration of the movement, but in the interaction of these opposing forces. To understand the nature of the interaction, one should be reminded, first, of the cumulative impact of these opposing

forces.

Chapters five to nine have demonstrated that, despite repeated concessions to the erosive forces of secularization, the overwhelming impact is in fact integrating. For instance, in 1975 Canadian Mennonite Brethren still upheld theological convictions and ethical positions, the unique constellation of which made Mennonite Brethren quite sectarian in outlook. Hence, a strong measure of ideological homogeneity, which can successfully straddle ethnically heterogeneous groups, has gradually emerged to offset the erosion of the biological and cultural cohesion which provided such a strong measure of integration until recent times. Both on a personal, as well as on a group level, identities have been consolidated through conversion and charisma, respectively, throughout the half century under scrutiny, regardless of new ways of responding to the psychological and sociological dimensions of these religious phenomena. Moreover, the increased sophistication in the socialization endeavors has more than offset the relativizing effects of the encounter with the pluralism of the world. Finally, conference structures and service opportunities continuously reinforced the integration which was being challenged by increased privatization and competing appeals for loyalties. The sacralization of the Canadian Mennonite Brethren identity after a half century of testing is unambiguously clear despite the countervailing forces of secularization apparent within each of these mechanisms of sacralization.

Chapters ten to fourteen have shown that through numerous, rather insidious means the secularization process has been active throughout the half century. Yet Mennonite Brethren have been quite aware of this force and have consciously responded and withstood the negative implications.

An examination of Mennonite Brethren openness to education has demonstrated both the marked impact of education upon social change, as well as the deliberate socialization that simultaneously occurs with such change. Urbanization undoubtedly has erosive effects upon conservative beliefs and life-styles, but affords new challenges of outreach for a movement which is capable of exercising influence beyond its own people. While a study of occupational change suggests the white-collar worker to be more secularized than the blue, such change, nevertheless, allows for a broad spectrum of vocational penetration with the Christian witness, more than compensating for any loss of commitment in faith by becoming white-collar groups. Again, since economic ascendancy likewise results in lower scores in some variables of religiosity, while at the same time it produces higher scores in other variables, its impact is not unilinear. And while assimilation of the largely immigrant group has continuously produced a shift on the continuum from conflict to convergence, the identity crisis which eventually erupts enables the movement to discover itself and purge itself of those elements not conducive to on-going religiosity in a pluralistic world. The end product of these five major forces of secularization is not total convergence with the host society, but an adaptation to the forces of differentiation which is restricted by the checks and balances rooted in the Archimedean point. Each group of chapters represents an overwhelmingly major thrust of sacralization and secularization, respectively, with a significant and sometimes not so significant counter-thrust simultaneously at work. This see-saw relationship needs further examination..

Having ascertained the cumulative impact of the synthetic process

of sacralization and the analytic process of secularization, one can further assess how both of these forces are essential to a viable form of sectarianism. By itself, the integrating process of sacralization may lead to continuity, but without adequate checks such continuity would result in a rigidification which would stifle the vitality of such sectarianism in contemporary society. So also, by itself the differentiating process of secularization may rapidly lead to change in the religious movement, but again, without adequate checks, such change would result in total convergence with the host society and loss of the sectarian stance. Both sacralization and secularization are essential, therefore, to lend viability to sectarianism in contemporary society. The forces of integration and differentiation constitute a yin/yang complementarity, the dialectic of which keeps a sectarian movement alive in an age otherwise known for decreased transcendence and increased immanence in religious symbolism.

Within the dialectic of sacralization and secularization, one can further discover a yin/yang complementarity in which religion is treated both as an independent and dependent variable. In keeping with the thesis of Max Weber, chapters five to nine have demonstrated how religion can serve as an independent variable and consequently influence forces in society. A sectarian theology accounts for the Archimedean fulcrum which helps define the boundaries. The biological and cultural links have been given sacred meaning because of their significance. The individual and group identity have also been sacralized, even as socialization has been thoroughly saturated with religious content, while the structural network and action-oriented bases are religiously legitimated. Religion is treated as an independent variable to account for the continuity. At the

7

same time, it also becomes the dependent variable, in which society determines religion (or lack of it), as Emile Durkheim would have us believe. Education relativizes religious beliefs and conservative ethics, urbanization makes a movement accessible to the hazards of fragility, occupational change exposes the proponents of religious beliefs to new testings, upward social mobility leads to less reliance on religious motivation, and assimilating with society tends to disguise the religious distinctive. It is only as one views religion simultaneously as an independent and dependent variable that one more fully understands the complexity of the forces at work and how Canadian Mennonite Brethren have persisted in the face of continuity and change. The viability of sectarianism is explained, therefore, in terms of the on-going dialectic between integration and differentiation.

3. Responding to Spokesmen on Sectarianism

As a result of the foregoing study of sectarianism, one responds to both the theoreticians and empirical investigators of sectarianism in the following manner. Responding, first, to the two European "founding fathers" who first employed the typology, Max Weber and Ernst Troeltsch, one affirms that despite extensive use, repeated elaboration, and rigorous critique of the church-sect typology, one can still today use this heuristic device if one is alert to its limitations. The Canadian Mennonite Brethren Church and the Anabaptist-Mennonite movement from which it emerged are good examples of a sect not only in its early stage of conflict with the host society, but also in its later refusal to be entirely assimilated by the church type. Moreover, as chapter thirteen indicates, Mennonite

Brethren in the twentieth century constitute a case study of Weber's thesis of the "Protestant ethic" both in the asceticism which marked the early years after immigration and in the loss of the "innerworldly asceticism" of recent times.

Responding further to the two North American spokesmen on sectarianism, H. Richard Niebuhr and S. D. Clark, whose works became classics in United States and Canada, respectively, one appreciates their insights on sectarian growth on the frontier setting, but recognizes also their limitations. Contrary to Niebuhr's hypothesis, Mennonite Brethren have demonstrated sectarian continuity beyond the second generation. Contrary to Clark's conclusion that contemporary sectarianism serves principally to provide a sense of solidarity for those who have lost a sense of belonging and are "socially unattached" and "foot-loose" in the community, Mennonite Brethren in Canada today have integrated culturally, demonstrating upward social mobility and vocational and intellectual penetration of all spheres of society, and yet maintained sectarian separateness while reshaping a new identity rooted in ideological issues.

Responding briefly to those American sociologists who have done extensive empirical studies in religion and whose conclusions bear upon this study, one might single out Herberg, Lenski, Glock and Stark. On the basis of the findings concerning Mennonite Brethren, one disagrees with Herberg's conclusion that the second generation disassociates itself more from the first with a subsequent recovery in the third. Secularization among Canadian Mennonite Brethren was decidedly more apparent in the third than the second generation. So also one takes exception to his view that Protestantism is but a sanction for the American values of individualism,

activism, and self-improvement; instead, one sides with Lenski who contends that through training from early childhood men can internalize different values which result in a behavioral pattern that does not converge with society. Today's Mennonite Brethren provide considerable evidence of the latter. Stark and Glock's grouping of sects into one collapsed category does violence to the serious study of a particular sectarian group, because the uniquely different groups have been blended into a non-reality through statistical averaging. In some empirical measures, Mennonite Brethren score even higher than Glock and Stark's findings indicate; in other measures, the findings are quite the reverse. Consequently, as chapter one suggests, these authors fail to come to grips with sectarian viability and are too ready to predict religion's imminent demise.

The findings of this thesis are more supportive of Berger and Greeley's notions. As Berger might suggest, the study of sectarianism not only provides empirical data which contrast with the beliefs and practices of established churches, but supplies significant evidence of transcendence. Contemporary man is not totally secular. Religion persists, and so does "unsecular man", as Greeley purports. Repeatedly one returns to the findings of E. K. Francis in his study of Manitoba Mennonites. Whereas his insights on the acculturation and assimilation of an immigrant group are indeed helpful, he would find contemporary, urban Mennonite Brethren very different from the largely homogeneous communities he studied in rural Manitoba. This would not come as a surprise, for he himself detected the openness to education and middle-class origins of many of the newly immigrated Russlaender who constituted the core group of this study. Furthermore, the recent identity crisis highlights his caution that assim-

ilation should occur at the least cost to human suffering. Kauffman and Harder, whose Church Member Profile of 1972 provided the data for the secondary analysis, enabled the attainment of the second goal of the thesis, that is, to do an analysis of the religious movement so as to provide a better understanding of it than current studies provide. While their own comparative interpretation of the data provided insights into the religious sociology of Mennonite Brethren, they contributed as well to the theoretical framework of the identity theory in religion by isolating the key variable of Mennonite reality. This isolation of the key variable, which is the belief variable, including the distinguishing principles of Anabaptism, strengthened the conclusion that cognitive boundaries constitute the most significant component of religious continuity.

Responding, finally, to the primary architects of the theory which is being tested, one singles out Bryan Wilson and Hans Mol. Despite Wilson's elaborate typology, Mennonite Brethren do not quite fit either his introversionist nor conversionist types. Nonetheless, it is these types that explain the tension between those in the sect who tend to provide continuity and those who aggressively confront change, yet refuse to be assimilated by the world. More significant than finding a model, however, is Wilson's definition of a sect as an ideological and social unit, a protest against wider society. In addition to Wilson's examples from Great Britain, the Canadian Mennonite Brethren have demonstrated their ability to retain their protest without withdrawing from society. Like Wilson's, these findings indicate that economic determinism does not explain such sectarian phenomenon. Unlike Wilson's, these findings indicate that

psychological and sociological reasons are also inadequate. What is needed is the ideological component, for which Wilson finds an illustration in the Christian Science movement who are among the socially and economically privileged. Mol's theoretical framework is helpful in that he isolates the mechanisms of sacralization--objectification, ritual, commitment, and myth. More importantly, he views the sacralization/secularization process as a dialectic, as part of the see-saw relationship of integration and differentiation, for it is in this dialectic that the sect finds its viability in the contemporary world--maintaining the necessary integration to give continuity and allowing sufficient adaptability to provide change. The findings of this study affirm the utility of Mol's theory.

4. Suggestions for Further Research

Research in sectarianism has scarcely begun. Further study of the sectarian phenomenon can provide both a better conceptual framework for a scientific theory of religion, such as Mol's theory of religious identity, as well as a more intensive analysis of a specific religious group, such as Canadian Mennonite Brethren.

Strengthening the Theoretical Framework

As a result of the foregoing study, several aspects of such an endeavor need further investigation to strengthen the theoretical base for a better analysis of the sectarian phenomenon.

