MENNONITES AND HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE 1960s

THE STORY OF TWO CANADIAN MENNONITE COLLEGES

IN WINNIPEG, MANITOBA

by

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ABSTRACT

The Mennonites are a religious, social and ethnic group with origins in the time of the sixteenth century Reformation. The group was named after a Dutch Anabaptist leader, Menno Simons, who provided the members with substantial theological leadership. Throughout the last four centuries, the Mennonites have migrated around the world and divided into over a hundred different sub-groups. In 1989, Canada was home to over 100,000 Mennonite members who belonged to 735 church congregations that were part of 30 separate groups. The two largest Mennonite groups in Canada are the Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches (MB) and the Conference of Mennonites in Canada (CMC). These two groups, and the Colleges they own and operate, are the focus of this thesis topic - Mennonites and Higher Education in the 1960s.

By 1960, the Mennonite Brethren Bible College (MBBC) and the Canadian Mennonite Bible College (CMBC) had become involved in the process of opening their communities to the professional and vocational opportunities available in Canada while selectively closing the community to secular influences. The Colleges made institutional decisions which allowed them to offer a university standard education in a parochial setting.

These decisions created an active discussion within the two sponsoring Mennonite constituencies. Some members, within each group, were less inclined to embrace the influences of a growing urban, modern worldview because involvement in modern Canadian society would require the adaptation of their traditional, rural identity. The Colleges, on the other hand, encouraged changes while attempting to maintain continuity with essential community ideals. This process of change is the focus of this thesis.

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ABBREVIATIONS

CMBC - Canadian Mennonite Bible College

CMC - Conference of Mennonites in Canada

JMS - Journal of Mennonite Studies

MB - Mennonite Brethren

MBBC - Mennonite Brethren Bible College

MCI - Mennonite Collegiate Institute

MEI - Mennonite Educational Institute

MQR - Mennonite Quarterly Review

PREFACE

The earliest Anabaptists, who later became known as the Mennonites, were well known for their radical attempts to be the true Christian church during the sixteenth century. They were openly critical of the predominant Catholic Church and separated themselves from other Reformers of the 1520s by defying certain Church polities. They received their name "Anabaptists" (re-baptizers) because they rejected the Catholic view of infant baptism and re-baptized their converts upon a voluntary confession of the faith in Christ. This adult baptism was conducted in open defiance to Church and State orders that all citizens were to continue baptizing their infant children. An ideology of separation evolved from the use of this primary symbol, especially when those who were re-baptized, or refused to baptize their babies, were severely persecuted for their opposition.

The radical tendencies of this new sect gave way to a number of anti-clerical and iconclastic expressions throughout Switzerland, South German and the Netherlands in the 1520s and 1530s. Initially, there was no distinct Anabaptist center and no definite leadership. The group sprang up as a grass-roots movement within the midst of the social, economic, political and religious unrest of the Reformation. The movement developed some cohesiveness as various individuals deliberately or incidentally crossed paths and exchanged ideas. There was no monolithic Anabaptist ideal till after 1540 when a Dutch Anabaptist, Menno Simons began articulating theological views that united various Anabaptists into the group who would become his namesake – the Mennonites.

It was under Menno's influence, between 1540-1566, that the Mennonite community more strongly defined the nature of the "ideal" Christian church. The

Mennonite ideals at that time included having "correct" theology and a disciplined ethical lifestyle. The emphasis on ethics, in some ways, overshadowed theological thinking because the right lifestyle was thought to be evidence of correct theology. Since many of the early Mennonites belonged to the artisan or farming populace, theological articulations were the work of a few leaders, some of whom had been Catholic priests before joining the Anabaptist movement. As a former priest, Menno Simons spared no words of condemnation for the immoral lifestyle and corrupt theology he believed had taken hold of the Catholic Church. He taught his followers to be suspicious of the "deception of worldly knowledge" and to rely on the "correct" theology that came from a direct reading of the Bible. Exposure to the "Word of the Lord" was to lead individuals to a religious conversion experience that would then be demonstrated in an ethical lifestyle. True Christians belonged to the Kingdom of God and were encouraged to remain separated from the ways of the world around them.

Persecution for their beliefs drove Mennonites into exile. As the following chapters will indicate, after they found new places to settle, they began to develop in-house education for pragmatic purposes. Essentially, religious training was intended to instill and reinforce the two early ideals (as noted above) in all members of the community. First, the study of scripture was used to pass on the parochial views of "correct" theology. Second, religious education was to ensure the maintenance and perpetuation of a disciplined lifestyle, as prescribed by Mennonite communal standards. Religious leaders assumed responsibility for education, however, each member of the community was expected to support and reinforce the communal worldview. To a large

degree, Mennonite education served to preserve the religious, social and cultural ideology of the Mennonite people.

Originally, when I began considering this project in 1992, I was curious about how a religious, social and ethnic people, like the Mennonites, Sikhs and/or Jews, were able to transmit values and ideals from one generation to another – especially when there were large cultural gaps between the two generations. The topic interested me because, as a Mennonite and the mother of three daughters, I realized that parts of the Mennonite faith held meaning for me but were irrelevant for my children. How would I be able to describe what made our particular faith tradition unique? Was there, in fact, any difference between being "Mennonite" and being "Christian"?

At that time, I had just completed a Bachelor of Religious Studies (Theology) degree at Mennonite Brethren Bible College in Winnipeg, Manitoba, and I was taking some courses at Canadian Mennonite Bible College (as part of a Masters of Divinity program offered through a consortium associated with the University of Winnipeg School of Theology). The program of studies at both Mennonite colleges was theologically challenging to my "church-pew" faith. Though I had attended a Bible school in the early seventies after high school, I was not well prepared for the new "assault" to my faith. The material presented at both colleges was logical, rational, and met the standards of scholarly academia. Believing that Bible College training would substantiate my subjective, spiritual and lay reading of the biblical text, I was surprised to discover that I had to deconstruct many of my previous theological opinions. The process was terrifying. I objected, vehemently at times, to the new material presented to me but yet I

continued. After a short time, I began to realize the importance of what I was being taught.

I had been asked to think about my Christian faith, within the two communities of Mennonites, in new ways. Some of the ethnic or evangelical ideas I had considered to be essentially significant for "true" Christianity, were left behind when confronted with the reasonable arguments in favor of ecumenical understanding and tolerance. A new set of ethical standards replaced the ones I had previously embraced. Increasingly, I valued ideals like dialogue, understanding, respect and social responsibility. My colleagues supported these values and the theology from which they developed. My children appreciated the changes because they seemed more fitting for their worldview. Not all my fellow church members could understand the shift I had made until I would spend time carefully dialoguing with them. I slowly realized the important role both MBBC and CMBC had played in my worldview.

When I went on to complete a Bachelor of Arts degree in Religious Studies at the University of Winnipeg and a Pre-Masters Year in Religion at the University of Manitoba, I was well-prepared for most of material with which I needed to interact. My religious faith had been carefully balanced with rationality and academia. I was able to enjoy relationships and hearty conversations with students of other religious faiths (or no religion at all). Often when I needed to understand the mentality of my daughters' generation, I recognized the enormous benefit my post-secondary education had given me. It seemed that higher education had played a crucial part in reshaping my Mennonite theology and ethics for contemporary relevance. I was curious to find out if this was generally true. Hence, the topic for this thesis - "Mennonites and Higher Education".

Early research indicated that both CMBC and MBBC had made controversial changes during the 1960s that had created the environment I encountered at the Colleges during the early 1990s. I chose to focus on the two Winnipeg Mennonite institutions of higher learning and to narrow the primary study to the tumultuous decade of the sixties. The two Mennonites constituencies that sponsor the Colleges – the Conference of Mennonites in Canada (CMC) and the Mennonite Brethren (MB)- are included as part of this thesis. I have been intimately connected with both of these church groups. During my childhood, I attended a number of CMC churches with my family. At the age of seventeen, I became a baptized member of one of the CMC congregations - the Bergthaler Mennonite church in Altona, Manitoba. At the time of my marriage to a Mennonite Brethren church member, I chose to become a member of the MB church. I became acutely aware of how institutional changes were made when I served on the four-member Executive Committee of the Mennonite Brethren Church of Manitoba in the early 1990s. As already mentioned, I attended both of the Colleges included in this study. My personal interest in all aspects of this thesis has made the experience a rich and fulfilling one, despite the hours and hours of research, writing and re-writing. (As a bonus, almost half my personal library is now devoted to Mennonite history, sociology and theology.)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

To make a prairie it takes a clover and one bee,
One clover, and a bee,
And revery,
The revery alone will do,
If bees are few. Emily Dickenson

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- ***To God*** – for leading in "strange, unfamiliar ways" so we learn to trust You.

INTRODUCTION

The general failure to educate is not the result of the lack of goodwill, but rather the result of the immense complexities and difficulties involved in the educational experience -

Andrew M. Greeley [1]

The 1960s were a period of rapid change for the Mennonites living in Canada. As a community, they were quickly becoming a more modernized, urbanized and better - educated group. Many Mennonites became concerned that the values and ideals of the past would not survive life in the new, modern world. It became apparent, to some, that if the Mennonite community wanted to maintain continuity with historical traditions, certain values and ideals would need to be adapted to fit the new environment. Between the 1960s and the 1990s, numerous discussions within the community focused on how the Mennonite identity could be reformulated to fit into the modern world. The two Mennonites colleges in Winnipeg, Manitoba – Mennonite Brethren Bible College (MBBC) and the Canadian Mennonite Bible College (CMBC) - were actively involved in these discussions. Research conducted for this thesis indicated that both colleges reclaimed and adapted historical Mennonite ideals to validate the changes that were being made at an institutional level. As a result, the two schools became agents for both continuity and change within constituencies where some members resisted leaving their attachments to the past while others were eager to embrace the modern world.

The Canadian Mennonite community existed as a pre-modern society until the 1940s. Typical for a pre-modern society (as described by Durkheim and other

[1] As used in Daniel Hertzler, Mennonite Education: Why and How? (Scottdale: Herald Press, 1971), 17.

sociologists) the Mennonite community population lived in a number of small and relatively isolated rural or quasi-rural pockets of Canada. There was little technological sophistication and little division of labor since the economic foundation of the community rested primarily on an agricultural industry. Social relationships were personal, intimate and generally based on kinship. In this relatively homogeneous community tied together, by ethnic, social and religious ties, a small elite group usually held a traditionally sanctioned authority. Social solidarity was based on a similarity of roles and worldviews. All spheres of human life were bound by deeply rooted traditional modes of thought and behavior that were essentially religious in character.[2] At mid-twentieth century, however, this pre-modern worldview of many Mennonites was being replaced with a modern perspective.

Some sociologists describe a modern society as having a number of typological characteristics. These include:

1) a population that is concentrated in centralized urban areas,
2) a higher degree of vocational specialization and segmentation,
3) social relationships that are largely impersonal and organized primarily in a bureaucracy,
4) political power is based (at least ideologically) in the populace,
5) a socio-cultural pluralism where various social and cultural worlds live together with various degrees of contract with each other,
6) a worldview that is typically rational and secular, not bound by traditional sanctions but critical and open to innovation and experimentation,

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[2] Philip Sampson et all, eds., Faith and Modernity (Oxford: Regnum, 1994), 14-15.

7) and a solidarity that is maintained by interdependence between diverse groups and institutions.[3]

By the 1960s, many of these characteristics of the modern world were having a direct influence on Mennonites living in the city of Winnipeg. The implications were openly discussed at both MBBC and CMBC as the communities they represented struggled to adjust to a new worldview. The colleges, as urban Mennonite institutions were, in some ways, best equipped to deal with the transition. Both MBBC and CMBC were founded in Winnipeg during the forties when the number of Mennonites living in the city was just beginning to grow. The development of the schools, therefore, mirrored the increased Mennonite exposure to modern society. Constituency members who continued to live in primarily rural settings were less exposed to the forces of modernity and so it was difficult for them to recognize a need for the discussions, or for the changes being proposed, at the Colleges. Tensions escalated as the two groups, with very different worldviews, met to make institutional decisions. The colleges were forced to reconcile past traditions with modern inclinations in order to maintain the support of both groups. Their continued survival indicates that, to some degree, they were able to do so.

THE METHOD OF THIS STUDY

This study is a social historical analysis of Mennonite post-secondary education in Winnipeg, Manitoba during the 1960s. Information related to MBBC and CMBC provided the basis for this study. Available sources included numerous historical accounts, autobiographies and biographical works, records of the Mennonite Brethren Conference of Canada and the Conference of Mennonites in Canada, Mennonite

[3] Sampson, 15.

academic journals and church publications, scholarly works related to Mennonite studies, as well as College papers and records. Personal interview and questionnaire material was also gathered specifically for this study by the author. The study is divided into eight chapters covering: a brief historical overview of the Mennonite attitude toward education, the development of Mennonite education in Manitoba prior to the sixties, Mennonites and higher education in the context of their modern Canadian environment, and a detailed look at both MBBC, and CMBC during the 1960s.

Social historians look at the ordinary events in the life of an educational institution with the intent to make critical assessments. These studies are often directed by anthropological questions such as "Who are the students?" and "What are they doing?" For example, current studies have dealt with the experience of women in the university or the nature of student life at a particular period of time.[4] Social historians also consider social dynamics, such as the influence of professionalization on educational institutions or the effect of the World Wars on educational endeavors. Recent studies have looked at the role of social class and secularization on Canadian colleges. In Mennonite educational studies, T.D. Regehr's 1988 For Everything a Season: A History of the Alexanderkron Zentralschule, as a social history, describes the development of the Mennonite school system in a Russian village within the context of the tumultuous social and political climate of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

A social historical perspective is just one of a number of general categories for historical studies of higher education. An intellectual history of higher education studies

[4] Contributions to Paul Axelrod and John G. Reid, eds. Youth, University and Canadian Society: Essays in the Social History of Higher Education (Kingston, Montreal, London: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1989).

the effect of intellectual currents across disciplines within the educational institutions. The effect of Darwinism, for example, as it implicated biological, psychological, theological, geological studies would be a case in point. Intellectual histories can be descriptive and/or analytical, depending on the author's direction. Currently, very little work related to Mennonite education would qualify as an intellectual history. For example, few studies have qualitatively assessed the effect of popular educational philosophies on Mennonite educational techniques or methodologies and little has been written about how Mennonite schools maintain a preventative stance against the contemporary ideologies of individualization and secularization. [5]

The intellectual discussion of academic matters is not the explicit purpose of the third approach - single institutional history. The history of a single institution is often written for its public relation value. These studies are frequently written from the perspective of an "in-house" author who organizes information around a key person or a central idea. Common themes include the struggle, endurance, survival and accomplishment of the institution. Occasionally, external sponsors will publish studies promoting the benefit of their links to an educational institution. At least two Mennonite institutional histories published in 1995 follow this model. Both Mennonite Idealism and Higher Education: The Story of the Fresno Pacific College Idea, edited by Paul Toews, and Lead Us On: A History of Rockway Mennonite Collegiate 1945-1995, written by Sam Steiner, discuss the value of Mennonite schools in light of the common themes of struggle, survival and accomplishment.

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[5] John W. Friesen, "Studies in Mennonite Education: The State of the Art", JMS Vol. 1 (1983), 144.

Many of the Mennonite educational studies of the last thirty years have leaned in the direction of sociology rather than social history.[6] A number of these studies have been grounded in the structural-functional sociological theory where the focus has been to assess the level of assimilation of Mennonite young people. Two recent studies published in the 1995 Journal of Mennonite Studies reveal this interest. Both "Growing Roots and Wings: Emergence of Mennonite Teens", a study conducted by Leo Driedger and Abe Bergen, as well as Sharin and Eduard Schludermann's "Values of Winnipeg Adolosecents in Mennonite and Catholic Schools" are social science studies which rely heavily on statistical methods of data analysis.

An earlier social sciences project, Continuity and Change Among the Mennonite Brethren (1987), also relied heavily on statistical data for its analysis. For this study in religious sociology, Peter Hamm examined the Canadian Mennonite Brethren "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."[7] He relied heavily on statistical data gathered for the Church Member Profile, a survey of five Mennonite and Brethren in Christ denominations conducted in 1972 by J. Howard Kauffman and Leland D. Harder to draw his conclusions.[8] Though the data used for Hamm's study was collected during the earlier seventies, it is particularly useful as a reference point for this thesis.

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[6] There was an increased interest in the discipline of sociology between the 1960s and the 1990s so many of the studies conducted among Mennonites were of that nature. For examples, see the work of Leo Driedger, Leland Harder, Howard, Kaufmann, Calvin Redekop, et.al.

[7] Peter M. Hamm, Continuity and Change Among Canadian Mennonite Brethren (Waterloo: Wilfred Laurier University Press, 1987), xv-xvi.

[8] Their own findings were summarized in Howard Kauffman and Leland Harder, Anabaptists Four Centuries Later: A Profile of Five Mennonite and Brethren in Christ Denominations (Scottdale: Herald Press, 1975).

The current thesis used the statistics included in Hamm's study to provide some of the quanitative data to support the qualitative evidence gathered by the method of this study. Hamm discovered that both continuity and change were part of the Mennonite response to Canadian society and his analysis validates this current study. As a social historical study, this thesis was less reliant on statistical data, however, than it was on underlying questions. The historical evidence gathered was examined in light of questions like "How do the ideas and aspirations of the Mennonites in Manitoba change with increased cultural openness?" and "How are ideas related to education exchanged, strengthened, refuted and implemented within the Mennonite community?" The study also recognized that institutional decisions made at CMBC and MBBC needed to be viewed within the context of the broader Canadian society. It is the author's perspective that Mennonites, and the Mennonite Colleges, were deeply influenced by the modern society surrounding them. The Mennonite community was able, however, to escape wholesale accommodation or assimilation into the broader culture because intentional attempts were made to adapt traditional ideals and values for meaning in the modern world. The two Mennonite colleges in Winnipeg played a crucial role in helping their constituencies adjust to a new environment while retaining a Mennonite identity.

REVIEW OF THE CURRENT LITERATURE RELATED TO THIS STUDY

Recent historians of the Mennonite community have criticized the work of early Mennonite historians because they lacked a proper understanding of the broader context in which Mennonite life took place. In his 1983 article "Studies in Mennonite Education: The State of the Art", John Friesen stated that many of the studies in the past perpetuated

parochial biases or neglected to examine the larger context in which Mennonite education was taking place.[9] There was more work to be done. James Urry agreed and added that there was a need to "reassert a sense of balance in Mennonite history". The aim of his book, None But Saints, was to emphasize that "the transformation of Mennonite life involved external as well as internal factors and was concerned with issues greater than matters of faith or the state of individual Mennonite souls." [10] This trend has changed since 1988. Studies conducted since that time have related aspects of Mennonite post-secondary education to cultural influence.

In 1988, the Journal of Mennonite Studies published a brief paper by Ross T. Bender – "Private Mennonite Education in Ontario after World War II". Bender's quick analysis of the development of educational institutions in Ontario revealed that while the pioneer days focused on elementary schools, the 1920-40's were the Bible school era and the later years saw the development of Mennonite Bible Colleges in Canada. Decade by decade, the need for successively higher academic training, in Canada generally, resulted in higher levels of education being offered by Mennonite schools. Bender stated,

> This was not without vigorous debate, however, nor was it without significant sacrifice. Some schools have folded or merged as circumstances changed. New ones have been brought into being. In each generation there were those who had a vision and who were able to inspire others.[11]

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[9] Friesen, 144.

[10] James Urry, None But Saints: The Transformation of Mennonite Life in Russia 1789-1889 (Canada: Hyperion Press, 1989), 26.

[11] Ross T. Bender, "Private Mennonite Education in Ontario after World War II", JMS Vol. 6 (1988), 122-3.

Research gathered for this present study discovered that the educational development in Manitoba followed the pattern Bender noted in the Ontario Mennonite community. The second chapter of this thesis draws attention to the same progression of educational levels, as well as the debate it engendered.

Other Mennonite scholars have also drawn attention to both the tension and the benefits created by increased educational levels among the Mennonites. John Redekop, in his article "The Influence of Rising Educational Levels", argued that while "the influence of higher education on conservative evangelical or Anabaptist (Mennonite) groups has been a controversial topic for generations if not centuries" there is evidence to suggest that the Mennonites who attained advanced levels of education, and remained within the Mennonite church, tended to strengthen the Mennonite community as a whole. [12] He suggests that more highly educated Mennonites were able to work for the good of the community even though the process often created tensions and problems. As a result, Redekop argues that

> Mennonite Brethren should not view higher education mainly as a threat to the faithful church but as a means to achieve a more balanced and more thorough development.[13]

Similarly, Bruno Dyck argues for the benefits of higher education within the Mennonite community in his brief organization history of CMBC. He writes that since its inception

> CMBC has had a substantial direct and indirect influence on its constituency. In addition to educating and shaping the students who have attended the College, CMBC has served to unite, to provide vision for, and to develop

[12] John Redekop, "The Influence of Rising Educational Levels, Direction (1983), 58.
[13] Redekop, 58.

leaders for its parent organization, the Conference of Mennonites in Canada (CMC). [14]

Dyck goes on to question why, considering the breadth of CMBC's impact, so little has been written about its history. [15]

The lack of qualitative and historical research related to Mennonite post-secondary institutions is also noted by Leo Driedger in the summary of his 1997 sociological study Mennonite College and Seminary Enrollments. Driedger notes that research related to policies and curricula, as well as the future goals and aims of individual institutions, is especially lacking. [16] Currently most research studies of Mennonite education have been limited to secondary students or have only indirectly been interested in the work of the colleges. Abe Dueck, for example, used his quick overview of MBBC and CMBC to argue that the Canadian Mennonite Brethren (sponsors of MBBC) were more interested in evangelical Anabaptism than the Canadian Conference of Mennonites (supporters of CMBC). Dueck's 1995 paper "Canadian Mennonites and the Anabaptist Vision" includes information related to curricula at the two colleges to prove his thesis. In part, validation for his premise lies in the fact that a specific course on Anabaptist theology was never offered at CMBC "whereas at MBBC (this) course was consistently offered beginning in the late 1960s". [17]

Dueck began this argument in a 1988 paper where he examined "The Changing Role of Biblical/Theological Education" in the MB community. Dueck argued that

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[14] Bruno Dyck, "Half a Century of Canadian Mennonite Bible College: A Brief Organizational History", JMS Vol. 11 (1993), 194.
[15] Even the writing of Dyck's paper is directly related to the fifty year anniversary celebration of CMBC and not an independent piece of analysis.
[16] Leo Driedger, "Monastry or Marketplace? Changing Mennonite College/Seminary Enrollments", JMS Vol. 15 (1997), 77.
[17] Abe Dueck, "Canadian Mennonites and the Anabaptist Vision", JMS Vol. 13 (1995), 77.

MBBC was able to gain academic respectability during the past four decades because it brought together two of major modern theological influences – the new Anabaptism and the new evangelicalism. These influences stood in considerable tension with some of the past and current theological thought within the MB community. The tensions, Dueck argues, are best understood by examining MB theological development in light of the distinctive historical and cultural forces that were at work. The unique history and culture of the MB community has created certain attitudes toward education and theology that make it difficult to resolve this theological struggle easily.[18] This is true for both of the Mennonite groups included in this study.

REASONS FOR THIS STUDY:

Theological tensions were evident at both MBBC and CMBC during the sixties but they were only part of a number of problems. One of the major areas of debate involved the changes to the liberal arts curriculum at the colleges. This thesis includes this debate as part of its study. This study is significant since little research has been conducted on the context for changes to the liberal arts or general education curricula in Bible colleges. In 1991, Norman Rempel conducted a study of General Education in Accredited Bible Colleges in the USA and noted:

> Relatively little research has been conducted on Bible college education, despite the fact that nearly 30,000 students attend such institutions each year. The curriculum of the Bible college is divided into three major components: biblical/theological, professional and general education. Until this present study, only one researcher, Timothy Warner (1967),

[18] Abe Dueck, "The Changing Role in Biblical/Theological Education" in The Bible and The Church:Essays in Honor of David Ewert AJ Dueck, et al. eds. (Winnipeg: Kindred Press, 1988), 131-148.

examined this part of the curriculum in depth.[19]

Rempel's findings indicate that while Bible college educators affirm and promote the importance of general education (the liberal arts disciplines) in the overall curriculum, there are ongoing difficulties:

1) There is within the Bible college movement a lingering tendency toward anti-intellectualism, a suspicion of what is often considered "secular" learning.

2) Despite its promise, in many general education programs there is a lack of quality integration of "faith and learning".

3) The need for faculty in general education to have expertise both in theology and one or more disciplines makes the securing of quality general education faculty especially challenging.

4) The number of Bible college students taking their general education elsewhere makes quality worldview development particularly difficult.[20]

These four findings, drawn from Rempel's study of the Bible colleges in the USA, are related to this study of the Canadian Mennonite Bible colleges in Winnipeg, Manitoba.

This thesis demonstrates that, during the sixties, some Mennonites in Canada were deeply concerned about the effect of too much "secular" education. Other Mennonites were applauding the benefits of a liberal arts education because it was the way to enter the growing professional world. Some heartily endorsed the idea of providing university level courses within the "safety" of a religious institution. Since the Mennonite colleges in Winnipeg were small, however, they could not supply adequate "in-house" faculty for all the general arts and science requirements necessary to earn a

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[19] Norman Rempel, "General Education in Accredited Bible Colleges (USA): Recent Finding", Direction Vol. 22 (1993), 51.