Modifying the cluster of variables of sacralization. The foregoing study was not confined to Glock's five dimensions of religious commitment nor to Mol's four mechanisms of sacralization. These variables

might well have been employed to operationalize the measures of religiosity. However, to incorporate the most prominent components of Mennonite Brethren continuity, five sociological processes, expressing a functionalist approach to viewing society, were used: delineating boundaries, enhancing cohesion, consolidating identities, facilitating socialization, and reinforcing integration. A specific religious variable was then isolated to illustrate each of these sociological processes. In addition, however, such a variable as Mennonite Brethren art, which is a more strictly cultural component, might have been further investigated. Recent productions of music, drama, poetry, novel, humour, painting and sketches with a uniquely Mennonite motif are adding a new appreciation to the emerging identity. Further research of this component may warrant a new variable quite separate from "enhancing cohesion" where the ethnic and cultural separateness was illustrated. Whether or not it stands separately as "expressive" or "appreciative" or "cultural" still needs to be given further thought. Ample source material seems to be available to warrant such a category.

Extending the cluster of variables of secularization. Again, the foregoing study isolated five components of social change which would reflect on secularization. These components do not, however, exhaust the ramifications of the differentiation process. An important component, which initially appeared not to be so significant, is the increased political involvement of Mennonite Brethren in today's society. No doubt, this involvement affects its church-state relationships and threatens its separatist stance, particularly in personal and social ethics. Another study might elaborate upon this gradual concession for which there also

is ample documentation.

Analysing the dialectical process implicit to social change. It would appear that more research and refinement is required in describing and analysing the complexity of interaction between integration and differentiation, continuity and change, sacralization and secularization, or whatever patterns variable one chooses to express the yin/yang complementarity. More research and thought needs to be given to what happens theologically, philosophically, psychologically, and sociologically in such a distillation process. Perhaps the dialectical nature of the interaction means that it can neither be fully grasped nor adequately expressed, but more research is needed.

Intensifying the Study of Canadian Mennonite Brethren

More specifically, several suggestions seem appropriate for a more intensive sociological analysis of Mennonite Brethren.

Updating the Church Member Profile. It would be helpful to a further study of continuity and change if after one decade following 1972 another survey could be taken which tests many of the same components. Such a survey, despite all efforts to secure a scientifically selected random sample, should exclude recent immigrants who are not sufficiently acclimated linguistically to respond reliably to a lengthy questionnaire.

Upgrading the methodology. Whereas one guards against the use of sophisticated statistical tools for simple frequency counts or cross-tabulations, it may be well to include, at least in appendix form, the simpler statistical tests of significance and measures of association, or possibly even more complex multivariate analyses to determine causal rela-

tionships. Besides using more elaborate statistical aids, one should guard against grouping two seemingly similar components, such as personal and social ethics, when in fact the correlation between these is very minimal, as was repeatedly shown in the scores for Mennonite Brethren.

Extending the analysis to specific areas of concern. For the movement to gain a better understanding of the dynamics of change and the factors which promote or hinder church growth, more intensive studies are encouraged on the effectiveness of recruitment techniques, the causes of religious defection, and the response to particular doctrinal stances or ethical practices. For example, currently a study, initiated by Mennonite Central Committee (Canada), is being undertaken by three sociologists at the University of Manitoba to determine the response to the use of alcohol among five Mennonite groups in Canada. A preliminary report of this study is being published by Mennonite Central Committee in November of 1977. Such in-depth analysis provides descriptive data on the incidence and distribution of alcohol use and reflects on the nature of controls Mennonites exercise over their members. Mennonite groups will themselves study these results to modify their stance or strengthen their normative proscriptions against drinking. Other similar, more intensive analyses would serve similar ends.

Epilogue

Some 450 years after the birth of Anabaptism, some 115 years after the renewal movement which spawned the Mennonite Brethren, and fifty years after the major immigration of the core group in Canada today, Mennonite Brethren show signs of distinctive religious vitality despite outward

society. Such vitality is explained, not merely through theological and ethical tenets held by the group, but in terms of a scientific theory of religious identity which hypothesizes the viability of sectarianism.

Forces constituting sameness and continuity and forces constituting differences and change hold one another in balance. It is this dialectic of integration and differentiation, expressed in the religious terms of sacralization and secularization, which accounts for the continued viability of Canadian Mennonite Brethren.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

The bibliography includes the books, articles, and documents used in the preparation of the text. The works listed are classified as "Primary Sources" and "Secondary Materials" with several types in each category, that is, books and pamphlets, articles, and theses. The following abbreviations are used:

<u>BOMAS</u>	- Board of Missions and Services
<u>CMECP</u>	- <u>Consultation on Mennonite Educational and Cultural Problems</u>
<u>GCRYB</u>	- <u>Year Book of the General Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches</u>
<u>JSSR</u>	- <u>Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion</u>
<u>K-J</u>	- <u>Konferenz-Jugendblatt</u>
<u>MBBC</u>	- Mennonite Brethren Bible College
<u>MBH</u>	- <u>Mennonite Brethren Herald</u>
<u>MO</u>	- <u>Mennonite Observer</u>
<u>MQR</u>	- <u>Mennonite Quarterly Review</u>
<u>MR</u>	- <u>Mennonitische Rundschau</u>
<u>YB</u>	- <u>Year Book of the Canadian Conference of the Mennonite Brethren Churches of North America</u>

1. Primary Sources

Books, Official Documents, Pamphlets

Acts of Incorporation and By-Laws of the Alberta Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches. Winnipeg: Christian Press, 1957.

Bekker, Jacob. Origin of the Mennonite Brethren Church. Transl. by D. E. Pauls and A. E. Janzen. Hillsboro, Kansas: Mennonite Brethren Historical Society of the Midwest, 1973.

- Bender, Harold S. Conrad Grebel, c. 1498-1526: The Founder of the Swiss Brethren Sometimes Called Anabaptists. Goshen, Indiana: The Mennonite Historical Society, 1950.
- Calendar: Mennonite Brethren Bible College, 1945-46. Winnipeg: Christian Press, 1945.
- Charter and By-Laws of the Canadian Conference of the Mennonite Brethren Church of North America. Winnipeg: Christian Press, 1945.
- Church Directory: The Mennonite Brethren Churches of Winnipeg, 1976. Winnipeg: Christian Press, 1976.
- Confession of Faith of the Mennonite Brethren Church of North America. Hillsboro: M. B. Publishing House, n. d. (See also revised Confession in GCYB, 1975, pp. 17ff.)
- Confrontation: Triennial Report, 1969. Hillsboro: BOMAS, 1969.
- Constitution and By-Laws of the Ontario Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches, 1971. Mimeographed copy in MBBC archives.
- Constitution of the Canadian Conference of the Mennonite Brethren Churches of North America, 1970. Winnipeg: Christian Press, 1970.
- Constitution of the General Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches, 1963. Hillsboro: M. B. Publishing House, 1963.
- The Eleventh Convention of the Ontario Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches. Winnipeg: Christian Press, 1942.
- Friesen, P. M. Die Alt-Evangelische Mennonitische Bruderschaft in Russland (1789-1910). Halbstadt, Taurien: Raduga Verlagsgesellschaft, 1911.
- Glaubensbekenntnis der Vereinigten Christlichen Taufgesinnten Mennonitischen Brüdergemeinde in Russland. Halbstadt, Russia: P. Neufeld, 1902.
- Hamm, Martin. Aus der alten in die neue Heimat. Winnipeg: Christian Press, 1971.
- Huebert, G. D. Botschafter an Christi Stätt. Winnipeg: Christian Press, 1953.
- Impact: Triennial Report, 1975. Hillsboro: BOMAS, 1975.
- Isaac, Franz. Die Molotschnaer Mennoniten. Halbstadt, Taurien: H. J. Braun, 1908.
- Kauffman, J. Howard, and Harder, Leland. Anabaptists Four Centuries Later: A Profile of Five Mennonite and Brethren in Christ Denominations. Scottdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1975.

- Klassen, A. J. The Bible School Story: Fifty Years of Mennonite Brethren Schools in Canada. (no publisher, no date given) c. 1964.
- , ed. The Seminary Story. Fresno: Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary, 1975.
- Lohrenz, J. H. The Mennonite Brethren Church. Hillsboro: M. B. Publishing House, 1950.
- Minutes of the Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches of Manitoba, 1941. (no publisher) In MBBC archives.
- Mission Report, 1960. Hillsboro: BOMAS, 1960.
- Protokoll der Vertreterversammlung der Mennoniten Bruedergemeinde des Manitoba Kreises, 1929. Mimeographed copy in MBBC archives.
- Protokoll der 5. Jahressitzung der Mennoniten-Bruedergemeinde der Provinz Alberta, 1932. Mimeographed copy in MBBC archives.
- Protokoll der 1. Saskatchewan Konferenz der Mennoniten Bruedergemeinde, 1946. Mimeographed copy in MBBC archives.
- Obedience in Partnership, 1963. Hillsboro: BOMAS, 1963.
- Open Doors: Report to General Conference, 1966. Hillsboro: BOMAS, 1966.
- Reimer, Henry E. Being Born Again--By the Word of God. Hillsboro: Henry E. Reimer, 1970.
- Servanthood: Triennial Report, 1972. Hillsboro: BOMAS, 1972.
- Die Statuten der Mennoniten Bruedergemeinde von Manitoba, Canada, 1953. Winnipeg: Christian Press, 1953.
- Twenty-fifth Anniversary Publication of MBBC, 1944-1969. Winnipeg: Christian Press, 1969.
- Unruh, A. H. Die Geschichte der Mennoniten-Bruedergemeinde. Winnipeg: Christian Press, 1955.
- Verhandlungen der ersten Noerdlichen Distrikt-Konferenz der Mennoniten-Bruedergemeinde von Nord-Amerika (hereafter YB). Herbert, Sask.: 1910.
- Wenger, J. C., ed. Complete Writings of Menno Simons. Scottdale: Herald Press, 1956.
- Wiebe, Walter, et al. Century of Grace and Witness. Hillsboro: M. B. Publishing House, 1960.

Wiens, Delbert. New Wineskins for Old Wine: A Study of the Mennonite Brethren Church. Hillsboro: M. B. Publishing House, 1965.

Year Book of the Canadian Conference of the Mennonite Brethren Churches of North America. Winnipeg: Christian Press, 1910-1976. Annual publication, 1910-1976.

Year Book of the General Conference of the Mennonite Brethren Churches. Hillsboro: M. B. Publishing House, 1894-1908, annually published; 1909-1915, triennially published; 1919; 1921-1939, triennially; 1943; 1945-1975, triennially.

Articles in Denominational Periodicals and Yearbooks

Adrian, Victor. "Born Out of Anabaptism and Pietism", Insert in MBH, IV (March 26, 1965).

----- "The Inspiration of Scripture", paper presented at Faith and Ethics Conference, Reedley, 1967. MBBC archives.

----- "The MBBC and the Evangelical Mission of the Church", YB, 1967, 62-69.

----- "Is Situation Ethics the Answer?" YB, 1968, 81-94.

----- "Where Do We Go from Here?" MBH, V (Apr. 29, 1966), 5.

Anonymous. "Why Private High School Teachers Quit", MBH, II (Mar. 1, 1963), 6, 7.

Baerg, H. R. "The Camping Program", Voice, VIII (March-April, 1959), 11-14.

----- "Camping with a Purpose", Voice, VII (March-April, 1958), 12-15.

----- "Conversion", Voice, XIX (Jan., 1970), 5-8.

----- "Die Krise im Familienleben", Voice, XI (May-June, 1962), 4-7.

----- "Principles for Love, Courtship, and Engagements", Voice, VII (May-June, 1958), 10-12.

----- "The Right Use of Leisure", Voice, VIII (May-June, 1959), 9-13.

Bargen, Peter. "Bericht ueber die Hochschulen unserer Konferenz", YB, 1955, 11.

----- "Why I am a Mennonite?" MO, I (July 3 and Aug. 3, 1956).

- Bender, Harold S. "The Anabaptist Vision", MQR, XVIII (1944), 67-88.
- Berg, G. and T. "Aus dem Leserkreise", MR, LI (Jan. 11, 1928), 9.
- Bergmann, Helen. "Brethren, Take the Lead", MBH, XII (June 15, 1975), 26.
- Block, Henry H. "The Power of Influence in Business", Voice, XIX (Oct., 1970), 15-22.
- Brandt, Herbert J. "What does 'New Wineskins for Old Wine' say about Conversion?" MBH, V (Apr. 15, 1966), 8, 9.
- Braun, B. J. "An Examination of the M. B. Faith at the Turn of the Century", GCRYB, 1960, 7.
- Buller, Harold. "Why I am a Conscientious Objector", K-J, IV (Oct., 1948), 56-57.
- Buller, J. D. "Ehescheidung und wieder Verheirathung", MR, XLVIII (Apr. 8, 1925), 4.
- Burkholder, J. Lawrence. "Social Implications of Mennonite Doctrines", Twelfth CMECP, 1959. Elkhart, Indiana, 1959, pp. 91-111.
- Classen, Paul. "Statistics on Mennonite Central Committee Personnel", MQR, XLIV (July, 1970), 324-29.
- DeFehr, William. "50 Years of a Family Business", Mennonite Mirror, V (Nov., 1975), 13.
- Derksen, George. "A Christian in the Construction Business", MO, V (Feb. 20, 1959), 5.
- Doerksen, Victor. "A Clarification", MBH, X (Oct. 22, 1971), 24.
- "The Question of Mennonite Origins", MO, VI (Sept. 23, 1960), 2.
- "Why Be Ashamed?" MBH, X (Aug. 27, 1971), 9.
- Dueck, Abram. "Retrospect and Prospect: Reformatio or Restitutio", Direction, I (April, 1972), 42-43.
- Dueck, H. H. "The Future Role of MBBC", YB, 1973, 20-21.
- "Stability for Christian High Schools", MO, VI (May 20 and May 27, 1960).
- Dueksen, David D. "The Legacy of the Elmwood Bible Conference", MBH, VII (Jan. 12, 1968), 7, 18-19.

- Duerksen, D. K. "Das Heiligungsleben in der Familie", YB, 1961, 243-44.
- Dyck, Cornelius J. "1525 Revisited? A Comparison of Anabaptist and Mennonite Brethren Origins". Unpublished paper presented to the Symposium on Mennonite Brethren History, Fresno, Calif., May, 1975. See MBBC archives.
- Dyck, Rudolph. "Being Christian in Business", MBH, XIII (May 17, 1977), 4, 5, 30.
- Dyck, T. "Aus dem Leserkreise", MR, LI (Jan. 18, 1928), 9.
- Enns, Daniel P. "Die deutsche Sprache als Kulturfaktor", MR, XLVIII (May 13, May 20, May 27, June 3; 1925).
- Epp, Frank. "A Century of Life", The Canadian Mennonite, VII (Jan. 2, 1959), 2.
- "Keeping Body and Soul together in Church History". Unpublished paper presented to Symposium on Mennonite Brethren History, Fresno, Calif., May, 1975. See MBBC archives.
- Epp, George. "Alexander Voth--He Made Himself Available", MBH, VII (Dec. 13, 1968), 9, 10.
- "What the Statistics Tell", MBH, XIII (Mar. 22, 1974), 27.
- Epp, J. B. "Licht und Trost aus der Offenbarung fuer unsere dunkle Zeit", MR, LXV (Mar. 18, 1942 to Sept. 9, 1942).
- Epp, J. H. "Kampf fuer den Glauben im Heim und Schule", YB, 1956, 177.
- Erb, Paul. "Status Seeking", MO, V (June 26, 1959), 2.
- "What's Wrong with Work?" MO, IV (Aug. 8, 1958), 2.
- Ewert, Benj. "Mennoniten in Winnipeg", MR, XLVII (Dec. 24, 1924), 5.
- Ewert, David. "An Approach to Problems of Christian Ethics", MBH, VI (Mar. 24, 1967), 1-25.
- "Book Reviews", Direction, VI (April, 1977), 39-40.
- "The Christian Woman in the Church and the Conference", YB, 1974, 30-43.
- "The Dangers of Secularism", Voice, III (Sept.-Oct., 1954), 16-19, and (Nov.-Dec., 1954), 17-19.
- "How the Bible Came to Us", MBH, XIII (Jan. 11-May 3, 1974).

- "In Memorium: A. H. Unruh, D. D., 1878-1961", Voice, X (Jan.-Feb., 1961), 1-3.
- "The Problem of Leisure", Voice, XII (July-Aug., 1963), 5-8.
- "Reflections on Bible Reading in the Mennonite Brethren Church", Voice, IX (Jan.-Feb., 1960), 3-6.
- "The Scriptural Teaching on the Preservation of the Believer". Unpublished paper submitted to study conference of Mennonite Brethren in Denver, Colorado, 1958. See MBBC archives. 7
- "Some New Testament Teachings on the World", Voice, III (Jan.-Feb., 1954), 6-9.
- "Teaching Absolutes in a Day of Relativities", Voice, XIV (Jan.-Feb., 1965), 12-13.
- "What About our Liberal Arts College?" MBH, I (Aug. 24, 1962), 11.
- Ewert, H. H. "Die Lage der kuerzlich aus Russland eingewanderten Lehrer", MR, XLVIII (May 27, 1925), 7.
- "Unsere Stellung zur deutschen Sprache", MR, L (Dec. 14, 1927), 3.
- Fehderau, Harold. "About Our Church German Schools", MO, VI (April 8, 1960), 10.
- Froese, Abe. "New in the City", MBH, I (Aug. 31, 1962), 5.
- Froese, Frank. "Teaching Attracts Mennonites", MO, III (June 21, 1957), 2.
- Froese, J. A. "Watching a Trend", MO, VI (Feb. 3, 1961), 2.
- Geddert, G. "Familientreffen", MR, XCV (Nov. 8, 1972), 5.
- Giesbrecht, Herbert. "Abraham H. Unruh (1878-1961): A Man for All Seasons", MBH, XIV (Sept. 19, 1975), 4-6.
- "A Biblical Conversion", K-J, VIII (Mar.-April, 1952), 24-25.
- "The Christian and the Use of TV Today", Voice, XVI (May-June, 1967), 7-13.
- "In Search of Discipline: Ethical Covenants and Codes in the Local Church", Direction, V (Jan., 1976), 3-10.
- "Teaching the Liberal Arts", Voice, XIV (Sept.-Oct., 1965), 4-8.

- Graff, Tom. "Why I Became a Mennonite", MBH, XII (April 6, 1973), 3.
- Guenther, Allen R. and Swartz, Herb. "The Role of Women in the Church", MBH, XII (May 4, 1973), 4-9.
- Hamm, Peter M. "The Crisis in the Teaching Ministry of the Local Church", YB, 1971, 26-36.
- "A Study of the Reactions to the Name 'Mennonite Brethren' among Those Who Bear This Denominational Designation But Are of Non-Mennonite Background". Paper presented at Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary, Fresno, Calif., May, 1964.
- Harder, Leland. "Mennonite Mobility and the Christian Calling", Mennonite Life, XIX (Jan., 1964), 7-13.
- Hein, Marvin. "The Church in Flux", MBH, V (Nov. 25, 1966), 1, 8-9.
- "The Church, Its Regulations, and the Individual Member", MBH, VII (Jan. 26, 1968). (Insert in MBH.)
- "Church Membership: Its Essence and Necessity", MBH, X (Nov. 19, 1971), 21-26.
- Herzer, T. D. F. "Die Zuckerrueben Industrie und ihre Bedeutung fuer den Westen Canadas: Einige praktische Ratschlaege fuer die neu-Kanadischen Farmer", MR, L (March 16, 23; 1927).
- Hiebert, Clarence. "The Development of Mennonite Brethren Churches in North America". Unpublished paper presented to Symposium on Mennonite Brethren History, Fresno, Calif., May, 1975. See MBBC archives.
- Hiebert, Lando. "Our Sacred Trust Is a Spiritual Trust", GCYB, 1960, 2.
- Hiebert, Waldo. "Church Leadership in Trouble", MBH, XIV (Sept. 19, 1975), 2-3.
- "Wanted a Christian Philosophy of Weddings", MO, IV (June 13, 1958), 8.
- Hostetler, J. "Mennonite Central Committee Material Aid, 1941-1969", MQR, XLIV (July, 1970), 318-323.
- Hostetter, Charles. "Work Addiction", MBH, VI (Dec. 8, 1967), 5, 6.
- Huebert, G. D. "Are Conferences of Any Value?" MO, VII (June 30, 1961), 2.
- "Choosing a Life's Vocation", MO, VII (April 21, 1961), 2.
- "Sanctified Ambition", MO, V (Nov. 27, 1959), 2.