Bachelor of Arts degree. Alternatives needed to be considered so that students could transfer their liberal arts courses to other institutions for academic credit. Alliances were forged with the universities for this purpose but this required the Colleges to align their programs and curriculum with those of the university. Subsequently, the education offered by the Mennonite colleges included two very different perspectives – the worldview of a traditionalized religious community and the modern mentality of the university. This duality raised a number of concerns for the Winnipeg institutions. Did the blended "Mennonite" and "university" education lead to a full integration of "faith and learning"? Was it possible to mix "faith" and "learning" in the modern context? Were the colleges able to help the Christian student develop a richer Christian worldview, or did the influence of the university weaken the Mennonite's religious faith?

These questions were legitimate. The university was a primary carrier for the modern worldview that emphasized a rational, secular and critical way of thinking. Pedagogically, a liberal education was to supply the student with enough background information that they could understand "why" things worked the way they did. This knowledge was then to serve as the foundation for innovation and experimentation – specifically the ability to create something new from what already existed. Inevitably, this way of thinking challenged the presuppositions of past knowledge. "Old" or "traditional" ideas were increasingly exposed to the process of critical thought, and were sometimes found wanting. Religious concepts were particularly vulnerable when they were analyzed according to the rational, secular standard prevalent in the modern world.

MBBC and CMBC, as religious institutions, faced particular challenges in light of this modern criterion. Now they were responsible to assess critically the traditional ideas

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[20] Rempel, 54.

supported by their members. Constituency concerns continually raised the question of each College's purpose. Some questioned whether it was necessary to expand the liberal arts programs at the Colleges if it meant opening the community to critique; others thought it was essential. Some thought that the Mennonite community would be better served by schools that offered primarily biblical, theological and/or church-related courses while others argued that exposure to secular thought was essential for a fully developed Christian worldview. In an attempt to resolve these differences, Mennonites began to formulate a Mennonite philosophy of education for the first time.

The new Mennonite philosophy of education was concerned with the comprehensive issues that addressed the very existence of education: the question of *purposes* and the question of *process*. In answer to the question, What are the purposes of education?, some Mennonites discovered that the purposes of Mennonite education could only be defined in the *context of the purposes of a people*. Educational goals needed to emphasize *identity* and loyalty, development of *skills* needed for an adequate supply of workers, together with *additional emphases* which arose from the community's concept of the good life. As a religious group, it was stressed that Mennonites should educate to make their *history and identity* clear, in part to *counteract the influence of the larger society*, but largely to *train themselves to serve God and others*. [21]

The purposes of education needed to set alongside the "how to" educate. The question of educational process needed to addressed as well. It was determined that education was *not concerned simply with transmitting a tradition*. The *background*

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[21] Daniel Hertzler, Mennonite Education: Why and How? A Philosophy of Education for the Mennonite Church (Scottdale: Herald Press, 1971), 17-18. The purposes and processes described in this particular philosophy of education are easily detected in many of the MB and CMC material during the sixties, especially at the end of the decade.

information and perspective offered to a young person within the context of a people was to be an invitation for the student to join in the continual process of *restating, redefining and reformulating* the community's uniqueness. Changing circumstances required *evaluation* and *innovation*. The *pattern of openness* would allow for *adjustment* to changes as a result of new insights offered *by both instructors and students*. A quality Mennonite education would also offer *training in the skills* needed to function in the society of which the learner was a part, and *teach the values* (conception... of the desirable) of their community.[22]

During the 1960s, the goals of both MBBC and CMBC were defined by this kind of philosophy of education. Though it took almost a full decade to articulate these purposes and processes definitively, the effect was already evident. Constituency members studied graduates of the Colleges to determine how valuable the schools were for the Mennonite community. The standards by which the Colleges wanted to be measured were the standards set by a new philosophy of education:

> The goal of Mennonite education is a person who will be informed about his or her heritage and articulate his or her faith. Students will have a sense of identity and vocation as a Christian and will see their occupation as a way in which to serve Christ. They will see themselves as people of value and so will respect themselves and others. Students will possess emotional independence, the capacity for critical judgement, and the willingness to be unpopular. They will be concerned about spiritual, social and economic opportunity for the poor and the oppressed and will themselves not become a slave of affluence... But the Christian Mennonite

[22] Hertzler, 20-21.

> is not only an individual; he or she is also a person in community. The ultimate goal of church education is Christian maturity and this is more properly designated as group than as individual maturity.[23]

The following chapters will allow the reader to see if, and how, these goals were met within the history of Mennonite education and, in particular, at the Mennonite Colleges in Winnipeg in the 1960s.

[23] Hertzler, 47-48.

CHAPTER TWO

MENNONITE EDUCATION: AN AMBIVALENT ATTITUDE

I. MENNONITES AND EDUCATION: EUROPEAN BACKGROUND

Historically, Mennonites have been ambivalent about the value and purpose of education. On the one hand, Mennonites have valued and encouraged literacy as a means of fulfilling a community ideal referred to as "the priesthood of all believers". This sixteenth century distinctive, while not unique to the Mennonites, gave all church members the personal responsibility of reading the Bible. A community hermeneutical model was emphasized rather than the theological interpretations of a clerical elite and it was therefore essential for most of the members to be literate. Learning to read and write would enable the Mennonite community member to have direct access to the biblical Word of God. As a result, Mennonites recognized the need to offer their children a basic elementary education. Supplementary religious training became part of the educational curriculum in the form of catechismal memorization and this was to give the young person a basic understanding of the Mennonite faith and prepare him or her for the voluntary decision of adult baptism.

The overall purpose of Mennonite education was practical, eventually enabling the young person to participate in the religious community. Abstract theological developments or philosophical analysis were usually not part of a traditional Mennonite education because it was believed that God, through the Holy Spirit, would guide the Mennonite community to "right thinking" directly - not through theological or philosophical reflections which, according to Mennonite thought, were associated with

"worldly learning". This literal biblicism encouraged literacy at an elementary level but delayed the development of institutions of "higher learning" till the late nineteenth century.

The emphasis on the practical function of education and the hesitation to encourage critical thought and abstract reasoning has its roots in the earliest movements of the Anabaptists (as the first Mennonites were called) in Europe during the sixteenth century.[1] While a number of the early Anabaptist leaders were fairly well-educated, a general mistrust of "worldly learning" developed early in the Mennonite self-awareness.[2] This understanding was encouraged by Menno Simons, the early Mennonite leader from whom the Mennonites derived their name.

Menno Simons had been educated within the Catholic religious system and assumed the duties of a Catholic priest in 1524 in the Frisian village of Pingjum. Later he claimed he had not received an extensive theological training from the Catholic Church and was taught little Latin or Greek and no Scripture. [3] Simons did, however, have exposure to the writings of Luther which were circulating throughout Dutch monasteries at the time and, according to Mennonite historian, C. Henry Smith, Menno Simons became convinced the Catholic church was wrong in its understanding of two important religious doctrines - infant baptism and transubstantiation.[4] Though Menno Simons began to confront these beliefs of his church opponents, he directed his most forceful arguments at the ethical corruption and spiritual unfruitfulness of the church clergy and

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[1] The Anabaptists received this name because of their emphasis on re-baptizing adults upon the confession of their faith in Jesus Christ. A number of influential leaders in the early Anabaptist movement, such as Balthaser Hubmaier and Menno Simons spent a great deal of effort debating the role and value of infant baptism vs. adult baptism, in opposition to the Catholic Church.
[2] Calvin Redekop, Mennonite Society (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989), 174.
[3] C. Henry Smith, Smith's Story of the Mennonites (Newton, Kansas: Faith and Life Press, 1981), 53.
[4] Smith, 55.

laity. The Mennonites who followed Simon's ideal of the Christian church as the "regenerated" without "spot or wrinkle", "pure and undefiled" in belief and in moral conduct, also criticized the laxity and lack of ethical correction within the Catholic church.[5]

The Catholic church condemned and punished the Mennonites for their critical views and soon Anabaptist self-awareness associated the role of educated religious and secular authorities with their persecution. As the Mennonite sociologist Calvin Redekop pointed out, it was the "learned professors and doctors who provided the rational justification of the rejection, prosecution, and oppression of the Anabaptists".[6] Redekop argues that the teachings of the Mennonite leader, Menno Simons, encouraged a negative understanding of their "educated" opposition. For example, Simons wrote:

> I repeat, do not hear, do not follow, and do not believe the many learned ones who let themselves be called doctors, lords, and masters, for they mind but flesh and blood ... therefore do not hear those who are after fat salaries and a lazy life. They deceive you. ... they preach to you empty inventions out of their own imagination and not out of the mouth of the Lord.[7]

This statement, along with others from some early Anabaptists, helped to create a suspicion of "worldly learning and sophistication" and a basic mistrust emerged toward learning which took place outside of the private domain of the Mennonite church and home.[8]

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[5] Smith, 67.
[6] Redekop, 174.
[7] Menno Simons, The Complete Writings of Menno Simons (Scottdale: Herald Press, 1956), 195.
[8] Redekop, 174.

While education that took place outside of the Mennonite community was viewed with skepticism, education within Mennonites groups was not disparaged. European beginnings reveal, at the least, a mild enthusiasm for education among Anabaptists.[9] Calvin Redekop argues that Mennonites would tend to establish their own schools as soon as they were able to gain some control over their own lives and activities. The Mennonites in Switzerland, France, Germany and Austria did not acquire the necessary autonomy to develop their own educational institutions and so their children were presumably trained informally in the home until the early nineteenth century when a keener interest in the educational needs of young people, in general, developed. The elementary village schools in these regions were not, however, of a high order and, initially, there was no religious education for Mennonite children outside of the home. Occasionally, on estates where the population was largely Mennonite, or in communities where a sufficient number of Mennonite children were present, an educated pastor would become the village teacher or start a private school for the children of his church.[10]

Educational pursuits in Mennonite schools were matched to the Mennonite ideal of the Christian church. Generally, attention was directed to the study of scripture and the maintenance and perpetuation of a disciplined life.[11] The earliest example are the Hutterites - an early Anabaptist group - who in the 1540's were already conducting their own schools with a simple philosophy of education. In these closed communities, according to John Hoestetler, "the school-master, along with the entire Brotherhood, was

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[9] John Friesen, "Studies in Mennonite Education: The State of the Art", JMS 1 (University of Winnipeg, 1983), 133.
[10] Smith, 204.
[11] Students of Mennonite history are well aware that often general statements about the Mennonites/Anabaptists do not apply to all groups of Mennonites. During the twentieth century numerous arguments in favor of a polygenesis theory of Anabaptist roots have been articulated, thereby raising a consciousness of diversity among Mennonite groups.

to raise the children in the honor and fear of God, and to subdue any evil inclination from the time of their youth." [12] Hoestetler goes on to note that the Hutterites valued education "not for self-improvement but as a means of 'planting' in children 'the knowledge and fear of God' " and for shaping the individual will to conform with group expectations as early as the kindergarten years.[13]

There is some debate concerning how typical the Hutterite educational endeavors are for other Mennonite groups. Calvin Redekop argues that while the educational thrust of other Mennonite groups may vary somewhat, to a large extent, the Hutterite philosophy and practice of education can be generalized to the other Mennonite groups. [14] John W. Friesen, on the other hand, in his discussion of "The State of the Art of Mennonite Education", argues that the Hutterites are not an adequate comparison for all other Mennonite groups. Friesen argues that the Hutterites are usually satisfied with minimal literacy and do not necessarily connect schooling with the attainment of Biblical awareness or theological arguments.[15] He adds that the Hutterites, as a conservative Anabaptist group, "have conceptualized education as a means of assuring cultural preservation among the young", and then goes on to argue that this may not be the case for every Mennonite group. He adds that "only the knowledgeable student of Mennonite life will be aware of the many acute differences among Mennonite orientations", and the impact of these "divergences" on Mennonite education emphases within different groups.[16]

The connection between the desire for Mennonite autonomy and the

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[12] Redekop, 176.
[13] John A. Hostetler, Hutterite Society (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974), 144.
[14] Redekop, 176.
[15] Friesen, 137.

establishment of Mennonite schools became evident earlier in Mennonite history. The Dutch Mennonites who migrated to West Prussia requested, and were granted, a charter of privilege (*Privilegium*) numerous times by the reigning monarchs between 1550's and 1750's, guaranteeing a degree of religious toleration and independence. [17] At that time it was the conviction of Mennonite parents that at least an elementary education should be provided for their children so private schools were established very soon after their arrival, some as early as the 1550's.[18] The education offered in these schools as consisting of instruction in reading, writing, arithmetic and religion with a great deal of emphasis on memorization, drill and penmanship. The current language of the Mennonite community would be used for instruction, or taught as a second language, in hopes of perpetuating community identity.[19] Language played a significant role in maintaining Mennonite identity. For example, while in Prussia where German was the common language, the Dutch Mennonite immigrants continued to speak Dutch, till the middle of the eighteenth century. The initial use of the Dutch language served as a community distinctive in Prussia and then, when some of the Mennonites moved from Prussia to Russia later in the eighteenth century, they used the German language to distinguish them from the Russian speaking populace.

The move to Russia took place after 1780 when Fredrick the Great (1740-1786) of Prussia declared he would grant the Mennonites a special charter of autonomy only on the condition that they paid an annual sum of money in support of a military academy.

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[16] Friesen, 133.
[17] Adolf Ens, Subjects or Citizens? The Mennonite Experience in Canada, 1870-1925 (University of Ottawa Press, 1994), 4.
[18] Redekop, 176.
[19] Friesen, 133. The Dutch immigrants to Prussia spoke Dutch till the middle of the eighteenth century when High German became the language of the Mennonites there.

Since the Mennonites, as pacifists, were resistant to this association to military service almost half of the Mennonite population of the Prussian delta region migrated to New Russia during the fifty years of Fredrich's reign. In New Russia, Czarina Catherine II allowed the Mennonites to have the autonomy they sought. She granted them a charter of privilege in 1788 that promised "complete freedom of religious practice according to Mennonite church order and usage" as well as "exemption from all military service for all time for the Mennonite immigrants and their descendants".[20]

The autonomy granted the Mennonite colonists included control over their schools. Since public school attendance was not compulsory in Russia, nor anywhere else in Europe at that time, not all villages had schools. The Mennonites, however, placed an elementary school in every village from the time they arrived, and developed an extensive educational system of their own design. At first, the teachers were not well-educated or well-paid. They were usually farmers, craftsmen or herdsmen who, for the most part, operated the schools out of their homes because they needed the extra income. Typically the teacher was left completely in charge though the leaders of the community were responsible for supervision of the schools.[21]

The first educational reforms were introduced in 1820 through an organization called The Society for Christian Education that also directed the construction of the first secondary school. By 1843, Johann Cornies, a Mennonite individual associated with The Society for Christian Education, had established an Agricultural Commission which was granted considerable control over the school system by the Russian government. The developments instituted by Cornies included the creation of school districts, compulsory

[20] Ens, 4-5.
[21] Smith, 268.

attendance, licensing of teachers, a planned curriculum and teacher conferences.[22]

The response to these educational reforms was not unanimously positive. The Molotschna Mennonites were generally more responsive to educational changes than the Chortitza Mennonites. The Molotschna and Chortitza colonies developed quite different personalities early in their history and the distinctions governed the community response to educational progress. Initially, the two colonies were established when approximately 10,000 Mennonites arrived at Chortitza in 1789 and at Molotschna in 1804. Many of the first to leave Prussia for Russia were the poorer, the less able and less educated settlers and they began the Chortitza colony. When they arrived in the Chortitza River region, the settlers were greeted by the seemingly poor land and dilapidated, vacated villages. It took years of hard, pioneering work to bring the land into productivity and the hardships and poor spiritual leadership of the early years permitted a rather low cultural level to become dominant.[23] As a result, not much effort was expended on education during this time.

The type of educational system in Chortitza was very primitive at first. Attendance was sporadic because the children were needed at home, the teacher had little formal training and there were no textbooks. The Bible and Mennonite catechism formed the basis for the reading program and, since in most villages the church building was used as the school, there were no special educational furnishings or teaching aids. It was impossible for the students to make rapid progress under these conditions and yet, strong ties to tradition meant that many of these primitive educational patterns, forged during the "discouraged pioneer years" were still evident decades later when they became the ideal

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[22] Friesen, 134.
[23] HJ Gerbrandt, Adventure in Faith, (Altona, Manitoba: D.W. Friesen & Sons Ltd.,1970), 15.

school image for many of their (Chortitza) descendants of the latter half of the twentieth century. [24]

Molotschna, on the other hand, attracted later settlers who had remained in Prussia till they too began to find the Prussian government increasingly oppressive. The second migration movement, which began to develop in 1803, included "wealthy land and industry owners, educators and ministers". Conditions for the 365 families who settled in the Molotschna River area were quite different than they had been for the earliest settlers in Chortitza, 100 miles to the southeast. Gerbrandt writes that with the advantages of "material wealth, the educational and spiritual leadership and the experience of the Chortitza colony", the Molotschna colony made rapid progress economically.[25] Daughter colonies were established as new crown lands became available to accommodate the numerical growth within these Russian Mennonite colonies.

The privileges granted to the Mennonites in Russia, including large grants of land, meant that Mennonites remained geographically separated from the Russian people. This isolation created an environment with little intellectual stimulus in many Russian Mennonite villages and Gerhard Lohrenz, Mennonite leader and a Russian immigrant to Canada in the 1920's, recalls:

> Though the German language was used in all church services, it was understood rather poorly; the Low German, Platt Deutsch, constituted the primary medium of communication. There were few books. Few

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[24] Gerbrandt, 16.
[25] Gerbrandt, 16. The temporary stay of the Molotschna visitors at Chortitza and the employment they provided when they built their own villages helped the economy of Chortitza colony.

> leaders of intellectual and spiritual stature had accompanied them to their new home. Their ministers were elected from the laity without formal training. Since no remuneration was given for their services they struggled as others, to wrest a living from the hostile soil. Under these conditions, a slow stagnation crept into the intellectual and spiritual life of the group.[26]

Many others have described the spiritual climate during the mid-1800's as low, with little moral or ethical concern. This created an ideal setting for the message of Klaus Reimer, a travelling evangelist, who first visited Chortitza and then Molotschna.

Reimer's message of repentance and total separation from all cultural and educational influences appealed to those who later became his converts and subsequently separated into the ***Kleine Gemeinde*** (the "small church"). Edward Wuest, a pietistic Lutheran minister who began visiting the Mennonite villages, was also able to draw attention with his message of "free grace and holy living". Those who became converts began meeting in small groups to study the Bible. These meetings began to include extreme emotional expressions of spiritual freedom that were not considered suitable in their Mennonite communities. This group organized itself as the ***Mennonite Brethren Church*** on January 6, 1860 despite persecution by the larger Mennonite church. [27]

As these new Mennonite church groups were forming, another kind of Mennonite union was forged in Russia. The Mennonites who possessed a secondary education, though they tended to come from a number of distinct groups, were becoming united

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[26] Gerbrandt, 18.

[27] Gerbrandt, 20. For the reasons why the Mennonite Brethren felt they needed to separate from the larger Mennonite church (which included accusations against the church that might have led to some of the persecution the Mennonite Brethren experienced) see Appendix A.

through their approval of higher education. Some of the supporters of secondary education were the prosperous, progressively minded settlers - a few of whom were ministers, successful farmers and estate owners. The largest number of secondary students, however, were the children of entrepreneurs, merchants and artisans or teachers. Orphans or children from poor families who were especially academically inclined were selected and sponsored for further education by the educational supporters. Generally, the Mennonites who valued the secondary schools reflected a worldview quite different from the average Mennonite colonist. They believed that an education was necessary for their children so that they could pursue successful careers that lay outside of farming.[28]

Secondary education provided Mennonite children of both rich and poor backgrounds with an opportunity to escape the social confines of colony life. Teaching was the first occupation other than farmer to be widely accepted in the Russian Mennonite colonies in the nineteenth century. The picture depicted above by Gerhard Lohrenz may have been the experience within many Mennonite communities but not necessarily all. James Urry, an anthropologist who has extensively studied the Mennonites, argues that "images of dark, cluttered rooms ruled by despotic teachers, where cowed and dulled children were inculcated with unimaginative information are probably based on folklore".[29] Urry argues that the quality of education likely varied depending on the ability of the teacher and the community attitude toward education.

Generally, in the earliest Mennonite village schools, teaching was not a distinct profession but rather a part-time occupation with a very low social standing. Frequently,

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[28] James Urry, None But Saints: The Transformation of Mennonite Life in Russia 1789-1889 (Winnipeg: Hyperion Press Ltd., 1998), 164.

the task of teaching was assigned to someone who needed to supplement a poor income and the teacher's ability barely exceeded those of his oldest student. Eventually, however, after the 1820s, some qualified and capable teachers were able to raise the standard of education in their colonies and teachers became models of achievement and progress for the young. In these instances, Urry argues:

> A degree of solidarity was established among teachers, fostered by formal and informal meetings and a sense of being intellectually superior to most colonists. They often joined others to form the basis of what was much later to become an emergent intelligentsia in the colonies.[30]

In both Chortitza and Molotschna, there were a number of outstanding teachers as well as groups with positive attitudes toward education.

In Molotschna, Mennonite groups interested in intellectual development had met since the 1820's. They were stimulated by the new immigrants from Prussia during the nineteenth century. These Prussian Mennonites brought with them many of the ideas of leading educational theorists, such as Johann Pestalozzi and Friedrich Froebel, who were influencing the Prussian educational system at that time.[31] Some of the immigrants had been teachers in the Prussian schools and went on to greatly influence the structure and content of Mennonite schooling in Russia.[32] An example of change inspired by the Prussian reforms included the new centralized educational system organized by Johann Cornies which contrasted sharply with the older village system. The new system was aimed at producing an educated elite while earlier Mennonite education stressed social

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[29] Urry, 158.
[30] Urry, 165.
[31] TD Regehr, For Everything a Season: A History of the Alexanderkrone Zentralschule (Winnipeg, Manitoba: CMBC Publications, 1988) 8-9.

cohesiveness and only developed a level of competence necessary to preserve traditions. According to Mennonite historian Ted Regehr, Cornies was primarily interested in replacing the "the deadly methods of memorization, rote learning, and decorative art and penmanship" with a more enlightened and progressive learning of basic concepts and essential skills, "all based on accurate observations of actual objects".[33] The early foundation of Mennonite education was to be replaced with an emphasis on reason and science. In this model competition recognized and rewarded individual achievement and children were encouraged to see education as assisting in the progressive transformation of their colonies.[34] Educational reforms were also implemented to improve farming techniques and to encourage the adoption of new crops.[35] While these advances in agriculture were of a practical nature, the new system expected students to question the accepted truths of the past and to prepare for a future that was different from the past. [36]

While some educational reforms began to take place in the Russian colonies after the 1820s, the most drastic changes occurred after 1850. Some of these educational advances caused disagreements to erupt between progressive and conservative Mennonites living in Russia. Government enforced instruction in the Russian language in 1881 (except for religion and German language instruction) and the occasional Russian teacher for Mennonite schools (when no qualified Mennonite teacher was available) were seen, by conservative Mennonites, as dangerous compromises with outside cultural

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[32] Urry, 155-156.
[33] Regehr, 8.
[34] Urry, 163.
[35] Urry, 162.
[36] Urry, 163.

influences.[37] Mennonite leaders in Chortitza (and particularly its two daughter colonies, Bergthal and Fuerstenland) resisted many of the innovations. Most of the educational progress took place in Molotschna where Russian influences were also criticized by conservative members. Others saw the benefit of increased Mennonite education, regardless of the association with outside forces.

As mentioned above, Johann Cornies was one of the progressive Mennonites interested in educational reform. Cornies' interest was matched by an official Russian interest in educational improvements and this allowed him to seize the control of the educational institutions in the Mennonite colonies.[38] Although Cornies was largely self-educated, he believed that educational reform could be the way to overcome the stubborn conservatism of many Mennonites who he disliked. He wished to ensure that the next generation would be more responsive to change than their parents and grandparents had been. He began to develop an intensive educational system in the Mennonite colonies during the 1840s and it was fully operational by the 1850s in spite of opposition.

The 1850s also saw the beginnings of educational advances made by Wuest and his followers who would soon become the Mennonite Brethren. The early members of this group showed remarkable similarity in terms of occupation and education. Most of the Wuest "brethren" (as they were first known) had more than an elementary level education, many were school teachers or members of upwardly mobile social groups such as merchants, millers, or estate owners. Even though the majority of the adult male population in the Mennonite colonies were farmers, proportionally few farmers were part

[37] Friesen, 136.
[38] Urry, 162.

part of the Wuest group.[39] The educational background of many of Wuest "brethren" likely influenced the group's support of the establishment of a new secondary school from 1854 onwards. This school, known as the Brotherhood School, was officially opened in 1859 with the financial assistance of some of the wealthier members of the Wuest group.

The Brotherhood School was based on religious principles similar to those of German institutions that combined education with religious and philanthropic ideals. Both progress and piety were emphasized and these were closely linked to an increased individualism. The school reflected the religious innovation that had developed in the colonies among the educated and progressive elite. Cornies' progressive policies were already stressing the involvement of individual Mennonites in the competitive, secular world. Some thought that economic development could bring about an improvement in the moral quality of the Mennonite community. Progressive Mennonites believed there was need for such an improvement as well as the improvement which an individual religious commitment could make. The school stressed both the individual's personal salvation experience and the individual's economic development as means of raising the moral standard among Mennonites.[40]

The Wuest "brethren" became organized as the ***Mennonite Brethren (MB)*** in 1860, the year after the Brotherhood School was officially opened. Their active support of Mennonite education in the Russian villages of Chortitza and Molotschna was diminished, however, when a number of moderately conservative MBs joined over

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[39] Urry, 172. For more about the early Mennonite Brethren see Appendix A and Chapter Four.
[40] Urry, 172.

18,000 other Mennonites in a migration to the United States during the 1870s.[41] A more conservative group of Mennonites had begun to emigrate from the Russian colonies to Canada a decade earlier. This conservative group favored migration to Canada because the Canadian government was willing to offer them the religious autonomy they wanted. These Mennonites, for a large part, left Russia because they did not appreciate the growing Russian presence within the Mennonite communities there. Both the conservative and the moderate groups were particularly unhappy about the direct influence the Russian government began to have in Mennonite educational institutions. The decision to leave for North America was influenced by this concern.[42]

Of the 60,000 Mennonites living in Russia before the migrations began, two-thirds chose to remain. In general, those who stayed were the more culturally progressive and, under their influence, the Mennonite educational system in Russia experienced a phenomenal expansion during the period of 1870-1920.[43] Similar advances in Mennonite institutional development could not occur in Canada during the same period of time. The conservative nature of the earliest Mennonite settlers in Canada, along with the demands of beginning a new community life and a smaller population, deterred the kind of growth that took place in Russia.

Overall, the Mennonite educational system in Russia grew to the extent that by 1920, for a population of approximately 110,000, the Russian Mennonites operated:

1. 450 elementary schools with about 16,000 pupils and 570 teachers (including a school for the deaf);

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[41] A relatively small number of MBs came to Canada as part of a later migration in the early 1900s.
[42] J.A. Toews, A History of the Mennonite Brethren Church (Fresno: Board of Christian Literature, General Conference of the Mennonite Brethren Churches, 1975).
[43] Abe Dueck, Moving Beyond Secession: Defining Russian Mennonite Brethren Mission and Identity 1872-1922 (Winnipeg: Kindred Press, 1998), 4.

2. 25 secondary schools, two of which were considered business schools, with about 2,000 pupils enrolled and 100 teachers;
3. 2 teacher training schools with approximately 60 students;
4. One eight year business school for boys with about 300 students;
5. a girls' gymnasium with 150 enrolled; and
6. four Bible schools. [44]

The content and direction of these Mennonite schools generally pleased the Russian government and so some concessions were made. The Mennonites were allowed to offer instruction in religion and to teach German (the community language) in ten of a total of thirty hours per week.[45]

The advances made in the educational system reflected growth in other areas as well. According to Frank Epp, who has written a current Canadian Mennonite history covering this period, the 40,000 Mennonites who chose to remain in Russia enjoyed fifty years of "unprecedented prosperity and expansion of their communities and institutions".[46] With the difficult pioneer years behind them, the Mennonite communities in Russia began to develop a vigorous economy based on agriculture, the manufacturing of farm equipment and flour milling. Their population nearly tripled and the number of settlements increased to over fifty colonies from an original four mother colonies. These colonies included over 400 villages and Mennonites held over three million acres of land. The Mennonites became well known for their agricultural excellence and industrial

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[44] Friesen, 135.
[45] Friesen, 135.
[46] Frank H. Epp, Mennonites in Canada 1920-1940 (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1982), 140-141.

endeavors, including innovations in farming equipment.

Epp sees the links between the strong economy of the Mennonites in Russia and the rapid development of educational institutions that contributed to, and supported, the cultural and welfare of the total Mennonite community. Since the sustenance of the Mennonite communities now required more than just basic literacy, advances were made in Mennonite education to prepare the Mennonite young person for the additional tasks of an increasingly industrialized Mennonite world. Alternative higher education was also available to the hundreds of Mennonite students who received a university, college or seminary education outside of the Mennonite community, predominately in Germany and Switzerland. Graduates from these institutions included teachers, medical doctors and others who then returned to Russia to reinforce the Mennonite schools, hospitals and other welfare institutions. Increasingly, Mennonites in Russia appreciated the pragmatic value of higher education within the community.[47]

The Russian Revolution and Civil War prompted the another large migration to Canada. After their arrival during the 1920s, the displaced Russian Mennonite leadership attempted to reconstruct institutional structures in Canada to resemble those they were part of in pre-revolutionary Russia. This was not easily accomplished, however, without the powerful support of the Mennonite industrial and business elite they had experienced there. Education continued to be a major concern and a weekly paper, ***Der Bote*** (The Messenger), became a voice for the 1920 immigrant community. Dietrich H. Epp founded the paper as a vehicle by which the Mennonite people could be educated by the Russian leaders for life in a new domain. Epp expressed a great deal of confidence in the ability of the Russian immigrants to make a difference in Canada. In 1924, he wrote:

"We...did not come here to live in isolation, but...to build the Kingdom of God on earth for the realization of ethical ideals that teach us our beliefs and allow us to raise up our people's spiritual culture".[48] He strongly believed that to that end his paper was able to convey religious values and grounded Christianity, affect the political landscape of Canada, build heart and courage within the Mennonite community and influence agriculture, trade and industry.[49]

Initially, the Canadian Russian Mennonite leadership lost a great deal of power in the move to Canada. In pre-revolutionary Russia they had exercised considerable influence in political, economic and religious spheres. Now, they were needed to make new links with the Mennonite conferences and churches already existing in Canada. The Russian Mennonite influence quickly became noticeable in the educational initiatives that followed their arrival. (This influence will be discussed in the next chapter.)

A number of recurring themes related to education are evident throughout the history of the Anabaptist Mennonites from the sixteenth century till the twentieth. First, though many of the early Anabaptists were well educated, a general distrust of secular education developed early in Mennonite self-identity. As a result, many Mennonites have tended to favor an education that takes place within the confines of a parochial school and have developed Mennonite educational institutions to meet the changing needs of the Mennonite people. Secondly, the institutional developments and educational reforms are often brought about Mennonite individuals who experienced influences outside of the Mennonite community. These reforms were financially supported by some

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[47] Epp, 1982, 141.
[48] Dietrich H. Epp, "Zum Anfang," Der Bote, 14 January 1924, 2.
[49] Krista Taves, JMS, 16, 1998, 104.

of the wealthier community members who often had a greater degree of contact with the outside world through business developments. Third, the advancements initiated by the more progressive Mennonite leaders were usually met with resistance and criticism from conservative elements. Sometimes these disagreements led to schisms, the formation of other Mennonite groups, and /or further migrations. Fourth, with almost every migration, Mennonites have sought a substantial degree of religious and educational autonomy in their new home. As the migrant communities reached some level of economic security, more cultural and institutional development was able to take place. Lastly, there seems to be no monolithic Mennonite educational ideal. Mennonites continued to disagree about the value and purpose of Mennonite education throughout their early history. Separate Mennonite groups would promote and establish educational institutions to reflect their particular values and emphases. At times, Mennonites co-operated across group lines – with both other Mennonite communities and outside groups - especially when the strength of an alliance would help accomplish educational goals they could agree upon. The diversity of early Anabaptist beginnings is clearly represented in the diversity of opinion and approach to education among the various Mennonite groups who have their roots in a common history. Throughout the Mennonite story, the lines in the sand keep shifting.

CHAPTER THREE

THE AMBIVALENCE CONTINUES
Mennonite Education in Manitoba: 1870-1950

PRAIRIE YOUTH
I'm not an educated man

I'm not an educated man
With a college degree to my name;
I'm not classed among the learned
Who know from where the Normans came.

I don't wear a suit or tie
To show the world the knowledge of mine;
In overalls I feel quite at home;
I'm O.K., and mighty fine.

But I have my college degrees,
Not written on paper;
On my face and hands – that's strange!
By the teacher that is Nature.

Each day the sun, the wind, and the rain
Paint deep the degrees of honour;
I'm a scholar of the wide world,
Taking lessons from that donor.[1]

The development of Mennonite education in Manitoba between the 1870s and the 1950s repeated many of the patterns set in Russia before 1870. Mennonites continued to be suspicious of education that took place outside of the parochial school and were eager to develop Mennonite institutions to ensure community responsibility for the education of

[1] John Elias as quoted in Cultivating Dreams, Alan Warkentin (Morden: Willow Creek Publishing, 1990), 91. This poem represents the attitude of a number of young Mennonite men who lived in the rural areas of Manitoba during the twenties and thirties. This poem is circa 1937.

Mennonite youth. The development of Mennonite educational institutions in Manitoba includes successively higher academic levels through the decades.[2] During the first two decades (1870-1890) the Mennonites focused on setting up elementary schools in their rural communities. By 1889, the first secondary school was established in southern Manitoba. This school also served as the teacher training center for the numerous Mennonite village elementary schools. The development of six Bible Schools in Manitoba between 1920-1940 mirrored the general Bible school movement throughout Canada. Non-Mennonite Bible schools appeared on the scene in the earlier 1900s and Mennonites hurried to develop their own institutions so they could attract the Mennonite students who began attending these schools. During the 1940s, the increased number of Mennonites moving to the city led to the development of four Mennonite secondary and post-secondary educational institutions in Winnipeg by 1960.

Two major Mennonite groups in Manitoba – the Mennonite Brethren of Canada (MBs) and the Conference of Mennonites in Canada (CMC) - are the focus of this thesis and both groups opened a parochial high school and a Bible college between 1940-1960. (These schools all survive to the present day.) Though the major emphasis of this thesis is to discuss the life of the two Bible colleges during the 1960s, it is important to discuss the nature of earlier developments in Mennonite education so a clear picture of the historical and cultural influences of the Manitoba Mennonite community emerges. A basic pattern can be detected. Decade by decade, as higher educational levels became the norm in Canadian society, Mennonite groups organized to provide institutions that could meet the changing academic needs of their members. These institutional changes were

[2] Ross T. Bender conducted a study of "Private Mennonite Education in Ontario after WWII" and noted a similar pattern of educational development in Ontario, as referred to here. JMS 6 (1988), 122-3.

often initiated by the more progressive Mennonites and encountered resistance and criticism from the conservative elements. As in the past, sometimes the disagreements resulted in schism, the formation of new alliances between Mennonite groups, and/or further migrations. The major emigration from Canada to Latin America in the 1920s stemmed from the desire of the most conservative Mennonites to have religious and educational autonomy in their new home. The conclusions drawn in the brief overview of life in Russia before 1870, as described in the first chapter, prove to be true for the period of 1870 –1950 in Manitoba, as well.

THE EARLY PERIOD – A NEED FOR ELEMENTARY EDUCATION:

Early Mennonite education in Manitoba was first shaped by the four distinct Mennonite groups who arrived in Manitoba during the 1870s. Almost the entire Bergthal colony (daughter colony of the larger and older Chortitza colony) came to Manitoba during the first wave of immigration. This group settled on the East Reserve (east of the Red River and south of Winnipeg) as well as on the eastern part of the West Reserve (a large tract of land west of the Red River and south of Winnipeg). By the early 1880s, the two geographically separate sections of the congregation began developing into fairly distinct groups. The West Reserve group retained the name Bergthaler, while the East Reserve church came to be known as the Chortitzer.[3]

The East Reserve also became home to nearly seven hundred members of the Kleine Gemeinde congregation who settled half a dozen villages. These Mennonites were a minority group among the Mennonite immigrants living on the East Reserve.

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[3] Adolf Ens, Subjects or Citizens? The Mennonite Experience in Canada, 1870-1925 (University of Ottawa Press, 1994), 46.

They administered their own village affairs but left the majority group of Bergthal Mennonites to handle the administration of the reserve, as well as relations with the federal government. During the winter of 1881-1882, the number of Kleine Gemeinde in Manitoba dropped significantly when about half of the congregation moved to the USA to join with the Mennonite Church of God in Christ.[4]

The fourth Mennonite group took the name Reinlander and settled the western portion of the West Reserve. These immigrants, numbering just over 3,400, came from the Chortitza colony in Russia and its newest daughter colonies. This largest group was the strongest and most influential for a while and preferred to deal with the federal government directly through Mennonite intermediaries rather than with the provincial authorities. All four groups looked for a Privilegium with the Canadian government - similar to those arranged in Prussia and Russia - insuring religious autonomy that included educational independence.[5]

At this time, Manitoba's public schools were established on local or denominational initiative and administered by local trustees and the schools were eligible for government support if they placed themselves under the superintendence of either the Protestant or Catholic section of the Provincial Board of Education. *The Kleine Gemeinde* was the first to explore the possibility of such an arrangement while the Bergthal group was more cautious. The *Kleine Gemeinde* was a minority Mennonite group and recognized the benefit of a government alliance. The larger group of Bergthalers had less need of the government's financial assistance and worried about the loss of educational independence if they came under the supervision of government

[4] Ens, 45.
[5] Ens, 46.

officials.

Upon meeting with the provincial government, the congregations were offered various conditions. They were invited to organize their various villages into school districts according to their own discretion. They were assured of the continued use of their own teachers and of the right to teach in their own language. As well, their congregations were given full control over all instruction and they were assured that the government support of eighty to a hundred dollars per year would not in any way affect their rights and freedoms.[6] The only strings attached to this agreement involved the examination and licensing of Mennonite teachers as early as 1879. [7]

Not all Mennonite villages agreed to the above conditions. In 1887, thirty-five villages were organized into school districts. This number was reduced to twenty-two during 1880 - the main cause lying in Mennonite dissension regarding educational alliances with the government. Gerhard Wiebe, a Bergthaler Mennonite, described the situtation:

> It did not take long until we realized where matters were leading and we speedily withdrew and accepted no more funds. Oh how we wished that the *Kleine Gemeinde* had acted in the same way ... but they said that as soon as they would see any danger, they would also refuse the money.[8]

The Protestant section of the Board of Education tried to be as accommodating as

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[6] Ens, 63.
[7] Ens, 64.
[8] Gerhard Wiebe, p. 55. John J. Berger, "The Manitoba Mennonites and Their Schools from 1873 to 1924" (M.Ed term paper, University of Manitoba, 1950) pp. 44-54, gives the summary of this period of Mennonite education in Manitoba. This source is used by Adolf Ens, 64.

possible. Even though the Mennonite teachers were examined by their fellow Mennonites for licensing, the distrust of government involvement grew so that by 1882 only seven Mennonite school districts remained in operation, six of them *Kleine Gemeinde*. The Bergthal schools dropped from twenty-nine to sixteen in 1880 and within three years had almost totally withdrawn.[9]

The largest Mennonite group, the *Reinlander*, were strongly opposed to any government involvement in education and disciplined parents who sent their children to district schools by excommunicating them. Since they had settled in the West Reserve, few school districts formed there in the first few years. However, in 1883, a district school was opened in the village of Reinland (the administrative center for the *Reinlander* church) with an enrollment of twenty- three students. This school was opened against the wishes of the church leadership and in competition with the local church-operated school. [10]

The three earliest Mennonite communities in Manitoba reflect the diversity of opinion regarding education. Wilhelm Rempel, one of the best-educated and most capable Mennonite teachers and Inspector of Mennonite schools, was pessimistic about the reactions of many Mennonites to public education in particular. He noticed that some of the communities believed the advancing of the school would lead the Mennonites into "inconvenience and conscientious troubles". Other communities were either indifferent or strongly opposed to several of the subjects being taught, and it seemed to Rempel that the more progressive Mennonites would have to wait for years till "our wrongly informed people surmount that aversion prevailing amongst them regarding the better education of

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[9] Ens, 64.
[10] Ens, 65.

our rising generation".[11]

In summary, the various Manitoba Mennonite communities responded to the public school district system quite differently. The Bergthal communities were somewhat hesitant and converted to the public school system quite slowly because they feared the exposure to a broader education that government involvement might create. In contrast, the *Kleine Gemeinde* supported the idea of district schools since they were too small in number to offer a suitable education without the help of the government. The Reinlander church remained closed to the idea of public education on principle and chose to manage their own alternative schools, with the exception of a small group of *Reinlander* who decided to break away from the church decision on this matter and opened a public school.

THE EARLY 1900'S – SECONDARY SCHOOLS & SCHISMS

With the Kleine Gemeinde and Bergthaler support, the number of Mennonite public school districts in Manitoba increased quite quickly from eight in 1891 to forty-one in 1902 but declined again in 1906-7 when the mandatory national flag-flying policy created anxiety for the Mennonite community. H. H. Ewert, noted Mennonite educator in Manitoba during this time, expressed one of the community fears in a Mennonite paper. He wrote that the daily flying of the flag could ignite a militaristic spirit in the Mennonite young people and thereby bring them into conflict with the Mennonite pacifist stance.[12] The Bergthaler Mennonites found some comfort in the government's explanation that in British tradition the flag was not primarily a military symbol. Nevertheless, eleven

[11] "Report of the Superintendent of Education for Protestant Schools for the Year Ending Ist January 1886", pp. 85-86 and "Report ... 1887", pp. 53-54 in Adolf Ens, 64.

school districts, including all the Kleine Gemeinde ones, reverted to a private school status because they did not want to be charged with non-compliance to a government standard.[13]

The flag-flying tension, coupled with the introduction of mandatory school attendance in 1914 and the imposition of public schools on non-co-operating Mennonite school districts, beginning in 1918, caused a strong reaction within some Mennonite communities. By the 1920s, when organized efforts to lessen governmental control of education proved unsuccessful, almost eight thousand Canadian Mennonites immigrated to Latin America to again establish religious and educational freedom. Those who left Canada belonged to the most conservative Mennonite church communities in Manitoba at that time: the Reinlander, Sommerfelder and Chortitzer. The members of these communities who stayed behind did so because they were either unable or unwilling to risk the move. The resistance of the large Reinland community in Manitoba to government involvement in education was greatly reduced by this migration and they were forced to join the majority of Mennonite churches that had already accepted the public school system. The Mennonite church leaders in Manitoba, in the early twenties, accepted the fact that they were operating within a new situation and began to develop strategies to give their village public schools a "Mennonite" identity.

In late 1922, a committee representing six Mennonite groups – the Chortitzer, Sommerfelder, Kleine Gemeinde, Holdemann, Bergthaler, and Mennonite Brethren - was created to meet with the Manitoba government to negotiate a number of basic points. The committee requested permission to teach German, as well as English, in the

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[12] H.H. Ewert, Der Arbeiter (November 1906) pp. 12-13 as used in Ens, 111.
[13] Ens, 112.

Mennonite schools but this request was rebuffed by the government. The committee also asked the government to return the administration of public schools in Mennonite districts into the hands of local school boards however, this request was only partially met. Alternative efforts were put in place to retain training in the German language and religion. These subjects were taught in half-hour classes that were added before and after the official school day, and/or at Saturday school. The district teacher was responsible for this additional educational training and so it became imperative that the village teacher be a Mennonite, if at all possible.

The need for Mennonite teachers was recognized earlier at the end of the nineteenth century with the growing number of elementary schools in the Manitoba villages. The first secondary school, Mennonite Educational Institute (MEI) had been established in southern Manitoba in 1889 to train teachers. It was a widely held notion in the Mennonite community that a student went to high school to become a teacher, so the high school co-existed as a teacher training center. At the turn of the twentieth century, MEI was not able to graduate qualified teachers fast enough to meet the demand of Mennonite school districts so some districts recruited their teachers from the Mennonite communities in Kansas and Minnesota.[14]

The efforts to expand MEI between 1900-1920, so that the need for Canadian Mennonite teachers could be met, resulted in a great deal of controversy and nearly split the Bergthaler church. Two opposing Mennonites groups began to argue about whether the new facilities should be located in Gretna or, seven miles north, in Altona. After a great deal of cross accusations, MEI moved to Altona in 1910, from its original location

in Gretna. It remained in operation in Altona till the school building burned in 1927. Meanwhile, during those sixteen years, the school facility in Gretna had continued to operate under the new name of Mennonite Collegiate Institute (MCI). (This school is currently still in operation.) Both MEI and MCI had received government recognition as secondary school and as teacher training centers between 1910 and 1927. [15]

As MEI and MCI developed during this period, there was a shortage of Canadian Mennonite teachers for these secondary schools. The migration of Mennonites to Canada in the 1870s had not included very many professionally trained teachers so in the early decades a number of the instructors at these schools came from either non-Mennonite backgrounds or American Mennonite communities.[16] These teachers contributed a different emphasis to the traditional cultural values of Manitoba Mennonites during their time at these institutions. The presence of so many non-Manitoba Mennonites was so influential at MEI that the whole town community of Altona was given a different cultural outlook as result. The Altona Bergthaler Church experienced the pressure to use English in their worship services as early as 1927 which was much ahead of many other communities. It is also thought that the strong non-Mennonite influence in Altona discouraged the new Mennonite immigrants, arriving during the 1920s, from settling there.[17]

The new group of Mennonite immigrants to Manitoba during the 1920s came as part of the second major wave of Mennonites out of Russia. The seven thousand new

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[14] Henry Gerbrandt, Adventure in Faith: The Background in Europe and the Development in Canada of the Bergthaler Mennonite Church of Manitoba (Altona: Bergthaler Mennonite Church of Manitoba, 1970), 258.
[15] Gerbrandt, pp. 253-278.
[16] Gerbrandt, p 268. The American Mennonite community has a much longer history than its counterpart in Canada. Some Mennonite settlements in the United States began in the late eighteenth century.
[17] Gerbrandt, 267.

Russian Mennonites immediately began to look for Mennonite educational institutions that could replace those they had left behind in Russia. The institutional developments in Canada did not nearly match those that had taken place in the Russia between the 1870s and the 1920s (a list of institutional developments in Russia is included as part of chapter one), nonetheless, the Russian Mennonites were eager to attend MCI, as the one secondary/teacher training school left in Manitoba by 1927. Proportionately, a good number of the Russian immigrants were professionally trained teachers, however, they needed to spend time at MCI so they could learn the English language and to obtain Canadian teaching certification. In a short time, the Russian-born students represented a numerical majority at MCI. Many of these graduates went on to teach in the Manitoba Mennonite school districts.

New problems arose. The more recent Mennonites immigrants (referred to as the Russlander to distinguish them from the earlier Mennonite immigrants who now referred to themselves as the Kanadier) were very different from their new neighbors. The different experiences of the two groups had created significant distinctions and this caused considerable tensions between some of them. A key differences was how each group viewed education, in general, and higher education, in particular. Many of the earlier immigrants looked back on their decision to leave Russia during the 1870s as a morally superior, "right" decision. They had come to Canada and struggled through the early pioneer days because they had feared the accelerated russification, especially of the educational system. These Kanadier looked down on those newly arrived from Russia because these Mennonites were part of the group who had chosen to stay in Russia during the 1870s. The Russlander had stayed behind, compromised with the Russian

government, especially in regards to educational matters, and been very successful because of their accommodation. By the 1920s, there had been an explosion of Mennonite educational facilities and an increased number of Mennonite young people had become highly educated, both inside and outside of the Mennonite institutions. Unlike their Kanadier counterparts, the Russlander had experienced a diversity of professional and business education as well. The new ventures were necessitated by a land shortage in the two large Russian colonies. Members of the Russian Mennonite community had organized to provide their young people with as many educational opportunities, as possible, so they would not need to go outside of the community for their training. This move was heightened by the fact that, in 1906, at least 150 Russian Mennonite young people were studying at non-Mennonite secondary and post-secondary institutions. The community had noticed that when they studied elsewhere, many of the students broke out of the old community structures because of the exposure to "alien religious, social, intellectual and political ideas and attitudes."[18]

T. D. Regehr states that the Mennonites in Russia were eager to expand their educational facilities because they wanted to avoid sending their young people into an environment that they could not control. For example:

> The radicalism and revolutionary fervor of many secondary school and university students during the 1905 political disturbances were regarded with suspicion and fear by many Mennonite leaders who believed that great danger lurked in the various Russian cities and institutions of higher learning. They consequently urged that more and better Mennonite

[18] T.D. Regehr, For Everything a Season: A History of the Alexanderkrone Zentralschule (Winnipeg: CMBC Publications, 1988), 15.

> intermediate and secondary schools be established so that young people would not be exposed to undesirable outside influences and temptations.[19]

In particular, Mennonites recognized the need to provide educational institutions that could prepare Mennonite young people for entry into the professions or business opportunities which were available to other Russians.

The Mennonites who didn't leave Russia till the 1920s were proud of their efforts to maintain a strong Mennonite identity with the creation of alternative Mennonite educational institutions. Not all of the Mennonites already living in Canada shared these sentiments. In fact, in Manitoba, a number of Kanadier viewed the Russlanders with contempt or suspicion and spoke of their interest in higher education in derogatory ways. Generally, as Anna Ens states,

> for the early Kanadier especially, the Russlander were too proud, too aggressive, too enthusiastic about higher education, too anxious to exercise leadership, too ready to compromise with the state, too ready to move to the cities, and too unappreciative of the pioneering done by the Kanadier. As far as the Russlander were concerned, the Kanadier were too withdrawn, too simple-minded, too uncultured, too weak in their High German because of their excessive dependence on Low German, too afraid of schools and education, and too satisfied to follow traditions, social or liturgical.[20]

Such distinctions were drawn on numerous occasions. The 1920s immigrants would refer to the 1870 Mennonites as natives or aboriginals (Einheimische) while the minutes

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[19] Regehr, 15.
[20] Anna Ens, In Search of Unity: Story of the Conference of Mennonites in Manitoba (Winnipeg: CMBC Publications, 1996), 14.

of the Manitoba ministers' conference of 1940 refer to the Kanadier as Mennonites of the first category ("*Mennoniten erster Kategorie*") and to the Russlander as Mennonites of the second category ("*Mennoniten zweiter Kategorie*").[21]

Regardless of the prejudices on both sides, the influx of Russian Mennonites during the 1920s helped the existing Canadian Mennonites to accomplish two purposes. First, when the large group of conservative Mennonites left Manitoba for Latin America, the Mennonites living in rural Manitoba were concerned that non-Mennonites would purchase the agricultural land the Mennonites were selling when they left. This would mean that the Mennonite rural enclaves would be disrupted. The public school district was able to serve the educational purposes of the Mennonites only as long as they lived in areas that were predominently Mennonite and relatively seperated geographically. In that way, the majority of the students in the public schools would be Mennonite and cultural continuity could be maintained. These fears were allayed when the Russian Mennonites purchased the village lands. Rural Mennonites who wished to relocate to the city also found ready buyers for their land.