- "Work that Counts", MO, VII (Oct. 27, 1961), 2.
- "Work without Glory", MO, VII (Aug. 18, 1961), 2.
- Isaac, Jake. "Raising the Spiritual Standards of Our Private Schools", MO, V (Dec. 18, Dec. 26; 1959).
- Janz, B. B. "Die Grundlage der grossen Auswanderung aus Russland in den 20er Jahren", MR, LXXXIV (Aug. 30, Sept. 6; 1961).
- "Die Konferenz Botschaft", YB, 1954, 10-15.
- Janzen, Edmond. "The Church and the Urban Frontier", MBH, XIII (Oct. 18, 1974). (Insert in MBH.)
- Janzen, H. H. "Geistesstroemungen welche fuer unsere Jugend heute eine Gefahr bilden", YB, 1954, 115.
- "Und stellet euch nicht dieser Welt gleich", K-J, IX-X (Sept., 1953-Feb., 1954).
- "Unsere Bibelstunden", Voice, II (Nov.-Dec., 1953), 10.
- "Warum die Mennoniten Brueder ein solch' strenge Stellung gegen das Rauchen einnimmt", K-J, II (June, 1946), 2-3.
- Janzen, J. H. "Gottes Stellung zum Krieg", MR, LXIII (Apr. 17, 1940), 1-2.
- "Gottes Volk im Krieg", MR, LXIII (Apr. 10, 1940), 1-2.
- "Gottes Walten im Kriege", MR, LXIII (Mar. 27, 1940), 2-3.
- "Ursachen des Krieges", MR, LXIII (Mar. 27, 1940), 1-2.
- Janzen, K. J. "Ratschalege fuer Neubekehrte", MR, LXIV (Sept. 3, 1941), 2. 3.
- Jantz, Harold. "Bible Schools--Their Worth", MBH, VI (Sept. 1, 1967), 3.
- "Changeless and the Changing", MBH, V (Nov. 25, 1966), 3.
- "The Cost of Peace", MBH, IV (Nov. 5, 1965), 3.
- "Devotional Guide for the Family", MBH, IV (Jan. 8, 1965), 2.
- "Displaced Christianity", MBH, V (Jan. 7, 1966), 3.
- "Does the World Mold the Church?" MBH, V (Jan. 14, 1966), 3.
- "The Failure of Force", MBH, VII (Feb. 9, 1968), 3.

- "Footloose", MBH, IV (Feb. 12, 1965), 3.
- "For Denominations", MBH, III (Sept. 1964), 3.
- "An Interview with the Author", MBH, V (Jan. 14, 1966), 6-7.
- "Marks of the Spirit at Clearbrook", MBH, VII (July 26, 1968),
3.
- "MBBC--Looking Ahead", MBH, VIII (May 2, 1969), 9.
- "No Replacement for the Family", MBH, XIV (May 2, 1975), 11.
- "Our Materialistic Society", MBH, VI (Oct. 27, 1967), 2.
- "Our Materialistic Society", MBH, VI (Nov. 10, 1967), 2.
- "Primitive Christianity", MBH, V (April 8, 1966), 3.
- "Questions Before Baptism", MBH, III (Nov. 20, 1964), p. 3.
- "Revival", MBH, VII (Jan. 5, 1968), 3.
- "Separated unto God for an Effective Witness", MBH, V (May 27,
1966), 3.
- "Viet Nam Profile", MBH, V (Feb. 25, 1966), 3.
- "The War in South Viet Name", MBH, III (Aug. 21, 1964), 3.
- "What Holds Us Together?" MBH, XII (Nov. 30, 1973), 11.
- "Winnipeg Study Conference", MBH, VII (April 26, 1968), 3.
- and Siebert, Allan. "Mennonite Name--Biggest Issue in Fifty
Years", MBH, XVI (July 22, 1971), 2-4.
- Jantz, Hugo. "John A. Harder: Valient for the Truth", MBH, VIII (Jan. 24,
1969), 6-8.
- "Time for Change", MBH, IV (Feb. 26, 1965), 9, 18.
- Just, L. Roy. "An Analysis of the Social Distance Reactions of Students
from the Three Major American Mennonite Groups", Ninth CMECP, 1953,
73-77.
- K., J. "Es kommt noch nicht, das Paradies", MR, XLVIII (Jan. 21, 1925), 9.
- "Die Pflege der deutschen Sprache", MR, XLVIII (June 24, 1925),
5.

Kehler, Larry. "The Many Activities of the MCC", MQR, XLIV (July, 1970), 298-315.

Klassen, A. J. "The Bible in the Mennonite Brethren Church", Direction, II (April, 1973), 45, 49.

Klassen, D. K. "Die geistliche Pflege in der Familie", YB, 1914, 18-20.

Klassen, H. F. "Wie koennen wir etwas fuer die Jugend tun?" K-J, I (May 31, 1944), 2-4.

----- "Wollen wir Mennoniten bleiben?" K-J, VIII (Jan.-Feb., 1952), 1.

Klassen, P. B. "Reiseskizzen von der Landsuche", MR, XLVI (Oct. 31 and Nov. 14, 1923).

----- "Korrespondenzen", MR, LI (Jan. 4, 1928), 4.

Klassen, Peter. "Conference Spirit", MBH, II (July 12, 1963), 3.

----- "The Idea of a Conference", MBH, III (June 19, 1964), 3.

----- "It Couldn't Happen Here", MBH, III (Mar. 6, 1964), 3.

----- "On Being a Brotherhood", MBH, XII (Jan. 26, 1973), 11.

----- "On Being Agreeable", MBH, III (July 3, 1964), 3.

----- "A Philosophy of Change", MBH, III (June 26, 1964), 3.

----- "Turning the Sod", MBH, III (May 15, 1964), 3.

Konrad, Abe. "B. C. Teachers' Witness Expands", MO, I (Sept. 21, 1955), 3.

----- "Missionary-minded Teachers Wanted", MO, II (June 25, 1956), 10.

Konrad, George. "Christian Families--Another Look", Voice, XX (April, 1971), 12-20.

----- "Education and the Mission of the Church" in A. J. Klassen, The Church in Mission. Fresno: Board of Christian Literature of General Conference of Mennonite Brethren, 1967, pp. 205-221.

Kornelsen, H. "Grande Prairie", MR, XLIX (Aug. 18, 1926), 9.

Kr., A. "Der Ernst der gegenwaertigen Zeit", MR, XLVII (Dec. 31, 1924), 4.

- Kroeker, Dave. "Catholic and Baptist Speak at Anabaptist Anniversary Celebration", Mennonite Reporter, V (Feb. 3, 1975), 5.
- Lautermilch, E. J. "Rudy Boschman Team at Swift Current", MBH, XI (Dec. 1, 1972), 9.
- Lepp, G. "Misbrauch der deutschen Sprache", MR, XLVIII (Aug. 11, 1925), 2.
- Loewen, G. "Ein Anfang in Kanada", MR, LI (May 30, 1928), 11.
- Loewen, Harry. "A Good Label", MBH, VIII (Feb. 21, 1969), 8, 20.
- "University Education Dangerous", MBH, XII (June 15, 1973), 11.
- "Why Liberal Arts at College?" Voice, XV (July-Aug. 1966), 1-2.
- "Why Quarrel about a Name?" MBH, X (Oct. 22, 1971), 10, 24.
- "Winde des Wechsels", Voice, XV (Nov.-Dec., 1966), 7.
- Loewen, Howard. "Biblical Infallibility: An Examination of Lindsell's Thesis", Direction, VI (April, 1977), 3-18.
- Loewen, Jacob and Anne. "Can Child Conversion Last? Socialization and Child Conversion: A Personal Record", MBH, VIII (Oct. 17, 1969), 2-6.
- Lohrenz, G. "Etwas zu Unserer Geschichte", K-J, VI-VII (April, 1951), 50-51.
- Martens, Elmer. "The Use of the Old Testament in the Church", MBH, XIII (Oct. 18, 1974) (Insert in MBH.)
- and Phyllis. "Mennonite Brethren: Does the Name Fit?" Christian Living, XVII (Sept., 1970), 3-9.
- Martens, Hedy. "God's Word: To Women as to Men", Direction, V (Jan., 1976), 11-26.
- Martens, (Mrs.) J. B. "Revival Moves into Manitoba", MBH, XI (Jan. 14, 1972), 17.
- Neufeld, H. "Eine Einwanderungstatistik", MR, XLV (Apr. 22, 1925), 5, 8.
- "Die Frage des Rauchens", MR, XLVII (June 11, 1924), 1.
- Neumann, David. "Should Our Children Attend a Christian High School?" MBH, III (Aug. 28, 1964), 4, 5.
- Pauls, Ferdinand. "Mennonites and Prosperity", MO, I (Mar. 9, 1956), 8.

Penner, Peter. "Academic Qualifications and Migration Evangelism", MBH, III (June 26, 1964), 4.

----- "The Heritage of M. B. Young People", MO, IV (May 30, 1958), 8.

----- "What does Student Services Do?" MBH, III (May 22, 1964), 7.

Peters, F. C. "Act or Motive?" MBH, IV (Jan. 8, 1965), 7.

----- "The Bible as Authority", Voice, XII (Sept.-Oct., 1963), 16-18.

----- "Brother, Your Work is Not Your Calling", MBH, X (Aug. 27, 1971), 2, 3.

----- "Capital Punishment", MBH, XV (Jan. 9, 1976), 17.

----- "Consensus and Change in our Brotherhood", MBH, VII (Jan. 12, 1968), 6. (Insert in MBH.)

----- "Does Ethics have an Empire?" MBH, IV (Feb. 5, 1965), 7.

----- "The Early Mennonite Brethren Church: Baptist or Anabaptist?" Mennonite Life, XV (Oct. 1959), 176-78.

----- "Education among the Mennonites in Russia", Voice, VII (Sept.-Oct., 1958), 5, 6.

----- "Faith of our Fathers in the Day of our Children", MBH, V (Sept. 9, 1966), 4.

----- "Families in a Secular Society", MBH, VIII (Apr. 4, 1969), 6, 7.

----- "Die Heiligung im Lehren und Leben der Gemeinde", YB, 1961, 5.

----- "I'm Tired, I've Been Resting All Day", MBH, IV (Nov. 26, 1965), 6.

----- "Living in the World as Strangers", Voice, XI (July-Aug., 1962), 1-3.

----- "The Local Church--And Cultural Influences", MBH, II (Jan. 18, 1963), 7.

----- "Mennonite Brethren and Labour Unions", MBH, IV (Nov. 5, 1965), 8.

----- "Mennonite Brethren Church Polity", Voice, VIII (Nov.-Dec., 1959), 17-21.

- "The Mennonite Brethren Vision", paper submitted to World M. B. Consultation on Evangelism, Aug. 13, 1975, at Winkler, Man.
- "Mennonite Liberal Arts Education in Canada", MO, V (Sept. 25, 1959), 2.
- "Movements of Early Mennonite Brethren Teaching", Voice, IX (July-Aug., 1960), 1-5.
- "Needed--A Sense of Identity for Christian Families", MBH, VIII (May 2, 1969), 4.
- "Quo Vadis: Mennonite Brethren Church", GCRYB, 1969, 123-24.
- "Rethinking Church Discipline", K-J, XI (July, Sept., 1955).
- "Stewardship of the Total Person", Voice, XI (Sept.-Oct., 1968), 5-10.
- "Towards a Philosophy of Education at the MBBC", paper presented to faculty and board, in J. D. Doerksen, MBBC and College of Arts, 179-207.
- "Towards a Theology of Work", MBH, IV (Oct. 1, 1965), 8.
- "Two Worlds", Voice, XX (July, 1971), 21-23.
- "A Victorious Faith for a Challenging Future", MBH, II (Aug. 9, 1963), 3.
- "What We Have Done in the Matter of Baptism: A Clarification", MBH, II (Sept. 13, 1963), 6.
- "Work--Biblical View", MBH, IV (Aug. 6, 1965), 8.
- "Your Question", Voice, XII (May-June, 1963), 22-24.
- Peters, G. A. "Sie wanderten aus", MR, XLVII (Jan. 16, 1924), 9.
- "Warum bin ich ein Mennonite?" MR, XLVIII (Apr. 29, 1925), 25 and (May 6, 1925), 3.
- Quiring, J. H. "The Challenge of the Public School", Voice, I (May-June, 1952), 15.
- "Dealing Redemptively with the Divorced and Remarried", MBH, VII (Feb. 23, 1968). (Insert in MBH.)
- "Do We Create an Elite among Our Ministers?" Voice, XIII (Sept.-Oct., 1972), 6.