Second, Canadian Mennonites who were trying to boost the level of interest in Mennonite education welcomed the assistance of the Russian newcomers. There was an immediate increase of students in the secondary school and soon the Russian born Mennonites were actively working at building up institutions to replace those they had benefited from in Russia. The development of Mennonite education after the 1920s was greatly influenced by the new joint efforts. Within the first decade, co-operation led to the establishment of the first Mennonite Bible school – a new venture for Manitoba

[21] Anna Ens, 15.

Mennonites.

THE BIBLE SCHOOL ERA – 1920-1940:

The first Mennonite Bible School was started in 1925 with the help of AH Unruh, a newly arrived immigrant from Russia. Unruh had been teaching at a Mennonite Brethren Bible school in Tschongrow, Russia till it was closed by the Communist government in 1924. At that time Unruh and his family decided to emigrate to Canada where they settled in Winkler, Manitoba. Even though many of the Kanadier who had in the West Reserve did not always appreciate the highly educated Mennonite Russlander, Unruh immediately took on the challenge of starting a Bible school. Initially the school was named the Penial Bible School but the name was later changed to the Winkler Bible School. Even though Unruh was a highly-educated Russlander, he had the ability and grace to build bridges in the community and he was quickly recognized to be a gifted teacher by many of the Mennonites in the local community and beyond.[22]. The school opened in the fall of 1925 with thirteen students and followed the curriculum of the Mennonite Brethren school in Russia where Unruh had previously taught.

The curriculum of the Bible school in Russia was modeled on the curriculum of the Baptist seminary in Hamburg. The first year included studies in German language, Old Testament History and Interpretation, Church History, Bible Geography, and Homiletics. Second year studies dealt with the New Testament, Prophets, Bible Doctrine, Homiletics and more German language - as well as English grammar. The third year in three years included much of the same along with Hymnology, which

[22] David Ewert, Honor Such People (Winnipeg: Centre for Mennonite Brethren Studies, 1997), 10.

was part of all three years. Other general knowledge subjects were also offered.[23] Within the first few years, Johann G. Wiens, a graduate of the German Baptist Seminary in Hamburg and president of the Russian Bible school, and Gerhard Reimer, colleagues of Unruh's from Tschongraw, joined the faculty of Winkler Bible School. The influence of these Russian-born men, and others continued to be experienced at Mennonite schools, especially during these formative years when the constituency was in need of the well-educated leadership they were able to provide. The Russlander influence in Manitoba has been credited by Kanadier for adding new vitality to the educational initiatives already in place, and for providing the impetus for new endeavors, like the Bible schools. [24]

The Bible school movement in Manitoba was motivated by two important directives. First, the Bible schools were created to train leaders for work in the Mennonite churches.[25] The schools prepared and trained future preachers, church leaders, choristers, choir conductors, Sunday school teachers, missionaries, and other Mennonite church workers. Secondly, the Bible schools helped preserve Mennonite identity in the midst of increased exposure to outside influences.[26] Mennonite young people were initially attracted to the non-Mennonite Bible schools because they were the first Bible schools to arrive on the scene in Canada at the beginning of the twentieth century. Mennonites attended these burgeoning Bible schools for the religious and social opportunities the schools provided.

The Bible school movement, generally in Canada, had its antecedents in a similar movement in the U.S.A. These schools were viewed as "bastions of the faith" where a

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[23] David Ewert, Stalwart for the Truth: The Life and Legacy of AH Unruh (Winnipeg: Board of Christian Literature General Conference of the Mennonite Brethren 1975), 70-71.
[24] Gerbrandt, 278.
[25] Ewert (1975), 79.

fundamentalist/evangelical theology was advocated. The schools were set up in opposition to secular education and also over against other church colleges that were viewed as "hotbeds" of religious liberalism and modernism. These views arose in light of the fact that church colleges combined biblical and theological education with the liberal arts and the natural sciences. The Bible schools left the arts and sciences alone.[27]

Some Mennonites feared that the students who attended non-Mennonite Bible schools would become alienated from their Mennonite communities, either theologically and/or through exogamy. In response, various Mennonite groups organized their own Bible schools to protect what they believed to be "the biblical way" for their young people. A number of new Mennonite Bible Colleges opened throughout Canada between 1920-1950.

TABLE 3:1
Bible Schools in Manitoba 1900-1940

Date	Place	Institution	Affiliation
1925	Winkler	Peniel (Winkler) Bible School	MB
1929	Gretna	Elim Bible School	CMC
1930	Winnipeg	Winnipeg Bible School *	MB
1931	Steinbach	Steinbach Bible School	MB+
1934	Winnipeg	Mennonite Bible School *	CMC
1937	St. Elizabeth	St. Elizabeth Bible School *	CMC

* Indicates those schools that were no longer open by 1940.

+ The Steinbach School became an interdenominational school after a few years.[28]

Generally, these schools were well-suited to sustain a traditional Mennonite

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[26] Frank Epp, Mennonites in Canada 1786-1920 (Toronto: MacMillan of Canada, 1975), 469.
[27] Epp, 469.
[28] Table gathered from data included in Table 32 "A Chronology of Canadian Bible Schools"in Mennonites in Canada 1920-40 (Toronto: MacMillian of Canada, 1982) Frank Epp, 468.

worldview and lifestyle even though the theology they embraced was not specifically parochial. These schools did not articulate an Anabaptist/Mennonite theology that was very different from the fundamentalist or evangelical theology taught at other the other Bible schools. The importance of the Mennonite Bible schools lay in the fact that Mennonites were in control of the schools and, since the schools attracted primarily Mennonite students, the traditional worldview of the community could be supported by the educational institutions. Supporters of the Mennonite Bible schools typically favored a rural, agricultural way of life as the only "true" Mennonite way and considered the German language as the language of the Mennonites. The values and ideals of these rural communities were generally reflected in the standards set at the schools. Students were discouraged from wearing contemporary clothing, smoking, drinking alcoholic beverages, dancing and gambling.[29] Though there was some variability in what each Mennonite Bible school emphasized as the key elements of Mennonite faith and culture during the 1920s-1940s, the social and religious cohesiveness achieved through the work of the schools had a tremendous influence in the Mennonite communities and churches throughout Canada. [30]

AN URBAN SETTING CREATES THE NEED FOR URBAN SCHOOLS:

The Mennonite community in Canada was changed by the arrival of almost 8,000 refugee Mennonite immigrants from the Soviet Union after the WWII. Most of the Mennonites who arrived after 1940 settled in the urban areas of Canada. The immigrants chose not to participate in the typically rural Mennonite lifestyle for a number of reasons.

[29] Epp (1982), 238.
[30] Epp (1982), 469.

Mostly women and children arrived in Canada because many Mennonite men had been killed or evacuated to remote parts of the Soviet Union before their families emigrated. These immigrants lacked the capital to acquire even marginal land and the machinery to begin farming. As well, their commitment to traditional, rural and agricultural life-styles had been weakened under Soviet collectivization and the terror of forced evacuation from their land in the Soviet Union. The newly arrived immigrants needed the factory or industrial related jobs that were available to them in the cities and so many of them chose to settle in an urban area. Winnipeg was attractive to a number of Mennonite immigrants, especially those who found work in an urban, Mennonite-owned factory or business.[31]

These most recent immigrants to Manitoba were joined in Winnipeg by increasing numbers of rural Manitobans who were choosing to move to the city as well. The larger numbers of Mennonites necessitated the development of urban educational institutions. Two Mennonite groups are the particular focus of this thesis in the next chapters. Both the Mennonite Brethren Church of Canada (MBs) and the Conference of Mennonites of Canada (CMC) organized to establish secondary schools and Bible colleges in Winnipeg between the 1940s and 1960s. These two church bodies were the largest sub-groups of Mennonites in Canada and were concerned about keeping their constituencies strong. Members of each group worked hard at creating private academic institutions that could reinforce the values and ideals of their particular communities while offering students an education that equalled the standards of Canadian public schools. The emphasis at each parochial school was unique to that school.

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[31] T.D. Regehr, Mennonites in Canada: 1939-1970(Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996), 95.

TABLE 3:2
NUMBERS OF MENNONITES IN THE TWO GROUPS STUDIED

Mennonite Population in Canada	1941	1950	1960	1970
Total Mennonite Population	111,403			
Mennonite Brethren Church	6,732	9,579	13,659	16,660
Conference of Mennonites in Canada	12,471	15,500	16,118	20,018

TABLE 3:3
INSTITUTIONS OPENED IN WINNIPEG: 1940-1960

DATE OPENED	INSTITUTION	CHURCH GROUP
1944-	Mennonite Brethren Bible College (MBBC)	MB
1945-	Mennonite Brethren Collegiate Institute	MB
1947-	Canadian Mennonite Bible College (CMBC)	CMC
1958-	Westgate Mennonite Collegiate	CMC [32]

The purpose of Mennonite secondary education did not change very much from 1900 through to the 1960s. While the goals of Mennonite education for young people were expressed in contemporary terms through the years, the basic intent remains the same. The basic objectives were "to educate their own people to live as Christians in spite of the influences of the larger society" while "helping learners find out who they are and how they relate to others, and preparing them for service".[33]

Promotions for a Mennonite Brethren high school during the 1960s outlined similar goals:

1. direct unsaved students to a conversion experience;

2. train the students in the nuture 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;

[32] Information complied from material included in Regehr (1996).
[33] Daniel Hertzler, Mennonite Education: Why and How? (Scottsdate: Herald Press, 1971), 5.

5. offer a course of studies in which scholarship and academic thoroughness are fostered in a truly Christian atmosphere. [34]

Along with the educational goals, there was clearly a perceived pattern of faith and behaviour into which the Mennonite high school student was to fit. MBCI, for example, attempted to regulate the students' behavior with an intimidatingly long list of rules that was enforced with disciplinary acts. Most of the rules stayed throughout the 1950s till a new generation of teachers brought a more open and free approach to discipline and self-control. At that time the school began to rely on evangelistic revival meetings (held during the school year) to change the behavior of students. Teachers observed that the difficult students would often change their attitudes and behaviors after they experienced a religious conversion at the meetings. Teachers also noticed that when there were too many students at MBCI with a negative attitude toward spiritual concerns, these revival services did not have the same effect. The school was expected to make a difference in the students' religious life and criticism would come from all corners when the spiritual quality of the students sank too low. [35]

Westgate Collegiate Institute did not have quite the same expectations placed on it because it developed in a different time and under different circumstances. Even though there were persistent demands for a CMC high school in Winnipeg, the church conference did not established Westgate till 1958 because they already sponsored and operated the MCI, the high school in Gretna. MCI, as the oldest Mennonite high school in Manitoba, was quite a conservative school and slow to make institutional changes. The members of the CMC who wanted a more conservative environment for their young

[34] Mennonite Brethren Herald IV:12 (26 March 1965), 5.
[35] Regehr (1996), 254-255.

people could send them to MCI (since it operated as a boarding school). As a result, Westgate did not need to please as many elements within the constituency. The school was recognized to be more open and tolerant of the arts and social issues than other Mennonite high schools. Some argued that this was a result of its late start, in an urban setting, by urban Mennonites. The major emphasis at Westgate was the preservation of the German language. The two CMC churches that took the initiative to start Westgate in 1958 placed a heavy emphasis on German and so all the religious subjects were taught in German and on Tuesdays and Thursdays, students could only speak German. [36] It appears that the preservation of the Mennonite "language" was used to reinforce Mennonite identity at Westgate during its early years.

It was the wish to preserve a Mennonite identity that initially led the Mennonite Brethren Conference (Canada) to recognize the need for a college-level Bible training institute. As early as 1939, Rev. J.A. Toews Sr. officially stressed the acute problem of finding properly qualified Mennonite teachers for the numerous MB Bible schools that had emerged in Canada after the 1920s. At that time Rev. Toews Sr. stated:

> Advanced theological training and a broad general secular education must be required of our Bible school teachers if the schools are to survive and progress. The young men of our churches who are called to the teaching ministry should be offered an opportunity to attend an advanced Bible college or seminary.[37]

This concern led to the establishment of the Mennonite Brethren Bible College (MBBC), Winnipeg, Manitoba in 1944 and A. H. Unruh left his post at Winkler Bible School to

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[36] Regehr (1996), 258.
[37] MBBC catalogue, 17th issue (1960-61), 1.

take the presidency at the new College. A similar need for "an advanced Bible school" was felt by the Conference of Mennonites in Canada (CMC) and discussions for such a school sponsored by the CMC began in 1941. Committees were formed to discuss the possibility of opening a CMC Bible college and at first some leaders suggested a cooperative arrangement with MBBC. When two Winnipeg CMC ministers - Benjamin Ewert and Isaac I. Friesen - met with the president of MBBC in 1945 they were disappointed to hear that while the Mennonite Brethren would welcome the Conference of Mennonites' students and support, the MBs would need to retain control of any joint venture.[38]

The CMC felt this decision left them with no alternative but to begin a college of their own and Winnipeg was tentatively chosen as the location for the Canadian Mennonite Bible College (CMBC) in 1946. An urban site was considered to be ideal because then the college would be situated close to a university and other schools that could offer good library facilities. The city of Winnipeg offered this benefit to both colleges, as well as plenty of opportunities for practical service, mission work and part-time employment. Facilities were available but finding a "properly-credentialed person" to become the president of CMBC proved to be difficult. In 1947, Arnold J. Regier was invited to serve as the first president in a letter from committee-chairman J.J. Thiessen: "We had hoped to secure (a different individual) as president of the School and you as dean, but he has now definitely declined. This means that we expect you to take the lead, and are making an announcement in our papers to that effect"! [39] Regier was left with the responsibility of designing a program of studies that would be offered just three months

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[38] Regehr, 262.
[39] Bruno Dyck, "Half a Century of Canadian Mennonite Bible College", JMS 11 (1993) 197.

later.[40]

Regier envisioned CMBC to be more than just a place for training full-time church workers. This vision was not shared by all members of the CMC and those who had concerns about the college scrutinized both the appropriateness of textbooks and pedagogy. Earlier tensions within the Conference of Mennonites in Manitoba probably added to the perceived need for scrutiny at CMBC. A growing suspicion of one of the CMC congregations had been building for some time when an incident at a Ministers' Conference in September, 1944 brought the simmering tension to the surface. The congregation in question was the *Schonwieser Gemeinde*, a Mennonite group that had arrived in Manitoba from Russia during the 1920s immigration movement. J.H. Enns, their leader, like his predecessor Johann P. Klassen and many of his Schonwieser colleagues, was a well-educated man and some thought that he was seeking the presidency at the newly proposed College.[41]

All these men were viewed with suspicion by their Conference partners because they appeared too modernistic, rationalistic and critically assessed the Bible. The maxim for the Schonwieser leaders was: *in essentials unity* and *in non-essentials liberty*, but in all things love. For most ministers in the CMC, however, correct doctrine belonged to the category of essentials. Therefore a nasty confrontation erupted when Enns offered a controversial interpretation of the doctrine of salvation in a public message at the 1944 CMC conference. Enns used one of the early Anabaptist leaders to argue for "an eventual pardon for all" - a form of universalism - which caused the other Mennonite leaders to raise a number of complaints against Enns and the Schonwieser church group.

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[40] Dyck, 199.
[41] Anna Ens, 84.

Some argued that Enns' theology was obviously wrong because the evidence pointed in that direction. A "true spiritual life" seemed to be lacking in his congregation because some members were taking part in dancing and drinking alcohol (practices which were generally avoided and preached against in Mennonite circles). Questions were raised about how Enns could be a good influence on young people within the conference if his advice on lifestyle issues was merely – "Don't overdo it!" [42]

In part, the urban setting was blamed for facilitating some of these problems. One complainant wrote: "the Schonwieser Church, perhaps because it is located in the city of Winnipeg, seems to consider itself as a sort of Rome and thus shows a domineering attitude." There were misunderstandings and prejudices on the part of rural groups toward the city, and vice versa, of which education and lifestyle were a factor. However, some rural ministers stood alongside Enns, while some urban ministers didn't know which side to choose. Eventually, the controversy became so intense that the Schonwieser Gemeinde felt it could not remain in the CMC, and it withdrew.[43]

Some interpretations of this controversy brought to light the tensions between the newer Russian immigrants (who were more educated, urbanized and who practiced a slightly looser moral standard) and the more conservative Mennonites who had been in southern Manitoba since the 1870s. Some of the older leaders felt they were being overlooked in the Conference as the newer leaders began to dominate the scene. Some of these men sought to gain stature in the community by vehemently defending "pure doctrine". Rural/urban tensions also lay at the heart of this battle since Enns and the offending Schonwieser church were located in the city of Winnipeg. For those who

[42] Anna Ens, 82.
[43] Anna Ens, 80-82.

already distrusted the influence of the city on Mennonites, this conflict seemed to prove that the urban setting did, in fact, lead to theological and lifestyle digressions from the traditional Mennonite norm.[44]

The tension CMBC faced during its formative years persisted throughout its entire history and MBBC faced similar challenges. The Mennonite Colleges survived in their urban setting, despite the fears and criticism, as did the Mennonite high schools. Each institution went on to be shaped by and to embody the values and ideals of those who were their students and supporters. Each school took its unique approach to establishing a Mennonite identity, as Mennonite institutions of the past had. As in the past, there was tension and schism throughout the period of 1870-1960. Again there appeared to be no monolithic Mennonite educational ideal. Mennonites continued to disagree about the value and purpose of Mennonite education as they had in the last four centuries. However, despite the struggle (and sometimes because of it) the Mennonite community was successful at creating educational institutions that met some of the changing needs of its people.

[44] Anna Ens, 85.

CHAPTER FOUR

HERE COME THE '60S
A NEW FRONTIER

Ben Sawatsky and Susie Falk grew up in the Mennonite West Reserve of southern Manitoba during the first half of the twentieth century. Ben didn't enjoy school very much and he was relieved when the "magic age of 14 had come and school was finished once and for all for me". Susie, on the other hand, hoped to finish high school but just before her fourteenth birthday, two months short of finishing grade eight, she had to quit school to help at home. Her father wanted to her to return in the fall but her stepmother decided that Susie was needed to babysit her younger brothers and sisters. Ben and Susie met at the Mennonite church they attended and got married. In their late thirties, they moved to Winnipeg and worked together as a pastor couple at the Gospel Mennonite Church. [1]

It was the 1950s and a good number of Mennonite young people in Manitoba were coming to the city for an education or to find a job. Some of the students attended Gospel Mennonite and Ben said he was always "on the lookout" for those Bible college students who would be willing to volunteer for church work. Even though he appreciated the help of the college students, Ben admitted that, at the time, he had a negative attitude toward higher education. Things were about to change, however. His daughter suggested he return to a high school the Winnipeg School Board had just opened for "dropouts" and older students, and in 1966, at the age of 53, Ben began his grade twelve studies. [2]

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[1] Ben and Susie Sawatsky, Our Journey By Faith (Winnipeg 1992), 30.
[2] Sawatsky, 70.

Graduation day in June of 1967 was a time to reflect on life in Winnipeg. Ben recollected:

> We discovered we could raise a family in a large city environment, even better than on a farm. Gospel Mennonite helped us so that our children became better Christians, had good musical training and obtained a higher education. There were an increasing number of young people moving to the city to find employment. For many of them (Gospel Mennonite) ... would be recommended by parents and friends. (It) would also be a home church for the many students attending a college or university.[3]

As 1968 began, Ben and Susie were off to a Mennonite college in Virginia for more education. Friends and relatives sent them off with a wide variety of comments: "Beware of being led astray from your faith", "You know enough already", and "I am plain jealous". For Ben, the time ended up being "a lonely road" as well as "a wonderful few years". By age 56, he was able to complete a Bachelor degree with a double major in history and Bible, while Susie had a chance to work on her grade twelve education by correspondence. Their children were also busy studying at other institutions. Their oldest son graduated with a doctorate in modern Russian history, their daughter began studying music at a Mennonite college and later graduated with a Bachelor of Education and a degree in accounting from the University of Manitoba. Their youngest son earned a doctorate in Religious Studies at the University of Toronto.

The story of the Sawatsky family is the story of many Mennonites during the 1960s. Mennonites of both genders, and from all age brackets, went back to school to

either upgrade their secondary education or to pursue a post-secondary education. Some young women would begin studies in the fields traditionally chosen, like music or education, and then pursue one of the burgeoning new professions. Both men and women alike were attracted to history, sociology, psychology, philosophy, religion and theology, bringing their new insights to bear on their understand of the Mennonite faith and culture. As higher academic degrees were becoming necessary for certain occupations, middle-aged Mennonite pastors, teachers and professors would join younger colleagues as they completed higher academic degrees. Frequently, they needed to attend a secular or non-Mennonite religious institution to do so. The public university was increasingly drawing more Mennonite students than any other institution. The following table is a sample of where Mennonite Brethren students were studying in 1965.

Table 4:1

Canadian Mennonite Brethren Students in 1965

Number of Students	Institution
256	a Mennonite Brethren Bible school
82	non-Mennonite Bible schools
128	MBBC
413	university

The universities saw the largest increase in student numbers, up from 253 in 1963.[4]

The rising number of Mennonite students choosing to attend Canadian universities during the 1960s paralleled a general trend in Canadian society at that time. A dramatic change in university enrollment began at the end of the Second World War when the government paid for the education of returned veterans, and many of them

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[3] Sawatsky, 127.

[4] John Wall, "The Church and its Students", MB Herald (7 October 1966), 6.

chose to attend the university. By 1960, the number of men in undergraduate programs in Canadian universities had almost doubled from fifteen years earlier. During this same period, the percentage of women attending university declined (in part because of the pressure on women to return to family obligations, leaving the world of paid employment or education for the men who had returned to civilian life). The most important increase for women at Canadian universities began during the 1960s when their numbers increased by almost three hundred percent.

Table 4:2

Canadian University Full-Time Undergraduate Enrollment

Year	Men	Women	% Women	Total
1940-41	27,710	8,107	23.3	34,817
1945-46	48,991	12,870	26.3	61,861
1950-51	50,170	13,866	21.7	64,036
1955-56	54,545	14,765	21.5	69,310
1960-61	**80,582**	**26,629**	**24.8**	**107,211**
1965-66	**125,859**	**61,190**	**32.7**	**187,049**
1970-71	174,945	101,352	36.7	276,297
1975-76	190,410	140,127	42.4	330,537

Sources: Statistics Canada, Historical Compendium of Education Statistics, pp. 214-17. Statistics Canada, Education in Canada. #81-229. Bold emphasis added by thesis author.

HIGH HOPES FOR THE UNIVERSITY:

During the sixties, increased university attendance was linked to Canadian hopes for ***economic***, ***political*** and ***social*** progress. As the fifties came to an end, North

Americans were deeply concerned about economic and political well-being. Along with a public preoccupation with material security, there was a continued concern about the perceived Soviet threat and a "simmering cold war". During the 1950s, Soviet progress was generated by a remarkably sophisticated technology that nearly paralleled that of the United States. Lurid accounts of Soviet ambitions and the potential of a new world war began circulating throughout Canada. One opinion poll conducted in 1961 indicated that 48% of Canadians predicted the potential of warfare with Russia.[5] Higher levels of educational training in specific fields were considered a solution to these Canadian concerns.

It seemed that advances made by the Soviet Union were directly linked to the increase numbers they had trained to be technologists, engineers, and scientists. The communist government was the financing university education of over a million graduates in pure science during the 1950s, compared to the 990 thousand graduates in the USA. For Canadians, the perceived link between the economy, the cold war, and higher education was reinforced by the ideas reflected in a statement made by James Duncan (chairman of Ontario Hydro, and a member of the Industrial Foundation on Education), made during the time:

> In my opinion we are in danger of losing the cold war unless we do something about it and education is very close to the core of our problem. Science and engineering have made such remarkable progress in recent decades that the nation which holds the lead

[5] Paul Axelrod, "Service or Captivity? Business-University Relations in the Twentieth Century", Universities in Crisis: A Medieval Institution in the Twenty-first Century, eds. William AW Neilson and Chad Gaffield (Montreal: Institute for Research on Public Policy, 1986), 47.

in these fields holds the initiative in world affairs.[6]

The race was on and, in 1957, the Industrial Foundation on Education indicated that the institutions of higher education in Canada would need to increase the numbers of engineers and scientists by three or four times and the number of technicians by ten times, within the next 26 years, to keep pace with the growing need of the technological industry. When surveys discovered that fifty percent of Canadian employers of professional personnel were having trouble finding qualified staff it became obvious that economic expansion in Canada was being curtailed because of the shortfall. Businesses who were understaffed would not be able to expand their production capacity. The message went out that professional jobs and increased earnings waited for those Canadians who would be willing to get the right education.[7]

The enthusiasm for increased levels of education began to develop in Canada and changed public perceptions of what constituted an adequate education. By 1963, a poll revealed that sixty percent of Canadians believed young men should not leave school at age sixteen, even if they wanted to do so.[8] All forms of post-secondary education - from engineering to fine arts - were seen as a worthwhile public investment - as long as the economy was booming, and everyone would be able to participate. Paul Axelrod, historian of higher education, states:

> While support for the expansion of higher education was shaped by broadly based economic demands, the system felt as well pressures to "democratize" access to Canadian universities. Indeed, the "equality of opportunity" argument, heard increasingly in the late 1950s, became

[6] Axelrod (1986), 47-8.
[7] Axelrod (1986), 49.
[8] Axelrod (1986), 50.

> almost an article of faith among liberal-minded citizens and politicians in the 1960s.[9]

Traditionally, only a small minority of Canadians attended universities - a kind of social elite. However, as a result of this political support, the sixties witnessed a widening of educational opportunities and a period of rapid growth in every facet of education in Canada.

There was an enormous increase in the numbers of students seeking some form of post-secondary education. The universities, in particular, experienced an almost unquestioned growth. The swell of students headed for the university included older Canadians returning for further education, young people who were financially assisted by the increased public dollar, and those who sought the specialized education which would lead to a professional job. This increased demand for further education was spurred by widely publicized assertions about the social benefits of post-secondary education. The general public believed that education was, if not a "Higher Good", at least the means of obtaining a better job. Taxpayers appeared willing to pay the price for the expansion of post-secondary education, throughout the sixties, because it was widely accepted that universities and colleges were the route up the social scale for their children. New institutions were opened, old institutions were expanded, faculty members and professorial salaries soared - almost entirely at public expense. [10]

COMPONENTS OF A WELL-ROUNDED EDUCATION:

The 1960s brought sweeping changes throughout the Canadian academic scene. Since

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[9] Axelrod (1986), 53.
[10] Jan Morgan, ed., Report of the Task Force on Post-Secondary Education in Manitoba (1973), 9.

higher education had now been linked to the technological and economic growth of Canada, governments were only too willing to pour large sums of public money into post-secondary education - hoping to give Canada a competitive edge. Governments viewed their contribution as an investment in Canada's industrial, scientific and technological well-being. New institutions were created and older institutions were changed to qualify for the new public agenda. The university, in particular, felt the influence of the new direction. Since the crucial relationship of educational training to the economic development of Canada was unanimously accepted, close ties were drawn between the universities and the business sector. The increased urbanization of much of Canada, along with a corresponding commercial and industrial development, created new occupations for which specialized training was required and it was expected that the universities would supply the needed professional engineers, geologists, research scientists, and others who would lead Canada forward toward technological excellence. Universities were also expected to produce the economists, the accountants, the investment people and those for whom a professional economic training would be essential. [11]

For the business community, the prime function of higher education was to produce the workforce necessary to contribute to the economic growth and prosperity of Canada. The university was no longer presented as the "traditional custodian of morality, truth and knowledge" but as a vehicle by which economic progress could be achieved. It was at this time that some of the older institutions with long-standing religious affiliations decided to distance themselves from these affiliations. The university's new

[11] Paul Axelrod, Scholars and Dollars: Politics, Economics, and the Universities of Ontario 1945-1980 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1982), 36-7.

business partners felt that strong religious ties might jeopardize the autonomy and academic freedom believed necessary to accomplish the new goals. All interests and all ideas were to be considered equally - as open to research and development.[12]

While the economic value of post-secondary education was stressed during this era, many businessmen and academics did not believe that a purely technical training was sufficient for the professional. The liberal arts were still considered a necessary component of a well-rounded education since it provided an essential background for professional training and employment. While the liberal arts professors did not directly prepare students for careers in science and business, the business community considered the subjects they taught as basic knowledge for the professional life.[13]

Arguments for a liberal arts education described the rapid transformation of Canadian life during the last hundred years and the new needs the changes had created. Now urban centers were much larger, commerce was expanding and Canada's industrial development seemed to be proceeding at an almost bewildering rate. It seemed natural that if Canadian education was to bear any significant relationship to contemporary life it would need to keep pace. While dramatic changes had created a diversity of occupational and professional opportunities for Canadians, and demanded higher degrees of technical and professional skill than in earlier times, it was also recognized that the requirements of community life, in terms of public service and the scope of participation, had increased with the urbanization of Canada. Educators and social scientists argued that the early pioneers living in small communities, or rural districts, had less occasion than those who lived in modern communities to study the social and physical world in which

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[12] Margaret Fulton , "Historical Commitments in New Times: The Restructuring and Reorientation of Teaching and Research", Universities in Crisis, 232-235.

they lived. Their participation in activities beyond their local setting was usually much more limited. Now, a broader Canadian worldview required a greater social conscience and civic responsibility. The universities were faced with the challenge of creating a sense of social responsibility in its students.[14]

There were some within the Canadian university academy who believed that, in the midst of all the changes, the classic ideals of the university, as expressed through the liberal arts, would be able to provide a moral anchor for the new technological world and the professional person. Some feared that otherwise the standards of the university would become those shaped by an increasingly materialistic world -one in which the standards of success and achievement would be measured only in terms of wealth, power and/or production.[15] To curtail this possibility, the university's task was to transmit a body of knowledge that would help discipline the mind and "knock windows in the soul".[16]

Universities were asked to present the importance of social responsibilities as a moral duty and to equip the student to intelligently exercise those responsibilities. The argument was offered that if students were helped to understand their duty to themselves, their fellow men and society they would hopefully accept that duty as a normal and desirable aspect of life. It was believed that openness, understanding, civic duty and social responsibility would be able to refine and shape the increased technological training that took place on the university campus and edify the professional

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[13] Axelrod (1982), 109.
[14] S.N.F. Chant, "A Canadian Education", ed. Joseph Katz, Canadian Education (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Co. of Canada, 1956) 17.
[15] N.A.M. MacKenzie, "The Work of the Universities", Canadian Education, 179.
[16] MacKenzie, 180.

graduate.[17]

Some Mennonite educators echoed these sentiments. A few placed a similar confidence in a university liberal arts education to temper the parochial mentality of their Mennonite community. J.B. Toews, a prominent Russian-born Mennonite leader and educator was thoroughly convinced that a university education could serve to enrich a Mennonite student's life, if they allowed it have that opportunity. He believed many students were attending the universities to gain a professional degree but were not realizing the full benefit of a post-secondary education. They allowed no windows to be knocked into the soul. Toews argued:

> There are, sad to say, many Christian students whose faith remains unaffected by the new dimensions of university life. For them it is not a question of "losing" or "not losing" (i.e. their faith) but of obtaining the courses necessary for a degree and a job. A challenging encounter with God is simply not reckoned with, or expected. These students emerge from their university experience with antiquated religious patterns that subject Christ to a series of rigid concepts and inflexible practices... It is disturbing to see that many Christian university graduates are only really capable of functioning within the "safe" framework of well-organized congregations. They will eventually become religious schizophrenics, incapable of integrating their faith with their working situation. There is nothing sadder on campus than the maladjusted Christian who refuses to identify himself with any aspect of campus life, and whose self-righteousness and aloofness

[17] MacKenzie, 179-180.

contributes nothing toward making Christ known.[18]

Toews put the challenge to Mennonite young people to risk exposure to the outside world and to break away from the "holy huddle". He encouraged them to allow their university experience to create more questions "relative to the faith" than lead to a collection of answers.[19]

Many in the Mennonite community disagreed with Toews because they found the openness and challenge he encouraged too threatening and unsettling. His critics pronounced the dangers of secular influences in the academic world – such as cynicism, agnosticism, and relativism. (This discussion will be picked up in the next chapters with a closer look at the Mennonite community response to the increased university attendance.) Needless to say, while there were loud dissenting voices in some pockets of the Mennonite community, a good number wanted to take advantage of the increased opportunities a higher education would give them. These opportunities included new avenues of vocation and profession that were soon lauded with an evangelistic zeal. Often, the unprecedented potential for ministry and witness "in the world" was highlighted as a unique opportunity and challenge that needed to be met with enthusiasm.

The following excerpt from a Mennonite Brethren church periodical written in 1966 highlights how positively an entrance into the academic world was viewed by some within the Mennonite community during that time:

> Today's world is characterized by tremendous acceleration in the acquistion of knowledge. It is claimed that in recent decades the fund of available knowledge has doubled every ten years. If this

[18] John B. Toews, "Towards a Christian University Experience", MB Herald (7 Oct. 1966), 4.
[19] J.B. Toews, 5.

> is true, we must agree that the challenge of today with respect to new frontiers, is to be found in the academic world...Thrust into the frontiers of today's world, students might well become the ears of the church, detecting the needs of men, spelling out the questions they ask, so that the message of the church might be brought to bear on contemporary life as it was in the time of the prophets or the time of the apostles... Students need to recognize their unique opportunity to witness to Jesus Christ where the action is and where leaders of society and the world are being molded. On campuses, where almost complete freedom seems to prevail for public expression of any kind of view or conviction, students need to take greater initiative in making known a Person who deserves a hearing. To be a Christian student on campus, therefore, means to be an ambassador for Jesus Christ to people who are in the vanguard.[20]

Numerous Canadian Mennonites welcomed the new frontier opened to them by urbanization and professionalization as a biblical mandate to get "into all the world".[21]

As members within the Mennonite community became as eager as the rest of Canada to embrace the benefits offered by increased educational levels, opinions favoring a broader worldview were expressed with the vigor of religious validation:

> Our opportunities to be a church in mission are unprecendented in our

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[20] John Wall, "The Church and its Students", MB Herald (7 Oct. 1966), 6.

[21] Based on Matthew 28 which includes Christ's commission to his disciples to go into all the world with the gospel.

> generation. We no longer form tight ethnic centered communities as we did a generation ago. Like the Jerusalem church, we have been "scattered abroad" by economic pressures and opportunities, the urbanization pattern, and the drive for achievement in business, education, and professional life. Our membership is in touch with virtually every segment of our society.[22]

The Mennonites of the 1960s faced the world outside of the community with the awareness of a new set of responsibilities. The heightened levels of economic, social, and political opportunities that went alongside a university education introduced a new dimension to their world. As will be demonstrated in the next two chapters, Mennonites would not be content to let academic institutions outside of the community take care of the new need for higher education. As in the past, members would organize to try to offer their young people a university level post secondary education within the confines of the Mennonite world.

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[22] Victor Adrian, "Are We a Church in Mission?" The Voice, XIX, no.3 (July 1970), 2.

CHAPTER FIVE

CREATING A NEW MENNONITE INSTITUTION

As 1960 approached, and increased numbers of Mennonite young people began studying at Canadian universities, members within the Mennonite community began to discuss the possibility of developing a university-level liberal arts education. The pattern had been set. As educational levels rose in Canada generally, the Mennonites kept pace in the development of their educational facilities. By the 1950s, the Mennonites had established elementary and secondary schools, teacher-training institutes and Bible schools, as well as Bible colleges. If the community was now going to offer a higher education at a university level in Manitoba, the two colleges, MBBC and CMBC, seemed to be the logical choice for development.

During the forties and fifties, the purpose of the Mennonite Bible Colleges in Winnipeg was to provide a college-level Christian education that emphasized "Mennonite principles" and promoted "an understanding of the Mennonite heritage" while being "based upon the Bible as the Word of God and the only adequate foundation for a Christian education".[1] The Colleges sought to provide their students with "advanced theological training and a broad general secular education" so that members would not need to go "to schools of other denominations to receive this type of preparation" and then return to the community with "ideals and interpretations foreign" to Mennonite principles.[2] The degrees offered by the Colleges were Bachelor degrees in Christian Education, Biblical Studies and Theology, and most often the graduates would become

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[1] CMBC Calendar, 1955-56. Winnipeg: CMBC, 3.
[2] MBBC Calendar, 1946-47. Winnipeg: Christian Press, 5.

pastors, church workers and/or missionaries. As the sixties approached, the Colleges were providing a fairly high level of education for leaders within the constituency, which some believed could be adapted to a university-level standard.

Many members expressed a desire for a university education so that they could be move ahead professionally and vocationally.[3] If Manitoba Mennonites wished to accomplish their next goal, they basically had four options:

1) the individual colleges could try to offer a well-rounded liberal arts education on their own;
2) a college could join with other evangelical groups to provide such an education;
3) the two Mennonite colleges could participate in a joint venture;
4) each college could accredit its programs with a major university.

During the sixties, the fourth option was the only one that was able to work for MBBC and CMBC.

First, neither of the Colleges had a supporting body that was large enough to financially sustain the faculty or facilities to offer a complete biblical, theological and liberal arts education.[4] During the forties and fifties, selective liberal arts and science courses were taught to supplement the religious training for work in the churches or on the mission field. For example, during the 1950-55 school years, MBBC had a small Faculty of the Medical Department under the supervision of Dr. N.J. Neufeld. Three doctors taught Minor Surgery, Obstetrics, Physiology and Anatomy and Tropical

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[3] Verified by the questionnaires distributed to Mennonites who attended post-secondary institutions during the sixties.

[4] Margaret Loewen Reimer, One Quilt, Many Pieces: A Reference Guide to Mennonite Groups in Canada

Diseases, which held special appeal for the trained nurses who were attending the Bible College since theses courses prepared them for missionary assignments around the world.[5] Supplementary Liberal Arts courses included Philosophy, Anthropology, History, English Literature, Languages (Greek, German, Russian), and a number of Music Theory courses. It would have been an incredible undertaking to develop these minor courses into complete liberal arts and/or science programs necessary to qualify as a full-fledged liberal arts college. With under a hundred students each, the first option was an impossible undertaking for each of the Colleges.

The second option appealed to some constituents in the Mennonite communities who were already sending their children to Bible schools and colleges that were affiliated with other denominations. This option was never seriously considered because as, both MBBC and CMBC calendars stressed, the purpose of the schools was to preserve and promote the Mennonite faith and heritage. A number of Manitoba Mennonites were deliberate about providing a parochial education that would "safeguard" their young people from non-Mennonite influences.[6]

The third option became difficult to negotiate because of a historical schism between the Mennonite Brethren (MBs), who controlled MBBC, and the Conference of Mennonites (COM), who owned and operated CMBC. As recounted in chapter three, when the COM were hoping to co-operate with the MBs during the 1940s, at the time the Colleges were first organized, the MBs refused to do so unless they could be in control of the joint educational institution. This was not feasible since the MB constituency in

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(Waterloo: Mennonite Publishing Service, 1983), 13,17. Manitoba MBs- 5,810 members by 1980, Manitoba COM's – 11,200 members. As well, refer to statistics included in Chapter 3.

[5] MBBC Calendars, 1950-55. Dr. NJ Neufeld was joined by Dr.H. Gunther and Dr. TH Williams.

[6] CMBC Calendar, 1955-56, 3 and MBBC Calendars, 1950-56, 7.

Manitoba was only half the size of the COM membership, and so the COM decided to begin a college for its own constituency.[7] The MBs wanted to be in charge of a joint venture because they did not trust other Mennonites to be responsible for the two ideals noted above: correct theology and correct lifestyle. Past prejudices within the MB constituency, toward other Mennonite groups, were still very much in evidence in the twentieth century. A brief examination of the past story bears telling at this point.

The Mennonite Brethren and the Conference of Mennonites are just two of many Mennonite sub-groups throughout the world. Each Mennonite group has an ideology, implicit or explicit, which forms the basis for its identity and boundary creation. Serious divisions and conflicts within the Mennonite community have led to the formation of over a hundred separated Mennonite groups during its five hundred year history. During the 1850s, the influence of a number of Lutheran Pietists, like Eduard Wuest (1818-1859) and Wilhelm Lange, contributed to the schismatic break-away of the Mennonite Brethren from the larger Russian Mennonite church. The first Mennonite Brethren considered the large Mennonite church, of which they were a part, to be spiritually dead and ethically corrupt. They believed that a conversion experience was necessary to bring an individual into the true Christian community and certain ethical behavior (e.g. temperance) would necessarily follow. Generally, the Mennonite Brethren would choose to identify with other Christians who also emphasized repentance and conversion rather than with their fellow ethnic Mennonites who they believed were not genuinely converted.[8]

The first Mennonite Brethren claimed to be restoring the original Anabaptist

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[7] Ted Regehr. Mennonite in Canada: 1939-1970: A People Transformed (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996), 262. Canada-wide, the two groups were almost the same size however.

[8] John A. Toews, History of the Mennonite Brethren Church (Fresno: Board of Christian Literature, General Conference of MB Churches, 1975), 19. Toews writes that the Mennonite Brethren criticized the

vision of the faithful community of believers. Similarly, the mid-twentieth century Canadian Mennonite Brethren felt they were being faithful to the original ideal of the community (Gemeinde) of Anabaptist Mennonites. Numerous references indicate that the Mennonite Brethren (MB) believed they were more true to this original vision than other Mennonites were. The MBs felt quite strongly that church membership for other Mennonites seemed to be a matter of birth (being born into a Mennonite family) rather than a voluntary decision of rebirth. For the Mennonite Brethren, the experience of being "born again" resulted in eternal salvation and a visibly new life and character for the believer. The conversion experience was not considered genuine unless it was accompanied by a changed ethical life that could be observed.[9] This remained the normative experience for Mennonite Brethren past the 1950s and has historically influenced the MB relationship with other Mennonite groups. [10]

Since the past prejudices of the Mennonite Brethren toward other Mennonites stood in the way of a joint venture between MBBC and CMBC in the 1960s, the only option left open to the two colleges was the fourth one. Each college developed alliances with a university to strengthen the liberal arts component of their curriculum. CMBC was the first to make these arrangements. In the school year of 1957-58, the College was able to announce that the University of Manitoba had agreed to recognize the courses that

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church for a lack of vital Christian experience and a living, dynamic faith. The early MBs considered few preachers at the time to be "converted".

[9] The Mennonite Brethren have objected to the use of tobacco, alcohol, etc. since their inception in 1860. At that time they accused other Mennonites for having lower moral standards. Heinrich Balzer in "Faith and Reason", translated and edited by Robert Friedmann, MQR, XXII (1948), 90 notes that the MBs objected to the "pride, ostentation, vanity, greed for money and lust for wealth, avarice, drunkenness, luxury, vicious life, masquerades, obscene songs, gambling, and above all the miserable smoking of tobacco" that was part of the Mennonite lifestyle during the 1800s.

[10] John B. Toews, Pilgrimage of Faith: The Mennonite Brethren Church in Russia and North America (Winnipeg: Kindred Press, 1993), 33.

were equivalent in both institutions.[11] This accreditation was lost in 1959 when the University of Manitoba reorganized its relationship with its affiliated colleges and then re-established in 1964. At that time, CMBC became an approved teaching center of the UM. (More details of this development are included in the story of CMBC as told in Chapter Seven.) MBBC was able to make arrangements to become affiliated with Waterloo Lutheran University in Ontario in 1961. In 1970, MBBC was able to become associated with the University of Winnipeg.[12] (This story is developed more fully in Chapter Six.)

The benefits of these affiliations and associations with the universities were promoted because they allowed younger students to begin their liberal arts studies at a Mennonite college and then receive credit for them later when they went on to finish their university degree. There were benefits as well for the older students who were coming to the Bible colleges with post-secondary degrees from the universities. The stronger relationship of the Colleges with the universities should help these students feel that their previous educational background would be understood and respected at the schools. For both types of students, the Colleges were hoping to be a place where the integration of faith and learning could take place.

With accreditation in place for most of the sixties, the Colleges carried the similar purpose of being both a religious and an academic community. The schools hoped to encourage a personal dialogue between the faculty and students that would confront the students with the "living issues of the twentieth century" and help them "meet the challenges of our age". The College community was there to guide and direct the

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[11] CMBC Catalogue, 1957-58, 3.
[12] Regehr, 266.

individual student toward a "fuller comprehension of the meaning and purpose of life and the fulfillment of his (or her) potential".[13]

The Colleges were inviting the following students, as outlined in a solicitation brochure:

1. High School Graduates
   - Who are looking forward to Christian service.
   - Who seek an orientation in their Christian life before they enter upon professional training.
   - Who want to get their basic training in the Liberal Arts in a Christian College.
2. Bible School Students
   - Who seek further training for Christian service.
   - Who wish to study for a B.A. in a Christian atmosphere.
3. Public School Teachers
   - Who wish to enrich their teaching ministry through theological education.
   - Who want to improve their standing by enrolling in Liberal Arts, concurrently with Biblical subjects.
4. Professional people
   - Who want to make their professional work more meaningful in a deeper understanding of the Christian faith.
5. University Graduates
   - Who are not yet certain as to what the Lord would have them do, and who seek a better knowledge of the Scriptures.

[13] MBBC student solicitation brochure, 1966-1967.

- Who feel the call of the Lord to Christian service and wish to prepare themselves by the study of theology. [14]

It was the goal of the schools that students become equipped to "re-enter the larger society and make a positive contribution to the cause of Christ in the place where he (or she) finds himself". [15]

In their new task of becoming university-level academic institutions, CMBC and MBBC played a crucial role in the development of the Mennonite community in Manitoba. The Colleges played the role of "brokers" or "middlemen" – social networks that stood in the middle of the traditional community and the liberated society represented by the university. Leo Driedger argues that the "middlemen" social networks can bridge the gap between the two worldviews and select the best of both worlds to mold new "saved" networks in the middle.[16] Driedger states that for this to happen effectively, the brokers/middlemen must understand their community and its aspirations, be respected and accepted as legitimate leaders of their community, and at the same time also be a part of important social networks and contracts outside of their community. Brokers are crucial because they can help to link independent (and frequently isolated) ethnic networks with the outside world, providing fresh opportunities. [17]

Essentially, the Colleges were able to open the Mennonite world to the vocational and professional opportunities a university education offered while playing the vital role of redefining the boundaries of the Mennonite people so total assimilation would not take place. Leo Driedger, Mennonite sociologist and faculty member of CMBC during the

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[14] MBBC brochure used for soliciting students in 1966-1967. CMBC used similar promotions.
[15] Rudy Regehr, Student Council president. CMBC yearbook, 1961-62.
[16] Leo Driedger. Mennonite Identity in Conflict. ((Queenston, Ontario: Edwin Mellen Press, 1988), 192.
[17] Driedger, 192-193.

sixties, described this vital process in terms of good opening and closing in Mennonite social structures. Driedger argued that it was necessary to have "a continuous oscillation between relative openness and closedness" if a community is to make a "resilient adjustment to intakes of information and states of entrophy".[18] Vitality was not created by continual intake but by the ability of a social system to "open" and "close" appropriately. Opening and closing can be thought of as part of the shifting process to get the most of the best information while blocking out what can be harmful.

Good opening occurred for the Mennonite community when the gains of the new information flowing into the community assisted the development and growth of the individual and/or the social system. On the other hand, bad opening would have allowed necessary boundaries (which existed for the welfare of the system) to be transgressed, thereby creating a loss or lack of identity for the Mennonites. Good closing would emphasize norms, restraints and rituals that could give the Mennonite a positive identity and serve as a reinforcing mechanism. Bad closing, on the other hand, would overstress boundaries and restrictions, and the group, in a crisis of collective identity, would close the community to outside influences, try to protect common values, and more clearly define an enemy.[19]

The Mennonite community in Manitoba responded with all four categories of opening and closing during the 1960s. As already discussed throughout this thesis, the response of Mennonites to rising educational levels has historically been one of ambivalence. Some members welcomed the new opportunities while others were intensely opposed to changes. Acceptance, hesitation, resistance, schism and migration

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[18] Driedger, 195-196. Driedger draws from Orrin Klapp's work. See footnote 19.

were the varying responses to educational innovations in the past. The academic changes proposed at the Colleges now evoked a number of similar responses.

As already stated, some were eager to get going. Others hesitated but were soon convinced that the institutional changes proposed would not significantly threaten the original purpose of the Colleges. Some, however, became deeply resistant toward any move to strengthen the liberal arts component at the schools. These members were deeply convinced that too much new secular information would destroy the biblical/theological character of the colleges. For the strongly resistant members, the "overly educated" became the enemy.

At the beginning of the sixties, there were not very many university trained people within the Mennonite community. Things were quickly changing, however, especially among urban Mennonites. The dividing lines, in the community response to College developments, were generally drawn between those with more academic training and those with less formal education. At times these groups paralleled the urban/rural divisions but that was not strictly the case.[20] Those who had attended post-secondary institutions (other than the rural Bible schools) generally had a different body of background information than those with less education. This created a major difference in worldview and, in a different way, each group used the common Mennonite symbol system. Tension, controversy and conflict became inevitable.

The conflict that erupted within the Mennonite community, in Manitoba during the 1960s, was not unique to the Mennonites. The same difficulties were being

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[19] Orrin Klapp. "Opening and Closing in Open Systems." Behavioral Sciences 20:251-257 (1975), 254 as found in Driedger, 196.