- "Editorial", MBH, I (Jan. 19, 1962), 2.
- "Konferenze und Gemeinde", Voice, VI (May-June, 1957), 7-9.
- "The Mennonite Brethren Church: An Analysis of the Present" in A Century of Grace and Witness, 1860-1960, ed. by Walter Wiebe. Hillsboro: M. B. Publishing House, 1960, 75-79.
- "The Mennonite Teacher as a Missionary of the Future", MO, IV (Oct. 31, 1958), 4.
- "Overcoming Frustration in a Minister's Life", Voice, XII (Nov.-Dec., 1963), 1-3.
- Ratzlaff, Vernon. "A Christian Perspective on Abortion", MBH, X (Nov. 19, 1971), 9-14.
- "The Sacred and the Secular Debate", Voice, XVI (1967), 14-18.
- Redekop, John H. "Anabaptism", MBH, V (Sept. 30, 1966), 2.
- "Answering the Critics", MBH, III (July 31, 1964), 2.
- "The Apparent Irrelevance of Doctrine", MBH, III (June 5, 1964), 2.
- "An Assessment", MBH, XII (Aug. 3, 1973), 11.
- "A Brotherhood That Needs More", MBH, IV (Oct. 8, 1965), 2.
- "Capital Punishment", MBH, V (Jan. 7, 1966), 2.
- "Casualties of Urbanization", MBH, XII (May 18, 1973), 2.
- "The Christian and Labor Unions", MBH, VII (June 28, 1968), 10-11.
- "Christian Class Consciousness", MBH, XIV (Sept. 19, 1975), 12.
- "A Christian Pacifist Looks at the Expression of our Peace Witness", MBH, VII (Nov. 1, 1968), 7-10.
- "Church Membership and Local Autonomy", MBH, III (Oct. 1964), 2.
- "College and Constituency--An Analysis" in YB, 1971, 56-58.
- "College Training--Where are we heading?" MBH, IV (Feb. 19, 1965), 2.
- "Conference Debates: What's in a Name", MBH, X (July 23, 1971), 2, 4.

- "The Council of Boards", MBH, XIV (Mar. 7, 1975), 8.
- "Crowds at Clearbrook", MBH, VII (Aug. 23, 1968), 3.
- "Evangelical-Anabaptist but not Mennonite", MBH, X (July 9, 1971), 8.
- "Formalism in the Church Service", MBH, III (Apr. 3, 1964), 2.
- "Let Us Retreat--Professionally", MBH, IV (Sept. 17, 1965), 2.
- "Museum or Missions?" MBH, III (June 19, 1964), 2.
- "The New Conscientious Objector", MBH, XII (Mar. 21, 1975), 8.
- "Race and the Gospel of Love", MBH, IV (Apr. 12, 1965), 2.
- "Reflections on Hepburn", MBH, IV (Aug. 6, 1965), 2.
- "Reflections on Television", MBH, VII (Mar. 22, 1968), 2.
- "A Reply", MBH, VIII (Mar. 21, 1969), 10.
- "Response", MBH, X (Sept. 24, 1971), 8.
- "Revival", MBH, VI (Mar. 3, 1967), 2.
- "Revivalism", MBH, IV (Mar. 12, 1965), 2.
- "A Starving World", MBH, III (Apr. 24, 1964), 2.
- "Time for a change?" MBH, III (June 12, 1964), 2.
- "Two Bottles", MBH, VIII (Jan. 24, 1969), 10.
- "Understanding the Brethren", MBH, VIII (Aug. 22, 1969), 10.
- "~~The~~ Winds of Change", MBH, III (June 26, 1964), 2.
- Redekopp, J. F. "Die Gefahren unserer Gemeinden in der Jetztzeit", YB, 1933, 86-87.
- Redekopp, Isaac W. "Biblische Gemeindezucht", Voice, IV (July-Aug., 1955), 10-15.
- "Education in the Christian Church", Voice, I (Mar.-Apr., 1952), 9-10.
- "Our Christian Heritage", MO, VI (May 20, 1960), 2.

----- . "Der Wert der Sonntagschule in unsern Gemeinden", K-J, XI (Jan.-Feb., 1956), 5, 6, 14.

----- . "The Word of God as a Guide for our Homes in the Mennonite Brethren Conference", YB, 1957, 167.

Regehr, Heinrich. "Gesundes Wachstum in den S.-Schulen der Kanadischen M. B.-Konferenz", Voice, II (May-June, 1953), 12-14.

Regehr, Henry. "Patterns of Leadership in the M. B. Conference", Direction, I (Oct., 1972), 112-121.

Regehr, John. "The Call to the Ministry", study paper presented to 1976 Canadian Conference at Winnipeg. See MBBC archives.

----- . "Creativity and Advancing Years", MBH, XII (Feb. 9, 1973), 4, 5.

Regier, Mrs. Peter. "Korrespondenzen", MR, LI (Feb. 15, 1928), 4.

Rempel, Nicolai and Tina. "East Chilliwack, B. C.", MR, LXXIII (Dec. 6, 1950), 3.

Riediger, Peter. "Aus dem Leserkreise", MR, LI (Jan. 11, 1928), 9.

Rockschies, F. "Was verraet dir deine Muttersprache?" MR, LI (Sept. 26, 1928), 7, 11.

Schmidt, J. M. "Why Be Unbiblical?" MBH, X (Sept. 10, 1971), 10.

Schmidt, William. "The Development of the Canadian M. B. Church", YB, 1960, 158-59.

Schroeder, Peter C. "Clairmont, Alta", MR, XLVII (Sept. 17, 1924), 9.

Schroeder, William. "The Teacher as a Missionary", MO, V (Dec. 4, 1959), 10.

Shrag, M. "Dispersed and Involved", MBH, VI (Aug. 4, 1967), 3.

Siemens, Leonard. "The Christian and His Material Possessions", MBH, XIII (Oct. 18, 1974), 21-27. (Insert in MBH.)

----- . "To Be Christian in the 'Secular City'", Voice, XIX (Jan., 1970), 11-18.

Stobbe, Leslie. "As the Lord Has Prospered", MO, III (Nov. 22, 1957), 2.

----- . "Balanced Church Giving", MO, IV (July 18, 1958), 2.

----- . "A Bulwark against Secularism", MO, I (Oct. 19, 1955), 2.

- "Encouragement for Parents and Children's Workers", MO, III (July 5, 1957), 2.
- "Ethnic Consciousness as Barrier", MO, VI (Jan. 22, 1960), 2.
- "A Fellowship of the Concerned", MO, II (Apr. 6, 1956), 2.
- "An Important Decision", MO, IV (May 2, 1958), 2.
- "Laying Spiritual Foundations for Married Life", MO, IV (June 13, 1958), 2.
- "Moral Heritage", MO, VII (Jan. 27, 1961), 2.
- "Only a Breadwinner?" MO, III (Jan. 25, 1957), 2.
- "Our Reaction to Mennonite Ideals", MO, II (Apr. 20, 1956), 2.
- "Prejudice not Restricted to the South", MO, II (Nov. 15, 1957), 2.
- "Preparing for Life", MO, IV (Jan. 17, 1958), 2.
- "Revival Will Come, If ...", MO, II (Feb. 17, 1956), 2.
- "A Step in the Right Direction", MO, III (Apr. 5, 1957), 2.
- "Strength through the Family Altar", MO, II (Sept. 28, 1956), 2.
- "That Money Question", MO, III (June 28, 1957), 2.
- "Towards a More Consistent Testimony", MO, II (Feb. 10, 1956), 2.
- "Unity of Purpose Fostered", MO, III (Nov. 16, 1956), 2.
- "We Cannot Afford a Summer Slump", MO, II (June 29, 1956), 2.
- "When Change Comes ...", MO, V (Aug. 21, 1959), 2.
- "When Is a Home 'Broken'?" MO, IV (Mar. 21, 1958), 2.
- "Whose Responsibility?" MO, III (Feb. 8, 1957), 2.
- "Will You Be There?" MO, III (May 31, 1957), 2.

"The Story of the Mennonite Brethren Church", leaflet with no publisher, no date (c. 1970).

Thiessen, J. "Die Familie als den untersten Zweig der Missionsarbeit", YB, 1954, 112.

Thiessen, Jakob. "Warum muss die Auswanderung der Mennoniten aus Russland fortgesetzt werden?" MR, XLVII (Feb. 27, Mar. 12, Mar. 19; 1924).

Thiessen, John. "Revival Fires in British Columbia", MO, II (Sept. 5, 1958), 12.

Toews, A. A. "Ist unsere Absonderung berechtigt?" K-J, VIII (Sept.-Oct., 1952), 3-5.

Toews, Jacob J. "Contending for the Faith in the Home", YB, 1963, 139.

----- "Korrespondenzen--Herbert, Sask.", MR, XLVII (Apr. 9, 1924), 4.

----- "The Role of the Layman in the Evangelistic Church", Voice, XVIII (Oct., 1969), 40-47.

Toews, John A. "A. H. Unruh--Christian Educator and Practical Theologian", MBH, VII (Dec. 27, 1968), 7-9, 19.

----- "Child Conversion", Voice, I (July-Aug., 1952), 12-15.

----- "Choosing a Profession", Voice, IV (July-Aug., 1955), 7-10.

----- "Christian Encounter with Culture", MBH, XIII (Feb. 22, 1974), 3.

----- "Christ's Challenge to Re-orientation and Restoration", Voice, X (Jan.-Feb., 1961), 4-6.

----- "The Church as a Brotherhood: A Study in Early Mennonite Theology", Voice, IV (Sept.-Oct., 1955), 13-16.

----- "Consecration as Related to Our Vocation", Voice, X (Sept.-Oct., 1961), 3-6 and (Nov.-Dec., 1961), 3-6.