[20] Studies like Kauffman and Harder, argue that the move to urbanization also raised the educational levels of the Mennonites so they were parallel devlopments rather than one being *a priori* to the other.

experienced by various Christian denominations in Canada at that time. For example, John Stackhouse, in his discussion of Canadian evangelicalism, notes that the Evangelical Free Church experienced a similar struggle when they founded Trinity Western College in 1962. (TWC later became known as Trinity Western University in 1985.) Quoting Calvin Hanson, TWC's first president, Stackhouse wrote:

> ... there was a general spirit of skepticism concerning the value of higher education as evidenced by flippant and disparaging remarks which made fun of college degrees. It was apparently felt by many that a university education was quite incompatible with a strong and warm commitment to Jesus Christ. Furthermore, because many of the university educated clergy were within the liberal church element a kind of cause and effect relationship was summarily assumed between one's training and one's doctrine.[21]

Parochial institutions offering a higher education are often caught in the middle of a conflict between two groups of people with differing sets of information.

During the sixties, conflict within religious denominations was often one between theology professors, the professional clergy and church bureaucrats on the one hand, and the common folk on the other. The problem centered on the fact that while both groups of people had an allegiance to a common symbol system of their religious faith, each group now attributed entirely different meanings to that symbol system.[22] Often the one group, consisting of theology professors, publications' editors, directors of boards of social concerns and others in the bureaucratic structure constitute the official version of a

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[21] Calvin Hanson, On the Raw Edge of Faith; The Trinity Story, 47 included in John Stackhouse Jr., Canadian Evangelicalism in the Twentieth Century: An Introduction to Its Character (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993), 147.

[22] Jeffrey K. Hadden, The Gathering Storm in the Churches (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1970).

religion while the common lay folk practice a localized, or non-official, version of the faith.[23]

This was clearly the situation in both of the MB and CMC communities. Faculty, board members, and students were usually concerned with developing, defending and elaborating a reasoned theology and ethics professional group is usually concerned with protecting, preserving and elaborating the theology and ethics of the Mennonite faith, while others wanted to preserve the faith by maintaining the traditional culture and customs. The theological elite developed the theology, which was to be logically consistent and coherent, even if it could not be directly related to the everyday experiences of the laity. Biblical stories, for example, were sometimes demythologized and/or remythologized to support the logical coherence of the new theology. The revised version was often too rational, professional and sterile to provide a convincing system of meaning for the average person. While modern theology could offer a logical worldview it did not necessarily generate an ethos that produced a vibrant and alive religion, without special effort.[24]

In addition to formulating a logical theology, the faculty and students of the Bible Colleges also worked at making their faith relevant for other cultures and peoples. The theology and the ethical principles of the faith were articulated in such a way that the faith did not appear as culture bound. There was a desire to emphasize the principles of the faith, that had universal appeal, and to downplay some of the values and attitudes, that were specific to Mennonites only. The traditional version of the Mennonite faith may, on the other hand, involved a synthesis of the historic faith with ethnic customs,

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[23] Keith A.Roberts, Religion in Sociological Perspective (Chicago: Dorsey Press, 1984), 125-127.
[24] Roberts, 125-127.

values, and beliefs. Existing concepts of morality were supported and reinforced by previous interpretations of religious stories and symbols. In some cases, the ethnocentric biases of a community was so strong the traditional version of the religion was considered to be the only true understanding of the faith.[25]

While a good number within the Mennonite community in Manitoba supported the traditional version of the Mennonite faith during the 1960s, the Colleges needed to move in the direction of increased rationalization and critical assessment of traditional ideas if they wished to maintain association with the universities. Faculty at both Colleges attempted to articulate a theology that was intellectually satisfying, and able to move beyond some of the ethnocentric biases of the Mennonite community. These efforts put pressures on the some constituents to stretch out of their traditions, many of which they still found meaningful. Many of the Mennonites with less formal education did not find the answers provided by the trained professionals to be applicable to their lives. Those, however, who had experienced the challenges of secular post-secondary education and/or a professional career, welcomed the discussions and changes taking place at the schools as necessary for the future survival of a Mennonite identity in an urban setting.

A considerable gap was growing between those with less formal education and those with a college/university education. These two groups literally had a different worldview and yet they shared the same church conferences. Members attended individual church congregations that promoted one ideology over another but, at the MB and/or CMC conference level, they needed to come together at least once a year to make corporate decisions concerning their schools. While the potential for disagreement lay in

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[25] Roberts, 125-127.

numerous areas, when conflicts arose between those with a higher education and their less educated fellow members, the Colleges was frequently blamed for the disagreements. The focus turned to the schools because often faculty members and students became vocal representatives of those who had adapted their theology and ethics to fit a more modern worldview.

For example, life in the modern, urban world led to the reevaluation of traditional ethical ideals. MBBC continued to ask their students to abstain from smoking, drinking, gambling, movie attendance and social dancing and CMBC generally affirmed similar ethical ideals till the end of the sixties but there were indications that those who were more educated did not uniformly agree with all of the traditional standards. Those with more education argued they had changed their mind, not because they were losing their ethical standards, but, rather, because they now recognized that traditional ethical standards were secondary to a new set of ethical principles they had discerned in their study of scripture. Those with higher educational backgrounds generally believed that racial tolerance, political participation and the willingness to share in the ministry of the church were more essential to an ethical life than some of the traditional mandates which included no smoking, drinking of alcoholic beverages or social dancing.

The following tables have been complied from a survey conducted throughout five Mennonite and Brethren in Christ denominations in 1972 and represent some of these disparities between groups with different levels of formal education. Generally, it can be observed that opposition to smoking, drinking, gambling, dancing and premarital sexual relations, and other vices that the churches traditionally taught against decreased with rising educational levels.

MENNONITE AND BRETHREN IN CHRIST DENOMINATIONS

TABLE 5:1
Level of Schooling

Sampling #	Age Groups	Grade school	High	College	Post-College
(42)	20-29	2.4%	45.2	40.5	11.9
(102)	40-49	26.5%	43.1	5.9	24.5
(44)	60 & over	52.3	31.8	2.3	13.6

TABLE 5:2
MORAL OPINION and EDUCATIONAL LEVELS

	Grade School	High	College	Post-College
Believe it is always wrong to:				
Drink alcoholic beverage	72.9	53.4	22.5	40.7
Smoke tobacco	92.9	78.9	72.5	70.4
Attend adult movies	76.5	48.6	40.0	37.0
Engage in premarital sex	97.6	94.9	95.0	96.2
Engage in homosexual sex	96.4	91.9	90.0	92.5
Gamble	90.7	73.7	75.0	79.2
Dance socially	85.9	62.3	55.0	47.2

TABLE 5:3
RELIGIOSITY and EDUCATIONAL LEVELS

	Grade School	High	College	Post-College
When you make decisions in your everyday life, how often do you ask yourself what God would want you to do (Often)	70.2	65.3	82.1	84.9
Other than mealtime, how often do you pray privately (daily)	86.2	86.3	87.5	90.7
Do the members of your household have family worship (Yes)	74.7	63.4	72.5	79.2
On the average, how often have you attended church worship services (once a week)	75.3	84.0	87.5	88.7
Do you attend Sunday school every Sunday possible (yes)	51.7	66.3	70.0	69.8
Do you presently hold, or have held within the past three years, a positions of leadership in your local congregation (yes)	35.3	57.1	79.5	84.9
I believe God created the earth and all living creatures in six 24 hour days (definitely)	77.9	56.8	27.5	16.7

TABLE 5:4
SOCIAL & POLITICAL OPINION and EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

	Grade	High	College	Graduate/Professional
The Christian should take no part in war (agree)	71.6	60.3	70.0	72.2
Although there is no essential difference between blacks and whites, it is preferable for them not to mingle socially (disagree)	41.4	58.3	80.2	55.6
The national government should take every opportunity to stamp out Communism at home & abroad (disagree)	9.5	12.0	45.0	44.4
A church member should not join a labor union even if getting or holding a job depends on union membership (agree)	29.1	7.4	10.0	0.0
There are certain offices in our government the tasks of which a true Christian could not in clear conscience perform (agree)	75.0	69.0	67.5	68.5 [26]

The tables above summarize some of the basic differences in opinion between those with less or more education. For example, Table 2 and 3 indicate that those with a college degree were much less likely to believe that some traditional restrictions should still be upheld. This did not mean that those with higher educational levels were less religious, however. Conversely, they prayed more frequently, attended church more regularly and held positions of leadership with their churches. A marked difference is also noted in how the more highly educated groups understood some of the biblical stories. For example, exposure to broader theological arguments, which responded to

[26] This data was collected in 1972 when the Mennonite Brethren and COM were surveyed as two of five Mennonite and Brethren in Christ denominations. It was subsequently analyzed and summarized in Howard Kaufmann and Leland Harder, Anabaptists Four Centuries Later (Scottsdale: Herald Press, 1975) and Peter H. Hamm, Continuity and Change (Waterloo: Wilfred Laurier University Press, 1987). Both sources have been used to develop this compilation of data.

scientific observations, led many of those with advanced education to differ with the more literal, traditional conclusion that God created the world in six 24 hour days.

Table 4 reveals that there were also some differences in how those with varying educational backgrounds viewed social and political participation. All community prejudices were exposed to critical assessment. Therefore, racial tolerance, for example, was especially high among those with a college degree. Correlating Table 4 with Table I indicates that over 40% of those with a college degree at the time of the survey (1972) were between the ages of 20-29. The younger generation had been exposed a social environment, during the sixties, that had made great strides in breaking down traditional, but irrational, prejudices.

Age may have played a factor in other areas of the survey. Fifty-two percent of those surveyed with a *grade school education* belonged to the older generation of age *sixty and over*. Many in this group tended to be the most conservative and, as they feared, this survey proved that many of their traditional opinions were being challenged as younger members received higher levels of education. There appeared to be a marked change in the ethical opinion of those with more or less formal education and therefore those who favored the traditional way continued to believe that higher education was destroying the moral fabric of the Mennonite churches. The voice of the traditional group was being increasingly challenged, according to Table 3, as more members with a higher education were holding leadership positions within the churches, where they offered their counter-arguments.

Positive development of the Mennonite faith at this significant point would require co-operation on the part of all members. Good opening and closing would allow

for educational development while re-defining and reinforcing the Mennonite identity. As leaders, the educated church members and the church schools were cautioned not to deepen the gaps between those with more or less of an education within their constituencies and encouraged to become bridge builders between the two groups. As such, they provided challenging leadership at a time when the community, as a whole, was encouraged to reexamine its traditional ethnic religious beliefs and to exchange a "superficial compliance which may be nothing more than lingering conformity to an outdated standard" with authentic obedience to God.[27] Some had confidence that MBBC and CMBC would be able to assist the Mennonite community as they attempted the reexamination of their traditional faith in a modern time and setting.

[27] John H. Redekop, "The Influence of Rising Educational Levels", Direction (1983), 58.

CHAPTER SIX

THE MENNONITE BRETHREN BIBLE COLLEGE

INTRODUCTION:

Vern was a tall, handsome, Canadian Mennonite teenager. He grew up a predominantly Mennonite small town during the 1950s. The town was located less than a hundred kilometers from a major Canadian city but retained a distinctively rural character because miles of farmland lay between the main street of Vern's hometown and the bustling metropolis a hour's drive away. Vern attended a local Mennonite Brethren church, and the private Mennonite high school in town. He was better known as a athlete than for any other outstanding quality and so when it came time for Vern to graduate in 1960, he wasn't sure what direction to take next. He considered his options and chose to attend MBBC, in the city of Winnipeg.

Vern did not have any clear professional or vocational goals at the time but he thought that attending the Mennonite Brethren college would be a good choice for a number of reasons. He looked forward to living in the city because he found life in his small town to be somewhat limiting. He anticipated meeting other Mennonite young people who he hoped would share some of his interests. In particular, he was excited to meet all the professors at the college. At that time, the faculty of MBBC was well-known throughout the Mennonite Brethren community, and Vern respected their academic prowess and stature within the constituency. He hoped some of their "greatness", as he called it, would rub off on him.

Vern was not content to follow the small-town mentality he grew up with. He had always felt he was "different" from most of his buddies who were content to go into

farming, or to stay in town to get a job and get married. He wanted more but he wasn't sure what that was. Going away to a city college helped to set Vern apart from his friends, and he remembers the respect he received when he returned at Christmas:

> You know, when I left for MBBC in the fall, I don't think anyone in my home church would have thought twice about asking me to speak from the pulpit. I mean, who was I? A eighteen-year old guy who could only think about playing basketball - so why would they give any special notice to a guy like that for church work. But, you know, it was so interesting. I returned home for Christmas from Bible college, and the pastor immediately asked me to say a few words in front of the whole church. From that point on, I was considered to be in preparation for church leadership, and the church was eager to help me along the way. I never looked back – the course had been set.[1]

In the 1990s, Vern, along with many of his fellow classmates in the 1960s are well-known personalities within the Mennonite Brethren community. A quick glance through one of the yearbooks of the early sixties parallels the "Who's Who" of the nineties.

Sarah Klassen was a graduate of MBBC in 1962. She stayed in Winnipeg where she spent years teaching high school while becoming a prolific poet. Sarah joined a small number of fellow Mennonite artists (emerging during and after the sixties) in a controversial literary examination of their community. The poetry and fictional works of these artists began to deliberately deconstruct the existing Mennonite self-image, exposing what lay behind the traditional façade. These artists were, at times, severely

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[1] Interview material gathered on November 19, 1998 from Vern Heidebrecht, a well-known pastor of Northview MB, Abbotsford, B.C., one of the largest MB churches in Canada in the 1990s.

criticized for their work because it seemed secular and irreverent. Their artistic expressions, however, served as a powerful way of telling the Mennonite story.

In one of her poems, Sarah vividly portrays the life of the 1920s Russian immigrants to Canada as they struggled to make a new life for themselves in the urban setting of Winnipeg. The poem dramatizes the establishment of a religious community within a new and challenging setting. Sarah's fellow Mennonite Brethren needed to be reminded of that possibility as they faced the prospect of maintaining their religious faith in the midst of the modern and secular era of the sixties.

A brief history of Edison Avenue

When you find it the Promised Land
is a narrow river of mud
that wraps itself like glue around your Russian boots
and bicycle wheels. The fierce sun
grinds it to a dust the wind flings
howling in your face. Winters
your children get lost in its white raging.

Trees are enemies you didn't expect
You must take the axe to their trunks
burn out their everlasting roots.

Evenings you will dream
of the Lost Paradise. Wind breathing
through gold-bright wheatfields,
fragrance of apple orchards in spring.
You will pore over pictures of majestic horses
you harnessed to your Sunday carriages, camels,
herds of fat cattle. Such dreaming

must be unlearned

You must never forget God
brought you here to tend one tethered cow
a small barnful of leghorns
a kitchen garden where the trees grew.

He wants you to love him in a clapboard church
you build when you've made the long way
home from peddling onions eggs your first ripe corn
to the ladies in River Heights.

You will purify your flesh, scrub from it the sweat
of foundries and sewing factories
purge from your soul the street car's jangling.
Joined with the saints yearning in fixed rows
for worthiness, you will listen to the choir

singing (in four-part harmony, in German,
a capella) about camelian,
topaz, dazzling rubies that adorn
the New Jerusalem, God's shimmering bride
beyond the wide crystal river, its fertile banks
moist and cool in the shade of green cedars
forever.[2]

Sarah and Vern, along with many of the graduates of MBBC, went on to become active leaders within the Mennonite Brethren church community, as well as outside of it. During the 1960s, students were encouraged to interact in all aspects of contemporary Canadian life in light of the Mennonite Brethren mandate to "take the gospel into all the world". Those associated with MBBC helped to define and defend this mission, straining

the historical MB ideal of communal unity. A number of fears and tensions were exposed as the community discussed institutional changes at the College. These discussions are the basis for this chapter.

"UNITY OF THE BROTHERHOOD" AND INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

Historically, Mennonites have always gathered together for conferences at which time they make corporate decisions. Areas of concern and criticism would be raised by various members and then discussed with the hopes of reaching a consensus. Discussions at the Conference of the Mennonite Brethren Church of North America in 1951 revealed a new fear that had emerged within the community. The Mennonite Brethren had always valued the "*unity of the brotherhood*" as a community distinctive and now it seemed that this unity was being threatened by a burgeoning diversity within the group.

During the mid-twentieth century, cohesion within the Mennonite Brethren community had rapidly diminished because of the loss of solidarity in beliefs and values. Conference minutes from 1951 indicate that unprecedented "educational opportunities" were considered to be partially responsible. At that time it was strongly stated that educational advancements had introduced "organizational and instructional" policies which were "seriously weakening" the "unity in church polity and practice". This major concern was linked to the loss of the traditional selection of leadership from within the congregation. Lay ministers were being quickly replaced by pastoral "professionals" who were being educated and trained in divergent educational institutions. The broadening of educational backgrounds was seen as contributing to an increasing

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[2] Sarah Klassen, "A brief history of Edison Avenue", included in Acts of Concealment: Mennonite(s) Writing in Canada, Hilda Froese Tiessen and Peter Hinchcliffe, eds. (Waterloo: University of Waterloo

"indefiniteness and difference(s) of interpretation" and a "hesitancy in accepting defined statements of Ethical, Social and Spiritual Standards" necessary for the maintenance of a Mennonite Brethren people who could be "separated" from the world.[3]

The theological diversity was amply demonstrated in the conference enumeration of the denominations and schools at which MB church workers had received their training. The Alliance, Lutheran, Baptist (Southern and Swedish), Presbyterian, Interdenominational, Grace, Moody, Conservative Baptist, California Baptist, Pasadena College (Pentecostal), Phillips University, Princeton Theological Seminary, United Seminary were all cited.[4] Unlisted were other schools which Mennonite Brethren had recently attended: Winona Lake, Southwestern Baptist, Central Baptist, Northwestern Evangelical University of Western Ontario, Hartford Seminary, United College (Winnipeg), Western Baptist, Northern Baptist, and perhaps others.[5]

It was time to do something about this problem. It was strongly suggested that Mennonite Brethren should be able to offer a competitive, quality education to their members so that they would not need to attend these other institutions. This, in fact, had been the specific purpose of the Canadian Mennonite Brethren when they founded MBBC in 1943. Now it seemed more needed to be done.

After 1951, numerous discussions took place about the possibility of developing a seminary program at the College to meet the new need. This option was nearly

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Press, 1992), 22-23.

[3] Report of the Forty-fifth General Conference of the Mennonite Brethren Church of North America, July 21-26, 1951 Winkler, Manitoba, Canada. "A Statement to the Conference" presented by the Board of Reference and Counsel. Comments related to this statement are raised in the introduction to Paul Toews, ed., Bridging Troubled Waters (Fresno: Center for Mennonite Brethren Studies, 1995).

[4] Report of the Forty-Fifth General Conference of the MB Church of NA, "Summarized Report of the Mennonite Brethren Conference Seminary Commission", 118-119.

[5] Paul Toews, ed., Bridging Troubled Waters: The Mennonite Brethren at Mid-Twentieth Century (Winnipeg: Kindred Press, 1995).

eliminated, however, when the North American Conference of the Mennonite Brethren decided to open a seminary for church leadership development in Fresno, California. It seemed unlikely that the MB community in North America could support two schools that carried similar purposes. This meant that MBBC was free to develop in another direction.[6]

Until 1960, the original objective of the College had not been changed. It continued to be driven by the aims of a Bible College even though it had a liberal arts component. The immediate goal of the school was to "prepare students for an effective witness in specific Christian ministries but also for a witness of informed and committed disciples in the general stream of life".[7] Even when the College became officially affiliated with the Waterloo Lutheran University in 1961, the college board reassured the church constituency that this arrangement would not affect the Bible College objective of MBBC. A significant change did take place, however, because of this affiliation. Since the university could not be affiliated with a Bible College, MBBC needed to divide into two separate entities - The Mennonite Brethren Bible College and the Mennonite Brethren College of Arts - the latter of which signed the Articles of Agreement with Waterloo Lutheran University. [8] This administrative division between the Bible College courses and the liberal arts offerings raised questions within the constituency.

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[6] Not everyone was happy with this decision. J.A. Toews, in particular, thought that it would be great if MBBC could be both a Canadian seminary and a Liberal Arts College. He was unhappy with the idea that Canadian pastors would be trained in an American environment, even if it was MB.

[7] F.C. Peters, "Towards a Philosophy of Education at the Mennonite Brethren Bible College", taken from the Minutes of Meetings of the College Board, (1962).

[8] The association between the MB College and the university was described to the MB constituency in the following way: Affiliation is the Canadian approach to "accreditation" on the university level. Colleges are accepted into affiliation by a chartered university have membership in the National Conference of Canadian Universities and Colleges. Such colleges then accept the curriculum of those university and entrance requirements, faculty appointments, and course examinations as supervised by the university. Such credit is then readily transferable to other institutions in Canada. MBBC school catalogue (1962), 68.

Some constituency members became concerned that the new affiliation with Waterloo Lutheran University would lead to an emphasis on the arts that could overshadow the theological dimensions of the school. These members raised their questions at a number of conferences that convened in the early sixties. Those in favor of the proposed changes reassured the hesitant members that the new developments would be beneficial for MB students. Faculty of MBBC, in particular, welcomed the College affiliation with the university. They encouraged the constituency that this was a practical opportunity for students to transfer some of the credits they earned at MBBC to other educational institutions in Canada. [9] To calm the fears of those who worried that the school would no longer be producing church workers, each of the three college presidents, during the sixties, cited statistics to demonstrate the high number of graduates who became directly involved in the work of the church.

During this period of time, statistics were also cited to verify that students were responding to the opportunity of achieving a Bachelor of Arts degree in a Mennonite environment. The student needs were presented as outweighing the concerns of more conservative members. Between 1960-1969, 75 graduates of the college attained a BA. Sixty-two of these degrees were earned outside of MBBC since the school only began to offer its own BA degree in 1967, however, the additional thirteen students were able to graduate with a Bachelor of Arts degree from MBBC between 1967-69. [10] Until 1967, the presidents and faculty of MBBC were actively supportive of program changes that would enhance the liberal arts component at the college. They, along with a substantial number of influential supporters, believed that a move in this direction would help

[9] MBBC school catalogue, 1962, 68.
[10] See Appendix C

strengthen the Mennonite Brethren church spiritually as it rapidly became more modernized and encountered a broader worldview. The challenge would be to adapt key aspects of the Mennonite Brethren identity for contemporary relevance while retaining the confidence of those within the community who did not see a need for change.

Those who favored institutional change were well aware of their critics and MBBC faculty, for example, used a number of public opportunities to offer their proactive arguments. These arguments often became part of official community records. Conversely, many of those who feared the changes held no official power within the Mennonite Brethren church during the early sixties, and the arguments they raised were often veiled in the official records. Church members, reflecting on the disagreements of this time, spoke of those who questioned change in relatively generic terms. The group was not well-defined and there was no organized leadership for the dissenting voices. Individuals who raised their concerns on the conference floor were not named but merely included in a brief mention that some discussion had followed the presentations of those officially invited to speak. Most of those who spoke at the conferences and/or wrote for the monthly church publication, The Mennonite Brethren Herald , held positions of power and leadership in the community. These public records indicate that many of the leaders in the MB community favored the proposed developments at MBBC. The general substance of the opposing arguments can be inferred from the responses the leaders offered. A direct indication of how many members favored changes at the College can be deferred from the decisions made at the conferences. A significant majority vote was needed to make an official institutional change. Therefore, when a decision in favor of change was made at the annual conference, it can be assumed that the majority of MBs

were ready to move in that direction.

Based on communal records of the 1960s, it becomes clear that most MB members wanted to retain some of the original ideals that had given the community a unique identity since the 1860s. The point of disagreement lay in the arguments of *how* community values could best be preserved. As already indicated, one group of MBs believed that the implementation of change and the adaptation of key ideals were crucial for Mennonite life in the modern era. Another group of members feared that any significant change could completely disintegrate the MB ethos. Discussions about institutional development at the Mennonite Brethren Bible College during the 1960s reflected the debate between these two groups. Since the MB community cherished the ideal of corporate unity, a great deal of effort was exerted to bring church members to an agreement about the identity and tasks of MBBC. Essentially, three distinct community ideals were highlighted to encourage the support of all the members as Mennonite Brethren tried to decide which direction their College should take.

First, the primary emphasis on being converted or "born again" (which originally led to the schismatic separation of the Mennonite Brethren from the larger Mennonite church in 1860) continued to be called upon as the basis for Mennonite Brethren identity a century later. Second, the Mennonite Brethren continued to believe that a genuine conversion experience led to an inner transformation that was demonstrated in an ethical lifestyle. Any individual could be transformed into part of the "genuine people of God" by becoming converted to Christianity. Third, the Mennonite Brethren actively promoted the benefits of good church education. During the nineteenth century, the purpose of church education was to produce a higher spiritual and intellectual caliber of leader for

work within the Mennonite Brethren community. During the 1960s, all members remained confident that the church school should produce good leaders. The controversy lay in *what kind of leader* the College should produce.

Those who resisted institutional changes wanted the school to continue with the specific task of providing the community with dedicated church workers. In response, the group favoring an increased liberal arts component began to argue that the purpose of a good Mennonite Brethren education was to prepare every student for the task of spiritual leadership in North American society, regardless of their vocation or profession. Since increasing numbers of Mennonite Brethren were becoming active within the domain of larger Canadian society, it was argued that the primary ideals of conversion, ethical transformation and education should be articulated for a broader social context and not limited to the MB community. New or adapted interpretations were needed to provide a spiritual foundation for the practical desire of Mennonites who were already participating in the burgeoning vocational and professional opportunities in Canada.