----- "Die Ersten Mennoniten Brueder und Menno Simons: Hinweg von Menno oder zurueck zu Menno?" Voice, VI (Nov.-Dec., 1957), 1-3.

----- "Die Gemeinde muss evangelisieren--oder sterben", Voice, II (Jan.-Feb., 1953), 12-14.

----- "Die Gemeinde radikalen Bibelleser", Voice, IV (May-June, 1955), 11-14.

----- "Das Heiligungsleben im Beruf", YB, 1961, 244.

----- "In Memorium: B. B. Janz (1877-1964)", Voice, XII (Nov.-Dec., 1964), 4-8.

----- "In Search of Identity", MBH, XI (Mar. 10, 1972), 2-4, 25.

----- "Die Konferenzbotschaft", K-J, XI (July, Aug., 1955), 6-8.

- "A Legitimate Compromise", MO, VII (Apr. 7, 1961), 2.
- "Mangelhafte Betonung der konfessionellen Eigenart in unserer religiösen Erziehung", Voice, II (July-Aug., 1953), 21-23.
- "Nonresistance in the Light of the Old and New Testament", K-J, V (June, 1949), 13-16.
- "Nonresistance or Non-Involvement", MBH, IV (Apr. 30, 1965), 2.
- "On Attending the Conference", Voice, IV (Mar.-Apr., 1955), 9-11.
- "A Separated Church", Voice, VI (Mar.-Apr., 1957), 2-5.
- "Die Stadtgemeinde in der Mennonitischen Bruderschaft", Voice, V (July-Aug., 1956), 1-4.
- "Unsere Gefahren--die Gefahren der dritten Generation", Voice, VIII (May-June, 1959), 1, 2.
- "Die Wehrlosigkeit im Lichte des alten Testament im Lehre und Leben", Voice, I (Sept.-Oct., 1952), 4-7.
- "Wie erhalten wir unsern Gemeinden ihre Jugend?" Voice, III (Jan.-Feb., 1954), 15-18.
- "Wie koennen wir unser Friedenszeugnis staerken?" Voice, VII (Sept.-Oct., 1958), 1-4.
- Toews, John B. "Have We Really Seen the City?" MBH, V (Nov. 25, 1966), 4-5.
- Toews, John E. "Secularized Times and Places", MBH, IV (June 11, 1965), 19.
- "Where to, Mennonite Brethren ...?" The Christian Leader, XXXIX (Jan. 6, 1976), 2.
- Toews, Victor. "Aussprache und Pruefung bei unseren Tauffesten", Voice, VI (July-Aug., 1957), 7-9.
- Unger, Walter. "God's Gift of Recreation", MBH, XIII (May 31, 1974), 2, 3, 8.
- Unrau, Martin K. "Kurzer Bericht von der Ansiedlung auf dem C. P. R. Lande bei Mullinger und Mayfair", MR, LI (Apr. 4, 1928), 8.
- Unruh, A. H. "Da's Durchbrechen der ueberlieferten Ordnung in der Mennoniten Bruedergemeinde", Voice, II (July-Aug., 1953), 12-17.

- "Der Einfluss der Kanzel auf die Gemeinde", Voice, VII (Jan.-Feb., 1958), 13-19.
- "Die gegenwaertige Zeit im Lichte der Bibel", Die Antwort, I (July, 1934), 83-84.
- "Ein geschichtlichen Ueberblick der Bibelschulen der M. B. Gemeinden", K-J, XI (Nov.-Dec., 1955), 7.
- "Die Gleichstellung mit der Welt", K-J, VII (May-Aug., 1951), 3-8.
- "God's Word as Guide in Church Discipline", MO, III (Aug. 9, 16, 23; 1957).
- "Die positive Beinflussung der Jugend in den M. B.-Gemeinde Kanadas", K-J, VII (Feb., 1950, and Apr., 1950).
- Unruh, Benjamin. "Behmuehungen zur Sicherung der Wahrfreiheit fuer unsere ungetaufte Juenglinge", MR, L (Dec. 7, 1927), 2.
- "Unsere Stellung zum Krieg", MR, XLVIII (Dec. 16, 1925), 6.
- "Die Wehrlosigkeit", MR, XLIX (July 14, 21, 28, 1926).
- Voth, A. R. "Christian Responsibility to Planned Parenthood", MBH, VII (Feb. 9, 23, 1968).
- Voth, H. H. "Conversion, Baptism and Church Membership", Voice, XIX (Jan. 1970), 66-74.
- "Gemeindezucht und Seelsorge", Voice, XII (July-Aug., 1963), 2-4.
- "Love not the World", K-J, XIII (Mar.-June, 1957), 29-30.
- Voth, H. S. "Das christliche Familienleben", YB, 1933, 89-93.
- Wall, B. H. "Dank-Fest-Feier der in B. C. Wohnenden Sgradower", minutes of assembly of May-23, 24, 1948, at Sardis, B.C., in MBEC archives.
- Wall, C. "Die Mennoniten-Bruedergemeinde--eine bleibende Gemeinde", Voice, VIII (Nov.-Dec., 1959), 13-16.
- "Wie werde ich mit der Wehrlosigkeit fertig?" Voice, IV (July-Aug., 1955), 15-19.
- Warns, J. "Kennt das Neue Testament die Kindertaufe", MR, L (Aug. 10, 1927), 2.

- Wiebe, Anne. "Wie erzielt man Liebe und Verstaendnis fuer die Mutter-sprache", K-J, III (June, 1947), 6, 7.
- Wiebe, Katie Funk. "Color Me a Person", MBH, XII (Dec. 28, 1973), 2-5.
- "Faith and Art: A Compatible Team", MBH, III (June 28, 1974), 2-4, 30.
- "A Giant Leap for Mankind", MBH, XII (Oct. 5, 1973), 27.
- "The Woman Question", MBH, XII (May 4, 1973), 10.
- Wiebe, Rudy. "Away from the Mennonite Masses", MBH, I (Mar. 16, 1962), 4.
- "Counting on the Conference", MBH, II (Feb. 8, 1963), 3.
- "Gratitude for Canada", MBH, II (Mar. 15, 1963), 3.
- "MBs 'Make' It", Christian Living, XVII (Sept., 1970), 7.
- "The Meaning of Being Mennonite Brethren", MBH, VIII (Apr. 17, 1970), 2-4.
- "The Mennonite Brethren Herald: English Family Paper of the M. B. Conference", MBH, I (Jan. 19, 1962), 5, 12, 14.
- "New Faces Needed at the Conference", MBH, I (May 25, 1962), 4.
- "Part of Something Big", MBH, I (Aug. 24, 1962), 4.
- "The Rule Book and the Principle", MBH, II (June 28, 1963), 3.
- "Tombstone Community", Mennonite Life, XIX (Oct., 1964), 150-53.
- "Vocation: How Do I Decide?" MBH, I (Sept. 7, 1962), 5-7.
- "Why Bother with Mennonite History?" MBH, I (Nov. 23, 1962), 3.
- Wiebe, Waldo. "Revival at Greendale", MBH, II (Mar. 8, 1963), 14.
- Wiebe, William A. "M. B. Study Commission Considers Liberal Arts College", MO, VI (Mar. 4, 1960), 2.
- Wiens, David B. "Jesus Christus, der Herr in Familienleben", YB, 1958, 194-95.
- "The Marriage of Believers and Unbelievers", MBH, VI (Mar. 3, 1967), 4-7.
- Wiens, Delbert. "From the Village to the City", Direction, II (Jan., 1974), 98-149.

Wiens, G. G. "Die Neueingewanderten als Kulturtraeger", MR, XLVIII (July 15, 1925), 10.

Wiens, Marie K. "Full Church Citizenship for Women", MBH, XII (May 4, 1973), 18.

Willms, Nick. "Revival in Review", MBH, XII (June 29, 1973), 2.

2. Secondary Materials

Books and Pamphlets

Allen, Richard. The Social Passion: Religion and Social Reform in Canada 1914-28. Toronto: U. of Toronto Press, 1971.

Bainton, Roland H. The Age of the Reformation. Princeton, N. J.: D. Van Norstrand Co., Inc., 1956.

----- The Reformation of the Sixteenth Century. Boston: The Beacon Press, 1957.

Becker, Howard. Through Values to Social Interpretation: Essays on Social Context, Actions, Types, and Prospects. New York: Greenwood Press, 1968.

Bellah, Robert N. Beyond Belief: Essays on Religion in a Post-Traditional World. New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1970.

Berger, Peter L. The Noise of Solemn Assemblies: Christian Commitment and the Religious Establishment in America. Garden City, N. Y: Doubleday and Co., Inc., 1961.

----- A Rumour of Angels: Modern Society and the Rediscovery of the Supernatural. Baltimore, Md.: Penguin Books Inc., 1969.

----- The Sacred Canopy: Elements of a Sociological Theory of Religion. New York: Anchor Books, 1969.

----- and Brigitte.. Sociology: A Biographical Approach. New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1975.

Berger, Peter L. and Luckmann, Thomas. The Social Construction of Reality. New York: Doubleday (Anchor Books), 1967.

Blanke, Fritz. Brothers in Christ: The History of the Oldest Anabaptist Congregation, Zollikon, near Zurich, Switzerland. Transl. by Joseph Nordenhaug. Scottdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1961.

- Broom, Leonard, and Selznick, Philip. Sociology: A Text with Adapted Readings. New York: Harper and Row, 1973.
- Budd, Susan. Sociologists and Religion. London: Collier-Macmillan, 1973.
- Clark, Elmer T. The Psychology of Religious Awakening. New York: Macmillan, 1929.
- : Small Sects in America. Nashville: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1937.
- Clark, S. D. Church and Sect in Canada. Toronto: U. of Toronto Press, 1971.
- Clasen, Claus-Peter. Anabaptism: A Social History, 1525-1618: Switzerland, Austria, Moravia, South and Central Germany. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1972.
- Cox, Harvey. The Secular City: Secularization and Urbanization in Theological Perspective. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1971.
- Crysdale, Stewart. The Changing Church in Canada. Toronto: United Church Publishing House, 1965.
- Davis, Kenneth Ronald. Anabaptism and Asceticism: A Study in Intellectual Origins. Scottdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1974.
- Durkheim, Emile. The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life. Transl. by Joseph Ward Swain. New York: The Free Press, 1965.
- Dyck, Cornelius J. A Legacy of Faith: A Sixtieth Anniversary Tribute to Cornelius Krahn. Newton, Kansas: Faith and Life Press, 1962.
- , ed. Introduction to Mennonite History. Scottdale: Herald Press, 1967.
- Ehrt, Adolf. Das Mennonitentum in Russland von seiner Einwanderung bis zur Gegenwart. Berlin: Verlag von Julius Beltz, 1932.
- Eliade, Mircea. Patterns in Comparative Religion. New York: Sheed and Ward, 1958.
- Epp, David H. Die Chortitza Mennoniten. Odessa: A. Schultze, 1889.
- Epp, Frank H. Mennonite Exodus. Altona, Man.: D. W. Friesen, 1962.
- : Mennonites in Canada, 1786-1920: A History of a Separate People. Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1974.
- Estep, William R. The Anabaptist Story. Nashville: Broadman Press, 1963.

- Ewert, D. Stalwart for the Truth. Winnipeg: Christian Press, 1975.
- Fallding, Harold. The Sociology of Religion: An Explanation of the Unity and Diversity in Religion. Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, Ltd., 1974.
- Francis, E. K. In Search of Utopia: The Mennonites in Manitoba. Altona: D. W. Friesen and Sons, Ltd., 1955.
- Freud, Sigmund. Civilization and Its Discontents. Transl. by Joan Riviere; revised and edited by James Strachey. London: The Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psycho-Analysis, 1973.
- The Future of an Illusion. Transl. by W. D. Robson-Scott; revised and edited by James Strachey. Garden City, N. Y.: Anchor Books, 1964.
- Friedmann, Robert. Mennonite Piety Through the Centuries: Its Genius and Its Literature. Goshen College, Goshen, Indiana: The Mennonite Historical Society, 1949.
- Gerth, H. H. and Mills, C. Wright, transl., ed. From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology. New York: Oxford U. Press, 1974.
- Glock, Charles Y. Religion in Sociological Perspective: Essays in the Empirical Study of Religion. Belmont, Calif.: Wadsworth Publishing Co., 1973.
- and Hammond, Phillip E. Beyond the Classics? Essays in the Scientific Study of Religion. New York: Harper and Row, 1973.
- Glock, Charles Y. and Stark, Rodney. Christian Beliefs and Anti-Semitism. New York: Harper and Row, 1969.
- Goerz, H. Die Molotschnaer Ansiedlung. Steinbach, Man.: Echo-Verlag, 1949.
- Goode, William J. The Family. Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1964.
- Gordon, Milton M. Assimilation in American Life: The Role of Race, Religion, and National Origin. New York: Oxford U. Press, 1975.
- Gould, J. and Kolb, W. L. A Dictionary of the Social Sciences. New York: Free Press, 1964.
- Greeley, Andrew M. Religion in the Year 2000. New York: Sheed and Ward, 1969.
- Unsecular Man: The Persistence of Religion. New York: Dell Publishing Co., Inc., 1974.

- Heberle, Rudolf. Social Movements. New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1951.
- Herberg, Will. Protestant, Catholic, Jew. New York: Anchor Books, 1960.
- Hershberger, Guy F. The Recovery of the Anabaptist Vision: A Sixtieth Anniversary Tribute to Harold S. Bender. Scottdale: Herald Press, 1962.
- Hillerbrand, Hans J. The Protestant Reformation. New York: Harper and Row, 1969.
- The World of the Reformation. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1973.
- Horsch, John. Menno Simons: His Life, Labors, and Teachings. Scottdale: Mennonite Publishing House, 1916.
- Mennonites in Europe. Scottdale: Mennonite Publishing House, 1950.
- Janzen, A. E. Mennonite Brethren Distinctives. Hillsboro: M. B. Publishing House, 1966.
- Kanter, Rosabeth Moss. Commitment and Community: Communes and Utopias in Sociological Perspective. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1973.
- Keeney, William Echard. The Development of Dutch Anabaptist Thought and Practice from 1539-1564. Nieuwkoop: B. de Graaf, 1968.
- Kelley, Dean M. Why Conservative Churches are Growing: A Study in Sociology of Religion. New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1972.
- Klapp, Orrin E. Collective Search for Identity. Toronto: Holt, Rinehart, & Winston, Inc., 1969.
- Klaassen, Walter. Anabaptism: Neither Catholic nor Protestantism. Waterloo: Conrad Press, 1973.
- Klassen, William. Covenant and Community: The Life, Writings, and Hermeneutics of Pilgram Marpeck. Grand Rapids, Mich.: W. B. Eerdmans, 1968.
- Krahn, Cornelius. Dutch Anabaptism: Origin, Spread, Life and Thought (1450-1600). The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1968.
- Lenski, G. The Religious Factor: A Sociological Study of Religious Impact on Politics, Economics, and Family Life. Garden City: Anchor Books, 1963.

- Littell, Franklin Hamlin. The Origins of Sectarian Protestantism: A Study of the Anabaptist View of the Church (former, The Anabaptist View of the Church). New York: The Macmillan Co., 1972.
- Luckmann, Thomas. The Invisible Religion: The Problem of Religion in Modern Society. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1967.
- Mann, Peter H. An Approach to Urban Sociology. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1965.
- Martin, David. The Religious and the Secular: Studies in Secularization. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1969.
- Marx, Karl, and Engels, Friedrich. On Religion. Introduction by Reinhold Niebuhr. New York: Schocken Books, Inc., 1964. Fifth Printing, 1974.
- McKinney, John C. Constructive Typology and Social Theory. New York: Meredith Publishing Co., 1966.
- Mol, Hans J. The Breaking of Traditions: Theological Convictions in Colonial America. Berkeley: The Glendessary Press, 1968.
- Churches and Immigrants. R.E.M.P. Bulletin, IX (May, 1961).
- Identity and the Sacred. Agincourt, Ont.: Book Society of Canada Ltd., 1976.
- Moore, Wilbert E. Social Change. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1974.
- Newbigin, Lesslie. Honest Religion for Secular Man. London: SCM Press, Ltd., 1966.
- Niebuhr, H. Richard. The Social Sources of Denominationalism. New York: World Publishing (Meridan Book), 1972. Twelfth printing.
- Nisbet, Robert A. The Sociological Tradition. New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1966. Eighth printing.
- O'Dea, Thomas F. The Sociology of Religion (Foundation of Modern Sociology Series). Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1966.
- Oyer, John S. Lutheran Reformers Against Anabaptists: Luther, Melanchthon and Menius and the Anabaptists of Central Germany. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1964.
- Park, Robert E. and Burgess, Ernest W. Introduction to the Science of Sociology. Chicago: U. of Chicago Press, 1970.
- Parsons, Talcott. The Social System. Glencoe: Free Press, 1950.

- . The Structure of Social Action. Glencoe: Free Press, 1949.
- Peachey, Paul. The Church in the City. Newton: Faith and Life Press, 1963.
- Penner, Peter. Reaching the Otherwise Unreached: An Historical Account of the West Coast Children's Mission of B. C. Winnipeg: Christian Press, 1959.
- Peters, F. C. Your Church and You. Hillsboro: M. B. Publishing House, n. d.
- Peters, G. W. The Growth of Foreign Missions in the Mennonite Brethren Church. Hillsboro: Board of Foreign Missions, 1952.
- . Saturation Evangelism. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1970.
- Pope, Liston. Millhands and Preachers. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1942.
- Popenoe, David. Sociology. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1974.
- Scharf, Betty. The Sociological Study of Religion. New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1970.
- Simmel, Georg. Sociology of Religion. Transl. by Curt Rosenthal. New York: Philosophical Library, 1959.
- Smelser, Neil J. Sociology: An Introduction. New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1967.
- Sorokin, Pitirim. Social and Cultural Dynamics: A Study of Change in Major Systems of Art, Truth, Ethics, Law and Social Relationships. Boston: Porter Sargent Publisher, 1957.
- Stark, Rodney, and Glock, Charles Y. American Piety: The Nature of Religious Commitment. Berkeley and Los Angeles: U. of California Press, 1968.
- Stark, Werner. The Sociology of Religion: A Study of Christendom. Vol. I, Sectarian Religion. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1967.
- Stayer, James Mentzer. The Doctrine of the Sword in the First Decade of Anabaptism. Ann Arbor, Mich.: University Microfilms. Ph. D. Thesis, Cornell U., 1964.
- Strommen, M., et al. A Study of Generations. Minneapolis: Augsburg Press, 1972.
- Thiessen, Anna. Die Entstehung und Entwicklung der Mennoniten Brueder Gemeinde in Winnipeg. Compiled by Anna Thiessen, n. d. MBBC archives.

Toews, John A. Alternative Service in Canada During World War II. Winnipeg: Christian Press, 1959.

----- . A History of the Mennonite Brethren Church. Fresno: Board of Christian Literature of General Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches, 1975.

Toews, John B. Lost Fatherland. Scottdale: Herald Press, 1967.

Troeltsch, Ernst. The Social Teaching of the Christian Churches. Vol. I, II. Transl. by Olive Wyon; introd. by H. Richard Niebuhr. New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1960. First printing, 1931, in English; first printing, 1911, in German.

Unger, John, ed. Becoming Disciples: A Manual for Church Membership Classes. Fresno, Calif.: Board of Christian Literature of General Conference of Mennonite Brethren, 1973.

Wach, Joachim. Sociology of Religion. Chicago: U. of Chicago Press, 1971.

----- . Types of Religious Experience Christian and Non-Christian. Chicago: U. of Chicago Press, 1977.

Weber, Max. Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Society. Vol. I, III. Ed. by Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich. New York: Bedminster Press, 1968.

----- . The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism. Transl. by Talcott Parsons; foreward by R. H. Tawney. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1958.

----- . The Sociology of Religion. Transl. by Ephraim Fischhoff; introd. by Talcott Parsons. Boston: Beacon Press, 1969.

----- . The Theory of Social and Economic Organization. Transl. by A. M. Henderson and Talcott Parsons; intro. by Talcott Parsons. New York: Free Press, 1964.

von Wiese, Leopold and Becker, Howard. Systematic Sociology: On the Basis of the "Beziehungslehre" and "Gebildlehre". New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1932.

Williams, George Huntston. The Radical Reformation. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1962.

----- , and Mergal, Angel M. Spiritual and Anabaptist Writers: Documents Illustrative of the Radical Reformation. (Library of Christian Classics, Vol. XXV). London: SCM Press, Ltd., 1957.

Wilson, Bryan R. Magic and the Millenium: A Sociological Study of Religious Movements of Protest among Tribal and Third-World Peoples. New York: Harper and Row, 1973.

- . Patterns of Sectarianism: Organization and Ideology in Social and Religious Movements. London: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd., 1967.
- . Religion in Secular Society: A Sociological Comment. London: C. A. Watts and Co., Ltd., 1966.
- . Religious Sects: A Sociological Study. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1970.
- . Sects and Society: A Sociological Study of Three Religious Groups in Britain. London, William Heinemann Ltd., 1961.
- Winter, Gibson. The Suburban Captivity of the Churches. Garden City: Doubleday, 1961.
- Yinger, J. Milton. Religion, Society, and the Individual: An Introduction to the Sociology of Religion. New York: The Macmillan Co., 1969. Twelfth printing; first printing, 1957.
- . The Scientific Study of Religion. New York: The Macmillan Co., 1970.
- . Sociology Looks at Religion. Toronto: Collier-Macmillan Canada Ltd., 1969.
- Yoder, J. H. Peace Without Eschatology? Scottdale: Mennonite Publishing House, 1954.