MBBC attracted a good number of older students who had already received some training at a university or professional school. Many of these had been involved in a variety of careers before attending MBBC. The purposes of the College, as described above, appealed to those who wished to continue working within their chosen professions after their time at the College. The average age of students attending MBBC, during the 1960s, was 24 or 25 years of age.[11] Many of students arrived at MBBC with some post-secondary education because admission to the Bachelor of Theology program at MBBC required at least two years of university training.[12] Similarly, the Bachelor of Divinity

[11] J.H. Quiring. Report of the President to the MB Conference, 4-8 July 1964, 68-70.
[12] See Appendix E.

program appealed to the older student because it was specifically designed for those already involved in church work who now wanted to upgrade their education. Of the 164 students at MBBC, during the year 1964-65, sixty-two had attended university. Thirty-three of these students had been engaged in teaching, eleven were nurses and ten were either ministers or involved in the mission work of the church. Sixty-three of the students had some Bible school training. Bible college was considered, by some, as a finishing school for work in both the church and the community.[13]

Increasingly, the College presented the professional career as having the same religious integrity as work within the church. The secular world was now a new frontier for evangelistic efforts and the secular career was seen as a new opportunity to meet those who needed to hear the Christian message. Church members were encouraged to get out into the world with the gospel of Jesus Christ so that many of their fellow Canadians could be converted or "born again". It appeared that the threat of secularization could be significantly diminished if members viewed their involvement in the secular world as a sacred "mission field" rather than just an opportunity to make social and economic advances. The mandate left by Jesus Christ to - "Go into all the world and make disciples"- was now interpreted to include the secular workplace as well as the foreign mission field.[14] Consequently, all members were encouraged to participate in this primary goal, not just those who were involved in local church leadership or in missions.

The new social realities raised arguments for a revised corporate Confession of Faith and a contemporary ethical code for the Mennonite Brethren community. Some

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[13] David Ewert, "New College President talks about his hopes" MB Herald (Nov.5, 1982), 16.
[14] Matthew 28.

became deeply convinced that not all of the traditional norms were suitable for the new environment. These members believed that a more fitting religious and moral standard needed to be developed. These discussions escalated throughout the sixties and majority decisions in favor of change were negotiated. For example, in 1963, the decision to revise the 1902 Confession of Faith was made by the General Conference of Mennonite Brethren in North America. [15] Then in 1968, a record crowd of Mennonite Brethren gathered in Clearbrook, British Columbia, for the annual convention of the Mennonite Brethren Conference of Canada to discuss the reformulation of the MB ethical standards.[16] While a good number of members agreed that some of the older mandates were irrelevant for the sixties, it was recognized by most that changes would need to be made carefully, and only by consensus. It was strongly feared that group unity would be severely damaged if each member were suddenly given the individual freedom to decide which beliefs or ethical standard he, or she, would adopt. There were those who argued, however, that some action was necessary. They hoped that the religious and ethical relativism prevalent in general society could be curtailed within the MB community with the development and articulation of an appropriate set of contemporary community standards.

Generally, all Mennonite Brethren affirmed the importance of being set apart from secular society's values and norms. Most agreed that the MBs, as a Christian community, should reflect ideals that differed from their non-Christian neighbors. Discussions centered on *how* the objective of community distinctiveness could best be

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[15] J.B. Toews. Pilgrimage of Faith: The Mennonite Brethren Church 1860-1990 (Fresno, Winnipeg, Hillsboro: Centres for Mennonite Brethren Studies, 1993), 285.
[16] Yearbook of the Canadian MB Conference, 1968.

achieved and *what* the distinctions should be. The College became involved in the task of addressing these questions because most MBs agreed that the role of a parochial institution included defining and maintaining the community ethos.

Traditional Mennonite Brethren members believed that the College was encouraging too much participation with the outside world. Surely this would lead to the relativization of traditional Mennonite beliefs and values. While this group may have agreed that the purpose of the Christian church was to evangelize the world, they were more concerned that "worldly" values would seduce some members.

During the sixties, many Mennonites in Manitoba still relied on a distinct identity which included an enmeshment of ethnic, social and religious values. The cohesion and insularity provided by a primarily rural environment had helped to maintain a distinct traditional identity for years. Some now feared that direct involvement in the modern world would destroy this unity, leaving nothing substantial behind. Genuine anxiety was expressed about whether it was possible to have a Mennonite religious faith outside of ethnic and geographical boundaries. Those who argued for an expanded worldview needed to articulate *how* a unified religious faith could be preserved in the new environment before hesitant members would be convinced that greater involvement in Canadian society was worth the risk. This became the task of many faculty members at MBBC.

DEFINING AND DEFENDING THE NEW MISSION OF MBBC:

During the fifties and sixties, the faculty of MBBC held a substantial degree of respect and leadership within the Mennonite Brethren community. A good number of

students were attracted to the College because of the great admiration they held for their instructors. Some faculty members were regularly invited to preach in the MB churches across Canada and this gave young people a chance to be exposed to the College. Peter Hamm, a student who later became a faculty member at MBBC, recalls how meaningful his time at the College was.

> Although I took other Biblical training besides the two years at MBBC, no other training seemed to meet my needs so specifically and productively. These years gave stability and direction to my life, and while all theological matters were by no means settled, a certain theological orientation was acquired which enabled me to live with some uncertainties... While denominational loyalty was involuntarily cultivated, one did in fact come away with a fairly open theology, without being narrowly sectarian. And such a preparation for life was valuable.[17]

Hamm was not alone in expressing these thoughts and feelings.

As this chapter's introductory stories indicate, some young people, like Bob, found their time at the College opened doors to church ministry that they would not have been possible otherwise. Many of the MBBC graduates during the sixties continued to work within the MB church for the rest of their lives. Others, like Sarah, welcomed their time at the College because it gave them an opportunity to develop a more open way of viewing the Mennonite community. While Sarah's freedom to critically assess her faith is evident in her poetry, she continues to actively support the College till today. In particular, students of that decade comment on the influence of the faculty of MBBC in shaping their lives. The role of the faculty was so significant that the voice of the students was overshadowed by their strong presence.

During the sixties, the faculty of MBBC was meant to be competent in the classroom as well as in the pulpit and in Conference positions. Collectively, they were a powerful group within the MB church. Individually, they represented a variety of theological opinion and personality types. Students reflect on the fact that some were stern and academic, others more easy-going and pastoral, some quite casual and entertaining. All, however, demonstrated a personal warmth and interest in the individual students that made up the small student body of under two hundred.[18] The variety within the faculty meant that students from differing backgrounds could often find someone with whom they identified.[19]

Students at the College represented the two constituent groups outlined above – those who wanted the school to train church workers and those who appreciated MBBC's links to the standards of the university. Some students attended the school to receive training for practical work within the church and held a suspicious view of academia while other students were university graduates and thoroughly enjoyed the scholarly emphasis at the College. While individual students would share their reflections about the College within their local churches there is no record of their involvement in the debates about the school's direction during the sixties.[20] Dissension on campus was limited by a number of factors. First, many of the students were older (in their mid-twenties) and given credit by those leading the College for raising "the standards of conduct and of instruction by their maturity, wider experience, greater intellectual demands and their

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[17] Peter M. Hamm. Reflection on my Journey (Abbotsford: Self-published, 1993), 83.
[18] Hamm, 83-84.
[19] Hamm, 83-84.
[20] This changed in later decades when, for example, the students rose up to contest the discipline of a faculty member for "liberal" theology in the 1980s.

manifest purpose in life".[21] Second, the conduct of the students was carefully regulated to insure that the school body was as unified as possible. All students were "obligated to maintain a high standard of Christian conduct".[22] The use of tobacco and intoxicants was prohibited, as were other "questionable amusements, card playing, dancing (and) theaters of any kind" that "might defile mind and body and bring reproach upon the Christian testimony of the individual and the college".[23] As well, "for the purpose of maintaining the highest social and ethical standards of Christian principles", the College required all women students to wear a uniform consisting of a navy jumper and a blouse of their own choice, as long as it did not have a low neck line nor sleeves shorter than elbow length. For public meetings, female students were expected to wear three-quarter or full-length sleeves.[24] The College reserved the right to dismiss any student who did not conform to "the spiritual and ethical standards of Christian conduct as accepted by the College".[25] The general conduct rules stayed in place throughout the sixties, however, the uniform requirement was dropped in 1967-68. It appears that students may have been complaining about the need for women to wear uniforms, causing the school to change this policy. In a letter to a faculty member, the new president of MBBC in 1967, Victor Adrian, wrote, "We have revised some of our policies ...and our pattern of approach to the students here. It seems to me it should work much smoother next year".[26] The shift of policy at the time of Adrian's arrival will be examined in more detail at the end of this chapter. Essentially, however, student conduct at MBBC, throughout the sixties, was

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[21] J.H. Quiring, Report of the President to the MB Conference, 4-8 July 1964, 68-70.
[22] MBBC school catalogues from 1947-48 till 1967-68 reveal that the conduct rules were unchanged during those twenty years. In the 1968-69 catalogue the wording was changed but the essential conduct rules were unchanged and failure to comply carried the same penalty.
[23] All MBBC catalogues throughout the sixties. Last part of the quote taken from 1968-69 catalogue, 17.
[24] MBBC catalogues 1947-48 till 1967-68. Quote taken from 1947-48 catalogue, 11.
[25] MBBC catalogue 1953-55, 12. The College continued this policy throughout the sixties.

carefully regulated according to the biblical mandate included in the Student Handbook (1960-69):

> Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth. II Timothy 2:15

Students were responsible to reflect the vision and ideals of the College while they attended MBBC. Meanwhile, the mission of MBBC would be defined and defended by the predominant voice of the College faculty.

A notable Mennonite Brethren leader engaged in these discussions during the sixties was John A. Toews. Toews was the president of MBBC during 1956-1963 and was a faculty member at the college for twenty years. Toews was deeply influential in furthering the liberal arts program at the college while maintaining a strong theological presence within the church conference. Toews was at the helm of the college during the exciting period of growth and development at the end of the 1950s as faculty began imagining the possibilities for expansion. A number of faculty members returned to school during the summer months or in the evenings to pursue the higher academic degrees they needed to earn now that the college was working on accreditation with the university.[27] J. A. Toews also returned to Ph.D. studies at the University of Minnesota (1959-61) while he served as president and teaching faculty member at MBBC.

In his keynote address at the 1960 Centennial celebration of the MB church, Toews drew comparisons between the MB church of 1860 and 1960. He expressed his concern that the current generation, as the third generation of MBs, would lose the

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[26] Presidential correspondence of Victor Adrian to Peter Klassen, 26 July 1967.

[27] An increased academic level was required of the MBBC professors, especially when efforts were made to align with the university accreditation. In 1953, none of the faculty at MBBC held a doctorate degree and only one had a Masters. By 1965, however, most held either a Master of Arts degree or a Master of

essence of the original dynamic faith and retain only the form because this often happened in the third generation of other religious movements. He reiterated his concern that various other religious influences had effected the MB views in a negative way and called all members to restore the true Mennonite Brethren faith.[28]

Toews believed that the time had come for the Mennonite Brethren to restore their relationship with the larger Mennonite community. He preferred this association to the ones some Mennonite Brethren had forged with fundamentalist/evangelical groups in Canada. Toews feared that alliances with other evangelical groups would pull the MBs even further away from their Anabaptist Mennonite roots which he believed were uniquely able to "bear witness to the truth as it is in Christ for such a time as this".[29]

To show his support for the larger Mennonite community, Toews attended the Mennonite World Conference of 1962. This conference was held with the specific intention "to bring the Mennonites of the world together". A number of his MB colleagues disagreed with Toews' decision to attend because participation in the Mennonite World Conference required MB association with liberal-minded European Mennonite theologians.[30] Generally, the MB members who criticized Toews were more comfortable associating with other non-Mennonite evangelical groups than they were participating with fellow Mennonites who held a broad range of theological opinions. Increasingly, it was the more highly educated Mennonite Brethren who realized that it was possible to be engaged with a variety of Mennonite groups and Mennonite thought,

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Theology degree, two faculty members had earned a Ph.D. and other faculty members were engaged in doctoral studies.

[28] Elfrieda Toews Nafziger, A Man of His Word: A Biography of John A. Toews (Winnipeg: Christian Press, 1992), 99-102.

[29] "The Call to Bear Witness", Cornelius J. Dyck, ed., The Lordship of Christ: Proceedings of the Seventh Mennonite World Conference, 1-7 August 1962 (Elkhart, IN: Mennonite World Conference, 1962) 236-237.

without the fear of compromise. They too had been exposed to a diversity of theological opinions during their educational careers.[31]

David Ewert, another prominent faculty member at MBBC during the sixties, also attended the Mennonite World Conference in August, 1962. He returned with some strong words for the MB constituency, (which were published half a year later in the MB Herald).[32] Ewert suggested that the MB church needed to have the "nobility of soul to acknowledge what God had wrought in other branches of the Mennonite faith".[33] According to Ewert, the World Conference had provided a setting in which some of the MB weaknesses had become obvious. First, he stated that the MBs needed to realize that did not have a monopoly on theological insight. Mennonite Brethren were fooling themselves if they believed that God had reserved certain areas of divine revelation just for the MB church. Ewert argued that it was obvious there were many other Mennonites who were also sincerely seeking to be faithful to the Word of God.

Secondly, Ewert said he became aware of the fact that many of the Mennonite Brethren members in attendance at the conference could not carry on a theological conversation without becoming polemical. At that time he wrote:

> The only explanation I can give for this is, that they have become accustomed to their own views and have little use for the other's opinion, and, therefore, feel called to defend Biblical truth, which quite often means their understanding of the Bible. Some have read mainly the kind of theological literature which moves in the old Fundamentalist-Liberal spirit of controversy, and so they

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[30] Foreword to The Lordship of Christ, 3.
[31] See Appendix B.
[32] The Herald was a MB church publication that was sent to every member of the constituency. David Ewert was a key MB leader and during the 1980s he became President of MBBC.
[33] David Ewert, "What We Might Learn From the Mennonite World Conference" MB Herald 22 Feb. 1963, 10.

> tend to be suspicious of every theological statement that comes from other circles.[34]

Ewert continued with his criticism of the Mennonite Brethren who were too quick to attach labels to those who belong to other denominational communities. He also warned that the MBs should not believe they had "always and everywhere guarded the Truth of God in all its purity".[35]

David Ewert chastised the church for its arrogance and self-centeredness and articulated a new Mennonite Brethren vision in his third point. He challenged the Mennonite Brethren to confess its error and to take up the "Kingdom work". This work would take seriously the role of Christian education, publications, and the service of love to the hurting world all around them. Other Mennonites were leading the way and the Mennonite Brethren needed to catch up by developing a more balanced and less ethnocentric approach to the Christian faith.

J.A. Toews, and others, shared these sentiments. As Toews ended his seven years as president of MBBC in 1963, he spoke openly about the difficulty some MBs had with inter-Mennonite relationships.[36] He also noted the struggle the Mennonite Brethren church had experienced as the college expanded its liberal arts program during the early sixties. Unafraid of controversy within the MB church, Toews had actively promoted this expansion and strongly endorsed the 1961 affiliation arrangement with Waterloo Lutheran University as a means of accomplishing this purpose. Toews did his best to allay the fears of the constituency while stating firmly that change was necessary because

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[34] Ewert, 10.
[35] Ewert, 10.
[36] Toews, MBBC President's Report to the Annual Conference of the MB Church of Canada, 29 June 29-

> we are living in an age of rapid cultural, economic and educational change, and a reorientation in our philosophy of Christian education, as well as a rethinking of the program, to achieve the above objective is not only desirable but imperative.[37]

J.A. Toews worked hard to promote the liberal arts program at MBBC. It was his close relationship with a fellow faculty member, F. C. Peters that led to a fuller development of the program.

When Frank Peters was offered a position at the college in 1957, he had considerable training in theology and psychology and was working on his Ph.D. dissertation at Central Baptist Seminary in Kansas City. Peters hesitated to come to MBBC unless the college's offerings in the liberal arts were expanded. After consulting with the faculty, Toews reassured Peters that he would be able to work with the college on developing the curriculum. As a result, Peters was appointed the first Academic Dean of MBBC in 1957 and he remained on faculty till 1965.

Peters was instrumental in facilitating MBBC's affiliation with Waterloo Lutheran University in 1961. In the early 1950s Peters had been appointed lecturer at the Waterloo College (after he received a Bachelor of Divinity degree from Waterloo Lutheran Seminary) and his association with the school proved helpful for the later negotiations between MBBC and Waterloo Lutheran University. In 1965 Peters returned to Waterloo to take a teaching position at Sir Wilfred Laurier University and in 1966 he became president of that university. During his presidency, Peters became aware of the fact that out-of-province affiliations (such as MBBC enjoyed with Waterloo) would eventually

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3 July, (Conference Records: 1963), 42.

[37] Toews, MBBC President's Report to the Board, 25 January (MBBC Board Minutes, 1963).

come to an end and he prodded the college to begin negotiations with the University of Winnipeg for affiliation.[38]

Frank C. Peters was also actively involved in the promotion of the liberal arts program at MBBC within the church constituency during the 1960s. Peters was asked to write a paper describing the MBBC philosophy of education, which he then presented to the college board in 1962. In the paper, he argues that the liberal arts courses were viewed in the Bible college setting as both cultural education (one which all educated people should have) and as contributing to a general understanding of "the world in which and to which the Christian seeks to witness."[39] This idea would be stressed repeatedly throughout the 1960s by many of his colleagues and would fuel a Mennonite Brethren identity customized for the modern vocational/professional MB church member.

J. A. Toews set the tone for this new identity in his last report to the MB conference as president of MBBC in 1963. Toews used the New Testament imagery of spiritual warfare to describe the new task of MBBC. He addressed the Mennonite Brethren church with a biblical exhortation to be "fellow soldiers in contending for the faith that was once delivered to the saints" and encouraged them to "take up God's armor", for then they would be able to stand their ground in the face of difficulty and change the world.[40] Toews presented the Christian church as caught in "the great battle for truth and for the right", constantly struggling to both preserve and propagate the Christian faith. Christian schools, Toews argued, could play a decisive role in this task and, since its inception, MBBC had taken its place at the "front line of this battle".[41]

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[38] David Ewert, Honor Such People (Winnipeg: Center for Mennonite Brethren Studies, 1997), 134-137.
[39] Peters, Minutes of the Meetings of the College Board, 1962.
[40] Reference to Ephesians 6:13.
[41] Toews, MBBC President's Report of the Conference (1963), 38.

The use of warfare imagery reveals the general attitude of the college toward secular society during the sixties. Religious groups, generally, respond in one of three ways to the values and patterns of the dominant society.[42] While each group may rebel against some values while strongly affirming others, generally a religious group will either withdraw from the larger society around them, seek to transform the secular world, or accept the ideology of the prevailing culture. MBBC became a primary agent in the new MB task of transforming their world for Christ. Rather than retreating, which some suggested was a more faithful response, or simply adopting the secular mentality of the institutions around them, a number of Mennonite Brethren began to view their church as a key agent for societal change.

Some Mennonite groups have chosen the first option and attempted to withdraw from secular culture. While withdrawal from society was never the explicit intention of the Mennonite Brethren community, living in relatively isolated rural enclaves had created a similar effect. Therefore, some rural Mennonite Brethren still favored the separate, distinct ethnicity of the first generation Mennonite identity. Implicitly, they felt that they were a faithful remnant of true believers and they indicated this to their fellow MBs.

As already indicated, a growing number of Mennonite Brethren were not comfortable with the older Mennonite identity and were actively looking for one to replace it. While they were not prepared to adopt all of the values and structures of the dominant society, they were also not content to withdraw into their own communities. Increasingly, Mennonite Brethren participated in secular society by moving to the cities, attending secular schools and expanding their career options. A new spiritual agenda was

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[42] Roberts, 254-256.

increasingly articulated at the College that justified Mennonite participation in a secular society. This new agenda was based on the Great Commission left to the church by Jesus Christ, "Go into all the world with the gospel" (Matthew 28). Both the faculty and the students at MBBC became interested in fulfilling this role in contemporary society.

For example, the topic of the January 19, 1963 panel discussion organized for the MBBC Student Night was "Our Problem of Tradition and Ethics in Communicating the Gospel to the Community". Four MBBC faculty members participated on the panel. David Ewert opened the discussion that evening by defining the terms of the topic. He indicated that tradition could be viewed both optimistically and pessimistically. In an optimistic sense, tradition attempts to carry truth through the generations via a "spiritual heritage and unique emphases." Confidence should be placed, however, in biblical principles, which undergird traditional ideas not in the specific applications of those principles. Ewert argued that reinterpretation was always possible for contemporary situations.

Ewert's opening view was subsequently supported by the other three faculty members who were part of the panel - Peter Klassen, Victor Adrian and J.J. Toews. The points raised by all of these men highlighted the direction the College was taking. Klassen noted that the MBs lacked a comprehensive philosophy that could define the areas of culture, race and religion. He suggested that the MB leaders needed to begin working in this direction so members could be assisted in their new task of witnessing to their neighbors. Klassen also argued that Mennonite Brethren were weak in communicating the gospel to their world because they were resisting opportunities to have mutual contact with non-Christians. He suggested that participation in community

and state affairs would be helpful. Victor Adrian, faculty member who became president of the college in 1967, continued to press the idea that MBs were ill prepared to communicate the gospel. He believed however, that unfamiliarity with the gospel and/or a lack of enthusiasm for witnessing was contributing to the problem. J. J. Toews was confident that this was changing because there appeared to be a general awakening to the idea that each individual member was responsible for the work of the church in the world.[43]

J. A. Toews echoed his colleagues' ideas later that year at the annual conference. Although he expressed concern about the lax spirituality of the third generation Mennonites in Canada, he did not feel that that they were in a losing battle. He argued that MBs did not need to acquiesce to the secular values of those around them but could, and should, rather join in the battle for the Christian gospel in Canada.

Toews went on to link the purpose of MBBC with this mandate when he delineated the objectives of the school in the following way:

> We are contending for the foundation of our faith - the authority of the Scriptures; we are contending for the unity of our faith - the church as a brotherhood of believers; we are contending for the proper expression of our faith - a life of Christian discipleship; we are contending for the effective propagation of the faith - the training of soldiers of the cross who will rise to the challenge of the present hour.[44]

Toews concluded his address by encouraging the constituency to offer constructive criticism as well as wholehearted moral and financial support of the college as it

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[43] As reported in the MB Herald (Feb.1963).
[44] Toews, MBBC President's Report to the Conference (1963), 38.

attempted to meet these objectives.

Not all members of the Mennonite Brethren church were able to offer either constructive criticism or wholehearted support of the college because they were unclear about the role of MBBC within the overall Christian education program of the church. While Toews was able to list the objectives of MBBC at the conference in 1963 and F.C. Peters had presented the college philosophy of education to the college board in 1962, the MB conference did not have a clearly articulated philosophy of education by which members could assess the college's purposes at this time. The MB Board of Christian Education reported to the 1964 Canadian MB Conference that an implicit philosophy of education existed (since the MBs owned and operated schools), however an explicit definition of that philosophy was non-existent.[45]

John Wiebe, board chairman, argued the lack of a clear philosophy of education created an imbalanced perspective within the constituency. The needs of the various church schools were being raised individually and, frequently, in isolation from the other institutional concerns and without an overall educational objective. Members were often unfamiliar with the whole spectrum of Mennonite Brethren education and therefore were not willing to support all of the schools. This frequently led to inter-school tensions since a spirit of competition was fostered by the enthusiastic support of one school rather than another.[46]

While the constituency had been encouraged to view the whole program of MB Christian education as one united whole in 1961, this remained a difficult task because the inter-school tensions (between the MB Bible College and the MB Bible schools)

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[45] Report of the MB Board of Christian Education. Yearbook of the Canadian MB Conference, 1964.
[46] Report of the College Board. Yearbook of the Canadian Mennonite Brethren Conference, 1964.

reflected the growing gap between more highly educated MBs and those with less formal education. Many of the students at MBBC had post-secondary training while students at the MB Bible schools were not required to have a high school diploma. Additionally, the purpose of the Bible college was very different from that of the Bible schools. A statement by a Bible school president during the 1960s summarized the most basic difference. When asked whether the school should upgrade its supposedly "rurally-oriented, juvenile curriculum", H.R. Baerg replied with the following:

> To operate on an intellectual par with the university is not our aim. Nor are we out to equip students intellectually for the higher criticism of the university. Few issues are resolved by argument. Rather, we must zero in on the Bible and in this way foster an attitude of love for Christ and the Gospel - thus fortified a student will best face the attacks of the world.[47]

While both the College and the Bible schools identified the Bible and the gospel as foundational, the understanding and approach to these two symbols was not uniform. College faculty demonstrated that the role of the college was to question, criticize and reflect on the past in order to determine meaning and relevance for MBs within the context of the whole of society. Supporters of the Bible schools believed faithfulness to the Bible's claims required obedience to a set of dogmatic theological and religious mandates, which were prescribed by Mennonite Brethren traditions and passed on without question.[48]

As already mentioned, the inter-school tensions were frequently presented at the

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[47] H.R. Baerg, WBI Alumni Newsletter (vol. 11 #2) undated.