Scholarly Articles

- Baehr, Karl. "The Secularization Process among Mennonites", Conference on Mennonite Cultural Problems, Newton: Bethel College Press, 1942.
- Bellah, Robert N. "Religious Evolution", American Sociological Review, Vol. 29 (1964), 358-74.
- Berger, Peter L. "Sectarianism and Religious Sociation", American Journal of Sociology, LXIV (1958), 41-44.
- . "The Sociological Study of Sectarianism", Social Research, XXI:4 (1953), 467-85.
- . "A Sociological View of the Secularization of Theology", JSSR, VI (1967), 3-16.
- . "Some Second Thoughts on Substantive and Functional Definitions of Religion", JSSR, XIII (1974), 125-133.

- Bibby, Reginald W., and Brinkerhoff, Marlin B. "The Circulation of the Satins: A Study of People Who Join Conservative Churches", JSSR, XII (Sept., 1973), 273-82.
- Blumenfeld, Hans. "The Process of Urbanization" in The City: Canada's Prospects, Canada's Problems by L. Axworthy and J. M. Gillies (ed.), Toronto: Butterworth and Co., 1973, pp. 16-19.
- Brewer, Earl D. C. "Sect and Church in Methodism", Social Forces, XXX (1952), 400-408. (Also, Louis Schneider, Religion, Culture, and Society, New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1964, pp. 471-482.)
- Clasen, Claus-Peter. "The Anabaptist Leaders: Switzerland, Austria, South and Central Germany, 1525-1618", MQR, XLIX (1975), 122-164.
- Demerath III, Nicholas J. "In a Sow's Ear: A Reply to Good", JSSR, VI (1967), 77-84.
- Dobbelaere, Karel, and Lauwers, Jan. "Definition of Religion--A Sociological Critique", Social Compass, XX, 1973/74, 535-551.
- Driedger, Leo. "Canadian Mennonite Urbanism: Ethnic Villagers or Metropolitan Remnant?" MQR, XLIX (July, 1975), 226-241.
- "Developments in Higher Education among Mennonites in Manitoba", Sixteenth CMECP, 1967, 62-72.
- "Doctrinal Belief: A Major Factor in Differential Perception of Social Issues", Sociological Quarterly, XV (1974), 60-80.
- "In Search of Cultural Identity Factors: A Comparison of Ethnic Students", Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology, XII (1975), 150-162.
- "A Perspective on Canadian Mennonite Urbanization", Mennonite Life, XXIII (Oct., 1968), 147-52.
- , and Peters, Jacob. "Ethnic Identity: A Comparison of Mennonite and Other German Students", MQR, XLVII (July, 1973), 225-44.
- Dyck, William and Sawatsky, John. "Psycho-Social Changes Within a Metropolitan Religious Minority", Mennonite Life, XXIII (Oct., 1968), 172-176.
- Dynes, Russell R. "Church-Sect Typology and Socio-Economic Status", American Sociological Review, XX (1955), 555-60.
- Eister, Allan W. "Toward a Radical Critique of Church-Sect Typology", JSSR, VI (1967), 85-90.

Fallding, Harold. "Secularization and the Sacred and Profane", The Sociological Quarterly, VIII (1967), 349-64.

Fenn, Richard K. "The Secularization of Values: An Analytical Framework for the Study of Secularization", JSSR, III (1969), 112-124.

Fretz, J. Winfield. "Social Trends Affecting the Mennonite Family at Mid-Century" in Proceedings of the Eleventh CMECP, 1957, 131-35.

Friesen, Jim, and Vogt, Reinhard. "The Mennonite Community in Winnipeg", Mennonite Life, XIX (Jan., 1964), 13-15.

Friesen, John W. "Characteristics of Mennonite Identity: A Survey of Mennonite and Non-Mennonite Views", Canadian Ethnic Studies, III (June, 1971), 25-41.

Goode, Eric. "Further Reflections on the Church-Sect Dimension", JSSR, VI (1967), 270-77.

----- "Some Critical Observations in the Church-Sect Dimensions", JSSR, VI (1967), 69-77.

Gustafson, Paul. "UO-US-PS-PO: Restatement of Troeltsch's Church-Sect Typology", JSSR, VI (1967), 64-68.

Hansen, Marcus L. "The Third Generation in America", Commentary, XIV (Nov., 1952), 492-500.

Harder, Leland. "An Empirical Search for the Key Variable in Mennonite Reality", MQR, XLV (Oct., 1971), 331-351.

----- "Mennonite Mobility and the Christian Calling", Mennonite Life, XIX (Jan., 1964), 7-13.

Hershberger, Guy F. "Historical Background to the Formation of the MCC", MQR, XLIV (July, 1970), 213-44.

Hillerbrand, Hans J. "Anabaptism and History", MQR, XLV (1971), 107-122.

Janzen, Lois Barrett. "Mennonites Leave Church for Many Reasons", The Mennonite, LXXXIX (Feb. 2, 1974), 88-89.

Johnson, Benton. "Church and Sect Revisited", JSSR, X (1971), 124-37.

----- "Do Holiness Sects Socialize in Dominant Values?" Social Forces, XXXIX (1961), 309-16.

----- "On Church and Sect", American Sociological Review, XXVIII (1963), 539-49.

- Kauffman, J. Howard. "Tradition and Change in Mennonite Family Life" in Proceedings of the Eleventh CMECP, 1957, 113-30.
- Klaassen, Walter. "The Nature of the Anabaptist Protest", MQR, XLV (1971), 291-311.
- Kovacs, M. L. and Cropley, A. J. "Assimilation and Alienation in Ethnic Groups", Canadian Ethnic Studies, IV (No. 1-2, 1972), 13-24.
- Krahn, Cornelius. "Research on Urban Mennonites", Mennonite Life, XXIII (Oct., 1968), 189-190.
- "Some Social Attitudes of the Mennonites in Russia", MQR, IX (1935), 170-174.
- Krausz, Ernest. "Religion and Secularization: A Matter of Definitions", Social Compass, XVIII (1971/72), 203-212.
- Kreider, Robert. "The Anabaptist Conception of the Church in the Russian Mennonite Environment, 1789-1870", MQR, XXV (1951), 17-33.
- "Vocations of Swiss and South German Anabaptists", Mennonite Life, VIII (1953), 38-43.
- Milgram, Stanley. "The Experience of Living Cities: A Psychological Analysis", Science (March 13, 1970), 1461-1468.
- Moberg, David O. "Potential Uses of the Church-Sect Typology in Comparative Research", International Journal of Comparative Sociology, II (1961), 47-58.
- Mol, Hans. "Secularization and Cohesion", Review of Religious Research, II (1970), 183-191.
- "Some Major Correlates of Churchgoing in Canada", paper presented at McMaster University, March, 1974.
- Muelder, Walter. "From Sect to Church", Christendom, X (1945), 450-62.
- Nahirny, Vladimir C. and Fishman, Joshua A. "American Immigrant Groups: Ethnic Identification and the Problem of Generations", Sociological Review, XIII (1965), 311-325.
- O'Dea, Thomas F. "Mormonism and the Avoidance of Sectarian Stagnation: A Study of Church, Sect, and Incipient Nationality", American Journal of Sociology, LX (1954), 285-93.
- Peachey, Paul. "Early Anabaptists and Urbanism", Tenth CMECP, 1955, 75-83.
- "Identity Crisis among American Mennonites", MQR, XLII (Oct., 1968), 243-59.

----- "Social Background and Social Philosophy of the Swiss Anabaptists, 1525-1540", MQR, XXVIII (1954), 102-127.

Pfautz, Harold W. "The Sociology of Secularization: Religious Groups", The American Journal of Sociology, LXI (1955), 121-28.

Redekop, Calvin. "A New Look at Sect. Development", JSSR, XIII (1974), 345-352.

----- "Patterns of Cultural Assimilation among Mennonites", Eleventh CMECP, 1957, 99-112.

Schneider, Louis. "Toward Assessment of Sorokin's View of Change" in Explorations of Social Change, by G. K. Zollschau and W. Hirsch (ed.), Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1964.

Shiner, Larry. "The Concept of Secularization in Empirical Research", JSSR, VI (1967), 207-20.

Snook, John B. "An Alternative to Church-Sect", JSSR, XIII (1974), 191-204.

Stayer, James M., Packull, Werner O., Deppermann, Klaus. "From Monogenesis to Polygenesis: The Historical Discussion of Anabaptist Origins", MQR, XLIX (1975), 83-121.

Wilson, Bryan R. "An Analysis of Sect Development", American Sociological Review, XXIV (1959), 3-15. (Also in Patterns of Sectarianism, pp. 22-45).

Wirth, Louis. "Urbanism as a Way of Life", American Journal of Sociology, XLIV (July, 1938), 1-25.

Yinger, J. Milton. "Pluralism, Religion, and Secularism", JSSR, VI (1967), 17-30.

Yoder, John Howard. "Anabaptist Vision and Mennonite Reality" in A. J. Klassen, ed., Consultation on Anabaptist Mennonite Theology, Fresno: Council of Mennonite Seminaries, 1970, pp. 1-46.

Theses and Dissertations

Doerksen, John G. "History of Education of the Mennonite Brethren of Canada". M. Ed. thesis, University of Manitoba, 1963.

----- "Mennonite Brethren Bible College and College of Arts: Its History, Philosophy, and Development". Ph. D. dissertation, University of North Dakota, 1968.

Harder, Leland. "The Quest for Equilibrium of an Established Sect". Ph. D. dissertation, Garrett Biblical Institute, 1962.

Hiller, Harry H. "A Critical Analysis of the Role of Religion in a Canadian Populist Movement: The Emergence and Dominance of the Social Credit Party in Alberta". Ph. D. dissertation, McMaster University, 1972.

Klassen, A. J. "The Roots and Development of Mennonite Brethren Theology to 1914". M. A. thesis, Wheaton College, 1966.

Penner, Peter. "A Historical Survey of the Home Mission Work of the Mennonite Brethren Conference of Canada". Th. B. thesis, Mennonite Brethren Bible College, 1957.

Rempel, David G. "The Mennonite Colonies in New Russia: A Study of their Settlement and Economic Development from 1789 to 1914". Ph. D. dissertation, Stanford University, 1933.

Ross, John Arthur. "Regionalism, Nationalism and Social Gospel Support in the Ecumenical Movement of Canadian Presbyterianism". Ph. D. dissertation, McMaster University, 1973.

Toews, Jacob J. "Cultural Background of the Mennonite Brethren Church". M. A. thesis, University of Toronto, 1951.