[48] Interestingly, when one of the Bible schools did try to break the traditional educational patterns it operated under in 1967, it is severely criticized by its supporting constituency. The school came under the same type of scrutiny and critique the college was exposed to. The faculty was feared as untrustworthy and

annual church conferences as resulting from the lack of a comprehensive philosophy of education. The purpose of each school and the relationship of one institution to another within the constituency was not clearly outlined. At times it seemed like the programs were overlapping while at other times there appeared to be incompatible divergences. Victor Adrian, president of MBBC (1967-1972), gave an unofficial description of the two institutions at the time of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the College in 1969. Adrian suggested that the Bible College uniquely attempted to integrate the liberal arts with biblical training and theological studies while the Bible schools, on the other hand, were more concerned to give their students a survey of Biblical subjects and church related areas of study. He acknowledged that it was precisely in the attempted integration of theology with other disciplines of studies that cauased the greatest problems with some of the constituency.

Eventually, by 1968, the College faculty was invited to work on a philosophy of education for the MB church. The MB Herald published a series of five articles written by MBBC professors under the heading "Toward a Philosophy of Christian Education". The submissions came from five of the younger members of the faculty: Vernon Ratzlaff, Herbert Swartz, Allen Guenther, Herbert Giesbrecht and John Regehr. All were recent graduates from university programs. Ratzlaff, professor of philosophy and church history, held both a BA and a BSW in 1966 and was pursuing further studies at the University of Manitoba in 1968. Swartz, who served as registrar and taught Greek at the college, received a BA in addition to his Bachelor of Divinity in 1966. Allen Guenther held a Bachelor of Theology and a BA when he received his MA in 1967. He served as Dean of Students and the Hebrew instructor at the college. Herbert Giesbrecht taught

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the aims and objectives of the school were reassessed.

English at the time with a BA, a BTh. and a MA he earned in 1956. He went on to earn a Masters in Library Studies in the late 1960s and served as librarian at the college until his retirement. Regehr was responsible for the department of Practical Theology and by 1968 held a Bachelor of Divinity, a BEd and an MA. The articles written by these newcomers to the MBBC faculty continued to declare the purposes of the college that had been set in place earlier by their older colleagues.

In his article, "What makes a Christian College Christian?", Ratzlaff delineated between two types of education - one which maintains the traditional status quo and one which has a sense of mission. MBBC, he argued should be interested in the latter. He wrote:

> If the function of education is to transmit the existing values of the sponsoring society, to maintain the status quo, to perpetuate the received text, a college will do one thing; if the function of education is seen to be more than a task of transmission and also a task of mission (discovery/probing), a college will do another, or at least more than the former. In short, it is important to know whether the community is as concerned with making history as it is interested in learning it ... A Christian college does not provide pre-professional training in a "safe atmosphere"; it provides pre-professional training so that the individual may be better prepared to bring his faith to bear, within his vocational framework, on his society. It is a sense of mission that recognizes that the only calling considered valid by the Christian is that which asks him ... to "devote his whole life to the service of Christ and the church".

Ratzlaff argued that the validity of all learning areas was to be accepted by the Christian

college since these areas are interpreted within a theistic framework and utilized to prepare the student for the primary concern of preparation for mission.[49]

Herbert Swartz continued this argument in his article "Why Combine Liberal Arts and Theological Studies?" Swartz argued that the liberal arts and science were a pre-requisite of all human learning since these studies taught the student to i) reason logically, ii) communicate clearly, iii) inquire accurately, and iv) evaluate wisely. However, Swartz argued that the "neutral facts" of the arts and sciences were usually delivered within the body of convictions or presuppositions of an institutional system. The Bible college, therefore, would seek to combine elements of the liberal education with the unique emphasis provided by a thorough knowledge of the Bible. The purpose of such an education was to relate all the parts to whole so that the "man of God is 'fitted' to live."[50]

Such an education took place within the context of a community of scholars and students where, as Allen Guenther described it, the "whole is equal to more than the sum of the separate parts". In his discussion of "The Christian College Community - Opportunities and Perils", Guenther repeats the primary goal of MBBC as "the training ground for a task force of believers who penetrate the world at every level with the Christian witness" but he added a corresponding dimension. Guenther suggested that it was not just important for Christians to promote their ideas "out in the world" but it was imperative that church members have contact with "the world". There needed to be a fruitful interchange of ideas between the Christian and non-Christian world to keep the Mennonite Brethren church organism from withering away. He believed that the

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[49] Vern Ratzlaff, "What makes a Christian College Christian?" MB Herald 12 July 1968, 7-8.
[50] Herbert Swartz, "Why Combine Liberal Arts and Theological Studies?" MB Herald 26 July 1968, 13.

Christian campuses needed to be ventilated "with winds from the non-Christian world" so that meaningful involvement could begin. Guenther was clearly convinced that a transformation of both church and society was possible as a result. This is evident in the following argument:

> Involvement with the outside world must become one of the goals of the Christian school. This requires a joint effort by administration and students; neither can do the job by itself. By working together they can transform the evangelical college from a mere "religious" school into a driving force for Christ, for a new community, and for a new world.

The possibilities and problems of co-operation were experienced right within the college community as an increasing diversity was noted among the students on campus. At the end of the sixties there was less homogeneity in terms of age, sex, experience, denominational affiliation and theological orientation. [51]

According to Herbert Giesbrecht in his article "A Christian Attitude to Contemporary Thought", the "greater diversity of new ideas and new theologies" was not to be evaded in "timidity or spiritual arrogance". Giesbrecht argued that while the knowledge of the world had "something of the serpent" in it, it could also reflect something of God's truth. He notes:

> If we are such as seek truth honestly and diligently, we will not seek it only "in church or during devotions or in Bible class or during some activity which is specifically designated as Christian service", but will seek it in many places and we shall not be surprised to find facets of it even in the unlikeliest corners

[51] Allen Guenther, "The Christian College Community – Opportunities and Perils" MB Herald 9 August 1968, 8.

of contemporary thought.[52]

The ideal for the Christian, according to Giesbrecht, was to learn to enter more fully into the thoughts and concerns of both the religious and the secular man, "even while he tightens his hold on supernatural realities."[53]

The ideal of awareness is highlighted by John Regehr in his contribution to a philosophy of Christian education. In his article "Training for a Dynamic Home Church", Regehr primarily emphasized the role of the student when they return to their home congregations. He suggested that it is important for the student to have developed a responsible self-awareness while at college. This involves training that will allow for both " insight into and acceptance of self, and a sensitive and appreciative awareness of others". Regehr believed that students who achieved this balance would be able to contribute positively to a dynamic church life in which inter-personal relationships are nurtured. It is such a church that will be able to effectively communicate the abundance of life in Jesus to the secular world.[54]

This short review of the five articles reveals that the faculty at MBBC, throughout the sixties, continued to belief that it was the purpose of the college to prepare students to "get out into the world for Christ" as leaders of the church and society. Mennonite Brethren students and constituency were expected to embrace this ideal and actively support it. Church work need no longer be confined to the tasks of pastor, worship leader or Sunday school teacher. Now all of those who were involved in various vocations and professions could also become involved in the "work of the church". The MB community no longer needed to be divided by the growing involvement of some

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[52] Herbert Giesbrecht, "A Christian Attitude to Contemporary Thought" MB Herald 23 August 1968, 8-9.
[53] Giesbrecht, 9.

members in secular pursuits. ALL could be leaders in their sphere of influence and *all* could be united in the task of bringing the gospel to a world that needed to be ethically transformed.

THE NEW MISSION IS APPLIED – LANGUAGE AND HYMNOLOGY

At his first presidential report to the MB Conference, J.H. Quiring (1963-67) noted how difficult it was to give satisfactory answers to the continued questions about the College's purpose. He emphatically declared that "the college is OUR school". Since the primary purpose of MBBC was to serve the MB church, he believed the entire constituency should be required to give the school wholehearted support. He acknowledged that much of the concern about the College was driven by anxieties related to the development of the Liberal Arts component. Quiring indicated that the interest in, and demand for, liberal arts training continued to increase. He reassured the constituency however, that though it was the school's conviction that a liberal arts education was essential for the total training for Christian workers, the college had no ambitions to expand the liberal arts offerings at that time. Quiring outlined the program of studies offered by MBBC and then appealed to the constituency to give the College a definite mandate for the years ahead, along with the means to accomplish it, if they disagreed with the current direction.

PROGRAM OF STUDIES (1963-64)

Bachelor of Divinity degree - three years of study requiring an (undergraduate) degree for admission (e.g. BRE or BTh). Designed for pastors, missionaries and teachers.

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[54] John Regehr, "Training for a Dynamic Home Church", MB Herald 6 Sept. 1968, 9.

Bachelor of Theology degree - three years of study requiring two years of arts studies for admission. Emphasis on theology, exegesis and preaching.

Bachelor of Religious Education degree - three years above Senior Matriculation. Majors in Christian Education, Mission and Music

Sacred Music Course - A diploma course in sacred music requiring three years about Senior Matriculation.

Liberal Arts Courses - The College offers two years toward the degree at Waterloo University College. A special degree program in Music (BA) may be completed at MBBC and Waterloo University College.[55]

While much of the debate at the College during the early part of the sixties was centered on the development of the Liberal Arts program at a Mennonite Bible College, another source of tension emerged. The diminished emphasis on the German language at MBBC became a hotly debated issue. In 1960, MBBC was still committed to produce pastors who could speak the German language in the pulpit and for the purpose of visiting parishioners. As in the past, it was still mandatory for every theology student at MBBC to take a course in the German language during his or her first year of studies. It was soon apparent, however, that a few courses in the German language were not going to prepare a student (who primarily spoke English) to lead a predominantly German-speaking congregation when he graduated. Those who wanted MBBC to produce bi-lingual graduates complained that ignoring the German language showed a great

[55] JH Quiring, Report of the President to the MB Conference, 4-8 July 1964, 68-70.

disrespect for those who had "suffered so much to bring the schools into being." [56] Abandoning the German language was considered the new generation's ultimate sign of ingratitude for the contributions of the previous generation.[57]

As the controversy around the use of German escalated during the early sixties, the move to the primary use of the English language was supported by the new evangelistic vision of some Mennonite Brethren. It was argued that Mennonites would not be able to invite their neighbors to church services unless the sermons were in English. The need to make the Mennonite churches amicable to outsiders began to raise other similar issues of ethnocentrism. The question was asked: "How many of our Mennonite ethnicities, like language, can we drop and still be just as effective in our Christian witness to the world?" It was suggested that traits like "willingness to work, togetherness, ambition, frugality and thoroughness" could still set the Mennonite Brethren apart even if the language of their services were changed.[58] Some hoped that a higher education would help the Mennonite Brethren move away from so their ethnocentric biases and broaden the worldview of the Mennonites. Since many of the faculty of MBBC were actively promoting the evangelistic potential of widened horizons, this group viewed the College, optimistically, as a vehicle for change and renewal within the MB community.

During the latter half of the sixties, MBBC became involved in a second issue. The Christian church, in general, was noticing the apparent stagnancy of hymnody in the sixties. Members of the Mennonite Brethren church were also making this observation.

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[56] C.C. Peters for the Committee for the German Language, Report of the General Conference of the Mennonite Brethren Church of Canada, 1961, 234.
[57] C.C. Peters for the Committee for the German Language, 234.
[58] D.D. Duerksen, Mennonite Brethren Herald, 1 Feb. 1963, 18.

Many of the younger generation found the standard hymns to be antiquated and obsolete in light of the contemporary music of Joan Baez, Pete Seeger and Peter, Paul and Mary. Some even found the lyrics of contemporary music to be more expressive of their spiritual feelings than those they duly sang on Sunday mornings. As William Baerg, one of the music professors at MBBC, noted:

> Seemingly the world of experience in our hymnbook no longer overlaps with the existential experiences of the day. This may in part be due to the fact that the majority of hymns existent in our hymnals were written a hundred or more years ago, in a time when all conditions important to living were indeed different from those of this day... at one point in history (these hymns) were very meaningful to the Mennonite people, and rightly so...[59]

Many older Mennonites were dismayed by the apparent disregard of the old hymns by the younger generation. Disturbed by this trend, some constituent members began to blame the College for the shift away from the standard music of the church. It seemed that music students were not returning to their congregations with a restored passion for hymnody after their time at MBBC. This was partly due to the fact that the music professors at MBBC were also enthused about the new MB mission. Baerg offered the following argument to express the new sentiment:

> We cannot exaggerate the importance of hymns that are relevant to the present teaching of the church. It would appear to me that the concept of the role and purpose, or possibly better said, the mission of the church has undergone considerable change. Today we seem to ... speak of services on a broad basis. Our hymnody however has

[59] Wm. Baerg, "In Search of New Hymns", The Voice of the MBBC XVII:5 Sept.-Oct.1968, 14-15.

> not caught up with us on that point... Presently we deem it more important to speak of the mission of the church and its individual member in the community... Presently our Mennonite Brethren conference is appealing to its constituency at large to become involved in the creative process of writing hymns... we need a more contemporary expression if a renewal is to take place within a church. What we need is new hymns for a new day.[60]

The older generation did not appreciate the call for new hymns to replace those that, for them, had become almost as meaningful as the biblical text. Old favorites carried a significance that would not be discarded lightly or without a fight. Complaints and questions about the purpose of the music program were raised quite forcefully. Victor Adrian, president of MBBC (1967-1972), responded to such concerns at the 1967 annual conference. As the newly appointed president, he promised the constituency that the college would be examining the needs of Hymnology in the local churches, particularly at that time when there was also a transition from the German to the English language. Adrian believed there was a need to teach hymns and that it was the purpose of the college to serve the churches in that capacity. He expressed his concerns to the music faculty and pressed Victor Martens, director of the music department to clearly spell out how "the whole music department is to relate to the present and future work of the church". [61] Adrian's questions to the music faculty were to the point and reflected some of the concerns that were openly expressed to him by constituency members. As a result, he questioned if the department was producing the right people for the churches "as they

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[60] Baerg, 15-17.

[61] Adrian, Correspondence to Victor Martens, 21 March 1967.

now exist". For example, by 1967, the College A Cappella choir was of such a high quality that it was selected for a prestigious BBC competition. It appeared to some within the constituency that the emphasis within the music faculty was on professional musical performance rather than on church-related Hymnology. Some members complained that the MBBC music graduates were not adequately prepared to lead the churches in the type of music the churches were accustomed to.[62] In response, Adrian encouraged the members of the music faculty to get out into the churches where they could interact with the current choir directors and pastors to determine the current needs. [63] In this situation, Adrian placed the emphasis on addressing the criticisms the school received from within the constituency. His presidency began a temporary shift in the direction of the school. He attempted to use the College to meet the immediate concerns of the congregations, rather than proactively (and, at times, controversially) anticipating the future needs of the constituency as his predecessors had done, and as some of his colleagues continued to do.

A SUDDEN CHANGE IN DIRECTION:

As the sixties came to a close, Adrian, as the president of MBBC, wished to increase the confidence of the constituency and reduce some of the confusion that surrounded the school. He spoke openly about involving the churches in a more direct way in decision-making for the College programs, rather than allowing the school to set the agenda for the constituency. [64] He stated openly that his vision for MBBC was

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[62] Adrian, Presidential correspondence to letters of complaint received during 1967. One example, letter to Alfred H. Quiring, 14 Nov. 1967.
[63] Adrian, Correspondence to faculty members: Victor Martens, 21 March 1967, Peter Klassen, 26 July 1967.
[64] Adrian, Correspondence to the Chairman of Board of Higher Education and the Chairman of the College Sub-committee, 24 July 1967.

focused on promoting the theological program at the school rather than the liberal arts component.[65] Even though Adrian was deeply supportive of the new mission of the College, he became adamant that MBBC was recommitting itself to training students specifically for church-related ministries, rather than continuing an additional focus on university students.[66]

This decision did not ease the tension surrounding the College, however, it did redirect it. Many of the faculty, who had been major leaders in the development of the school during the earlier part of the sixties, now felt disenchanted with where the school was headed under Adrian's leadership.

J.A. Toews, a major supporter of the Arts program at MBBC, resigned in 1967 when Victor Adrian was chosen as President-elect. Tensions between faculty members at the time intensified his desire to leave. In a letter to the out-going President, J.H. Quiring, Toews expressed concern about the future role of the College.[67] David Ewert, also expressed concern about the tensions at the college immediately after Adrian assumed the leadership of MBBC. The future of the College was put before a commission appointed by the Canadian MB Conference and, as various briefs were presented, it became apparent that, for the first time in many years, there was a division at

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[65] Report of the President. Yearbook of the Canadian Conference of the Mennonite Brethren, 1-4 July 1967, 68-69.

[66] Adrian wrote an article "Are We a Church in Mission?" The Voice (July, 1970), 1-2. Here Adrian articulated some of the same arguments offered earlier by his colleagues. He agreed that the MB church was in a situation "of unprecedented opportunities to share the Gospel with others" because they had been "scattered abroad by economic pressures and opportunities, the urbanization pattern, and the drive for achievement in business, education and professional life." "Our membership is in touch with virtually every segment of society. This is important."

[67] Nafziger, 112.

the College about what kind school MBBC should be.[68] The dissension was centered on the question of whether the College should continue to develop its mission of integrating the liberal arts component with a theological emphasis, or primarily stress preparation for church-related ministries.

When Adrian choose to emphasize the theological program at MBBC during his tenure, he indicated he was being sensitive to the complaints within the constituency. In correspondence with the chairmen of various committees linked with the College, Adrian wrote that he believed they should

> move unitedly ... to give the impression to all our young people coming up in the ranks that we have a good theological program to offer to them ... and that we may thus unitedly encourage them to enter into it. [69]

To accomplish these purposes, Adrian narrowed the flexibility of the core program. Options were limited by the fact that now every student at MBBC was required to take a minimum of two courses in Bible or theology throughout his or her enrollment. This meant that every graduate would have to concentrate forty percent of their course load in theological studies, severely restricting the liberal arts options.

This decision became a major source of contention within the constituency. It appeared that Adrian had misunderstood the majority of the constituency when he shifted the direction of the College. By 1972, the controversy came to a head on the floor of the delegate sessions of the Canadian MB conference, and directly, or indirectly, resulted in the resignation of Adrian and the academic dean. Following the conference, a thorough

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[68] David Ewert, Journey of Faith: An Autobiography (Winnipeg: Centre for Mennonite Brethren Studies, 1993), 175.

[69] Letter from Victor Adrian to Herbert Brandt, D. Neuman (Chairman of the MB Board of Higher Education) and H.R. Baerg (Chairman, College Sub-Committee), 24 July 1967, 3.

review of the future role of the College, by the Board of Higher Education, confirmed the following:

(i) that the Canadian constituency continues to want an institution of higher education.

(ii) that the role of the College will be to offer courses at the Bachelor degree level in theology, arts and music in conjunction with the affiliation agreement with the University of Winnipeg. Such a program will provide the student with an opportunity to integrate his general program education with a theological perspective during his formative years, to face key life issues in an evangelical, Christian College setting and to take the necessary courses towards meeting the Bachelor's degree requirements.

(iii) Such a program will avoid major overlapping with the Bible Institutes and will also provide students with the Bachelor's degree admission requirements for Seminary.

(iv) Future requirement programs are to emphasize the admission of students to degree programs in theology, music and arts on an equal basis.[70]

These changes reaffirmed the new mission of MBBC as promoted prior to Adrian's presidency.

The shifts made between 1967-72 did not go unnoticed by newcomers to the faculty of MBBC. Peter Hamm came on faculty in 1969 and did not expect the problems he was about to encounter. As a former student at the College in the late fifties, he found that the very features, which had appealed to him about the school, were now being questioned. He indicated that "the university connection, the quality programme in

[70] "MB Bible College will 'definitely' continue" Mennonite Reporter Vol. 2, No. 6 1972.

music, the openness to current theological insights, and the less legalistic position on ethical issues" were the result of a great deal of hard work at the College, and it troubled him that these qualities were not unnecessarily questioned.[71] Later training in the social sciences, led Hamm to recognize that much of the tension at MBBC had been a normal "part of the turmoil of social change in which a conservative denomination finds its niche in the world of modernity."[72]

The Mennonite Brethren community's struggle with its identity in the modern world during the sixties had a direct influence on its College. The arguments developed during this period of time to validate the institutional changes at MBBC were part of formulating a theology of change for the constituency. This thesis has demonstrated that there was a definite move to defend the idea that the secular world was no longer to be avoided, but presented a new challenge to the church in its task to bring the gospel to the whole world. Increased exposure to the modern world outside of the parochial limits was encouraged with a new theological significance. Faculty and students, during the sixties, were caught up in the new mission of the MB church.

Observations made by Howard Dyck, a former student (1961-63), upon his return to MBBC as a faculty member in 1969 indicate that students at MBBC were eager to embrace all the opportunities and challenges of this new world. He wrote:

> Today's student at MBBC is quite possibly more keenly aware of the world we live in than any previous generation of MBBC'ers. He (or she) exhibits a profound concern for his (or her) world, and wants to say something to it. So perhaps there's some rather

[71] Peter M. Hamm, Reflections on my Journey (Abbotsford: self-published, 1993), 181.

> naïve expression of faith around here from time to time, but then isn't naivete a relative thing? If there's an impatience with the mistakes of the past, there's also a genuine openness to new, fresh ideas, and an unparalleled intellectual curiosity.[73]

Expressing the sentiments of other faculty members at the College, Dyck concluded his observations with an expression of delight. It was evident to him that the MBBC student of 1969-70 had a renewed sense of urgency and a vital desire to have a relevant faith which could be communicated to the world. Faculty and students were a mutual source of encouragement to each other as MBBC tried to fulfill this vision.

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[72] Hamm, 181.
[73] Howard Dyck, as quoted in H.Swartz "The Class of '69" MB Herald 3 Oct. 1969, 4.

CHAPTER SEVEN

CANADIAN MENNONITE BIBLE COLLEGE IN THE 1960S

INTRODUCTION:

MARKING EXAMS

It is 2:00 a.m. I have finished reading the last of some forty literary essays. It was a drudgery. Marking exams is the worst part of teaching. After some hours of it one doesn't trust one's own spelling of the most ordinary words any more, and one hardly knows what the short story under discussion means, says, intends, expresses, wants to say, seems to say ...

Reading papers is not only drudgery. It is meeting people. It is a conversation, and a taxing one at that. No, I do not sit there in full command of the subject, detachedly underlining mistakes and handing down a verdict in the form of a grade. My mind is active to the fullest; I have a difficult task to perform, I am grappling to understand a person.

That person is not I. He (she) thinks differently and speaks differently and brings a different background to the subject at hand. If I am successful, I will work myself into an understanding of his (her) essay. I will understand him (her) in his (her), but also in his (her) blundering and inexperience. Whatever intelligence, experience and learning I may have, will be taxed fully by this task to understand. It is my defeat, just as my student's I have to conclude: "I just do not understand you; it does not make sense to me." No, I won't give in easily! It must make sense in terms of the person, though it may not make academically negotiable sense, the kind of sense for which alone – alas – I can give a good mark.

My emotions are involved too. I rejoice, debate, frown, am surprised, get

depressed, or sad, or angry. Who would have expected such insight from John or Ruth or Dorothy? What excellent formulation. But how could anyone miss that point and write such nonsense.

Finally, I have to speak back. A grade and few comments may not seem much. I must be concise. What can I do for my student? I would like to make him feel good, but my means are limited. He, himself, has set up the measure. I can return to him his own blessing only. A good word, a good grade, based on falsehood, is not a blessing. My response in word and grade must be truthful, above all. It should also be helpful. It should say what is needed, and that in such a way that it can be received. Even the poorest student should know I have listened to what he has had to say, and that I have given my response seriously, as to a person I respect. Whether I will be able to convey that is a test in itself, both for me and for the student. We may both pass or fail in this examination of life.

Not every good mark makes one happy. I give some good marks with uneasy feelings; they are wrested from me, as it were. I include a caution with them. Often students accustomed to good marks are not open to that which – if heeded – might help them. Often they are not open to the meaning of lower marks than expected; they tend to rationalize. A student accustomed to good marks faces a test of maturity when he (she) receives a mediocre grade.

Some good marks given represent more than academic currency. " A. Thank you for a good paper." We have understood each other. Understanding is the goal of language, of teaching. The remark can remain short; for this occasion I have ceased to be your teacher. The "Thank You" is not a cliché; it is meant fully.[1]

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[1] Waldemar Janzen, "Marking Exams". The College Scroll vol.8, no.1 (10 April 1968) 3-4.

The above article was written, in 1968, by Waldemar Janzen, faculty member at CMBC (1956-1997), and published in the school paper *The College Scroll.* As Janzen described the process of marking essays, he succinctly conveyed the reciprocal relationship of student with teacher at CMBC during the 1960s.

Faculty members did not have the primary voice of authority at the school. Students played a vocal and dynamic role at the College. The individuality of each student was recognized, encouraged and challenged within a community ethos that emphasized mutual respect and responsibility. The majority of the public records of CMBC life include the students' voices and/or their interests. After their time of studies, students continued to play a significant role in developing and supporting the vision of the College as alumni. The volume of material, provided by students during the sixties, provides an insight into the life of CMBC that is personal and direct. The diversity represented by those associated with the College is readily evident in much of their writing.

The following student editorial, for example, presents a vivid picture of student diversity at CMBC and the ethos of the College throughout the sixties:

> *After having been at CMBC for a few months, one soon becomes aware of the fact that the reasons for students' coming here are as varied as the students are varied. Some come with the motive to make another attempt at resolving certain problems, either spiritual or social; some come to get educated (whatever that can mean), either out of their own volition or because of social, parental, or group pressures; others come for no other reason than that they do not know what else they could do after high school.*

Out of a large variety of students and such a conglomeration of reasons for attending CMBC, the college life is born. The question is, will it grow, and how.

It appears that most students have already passed through or at least arrived at that agonizing period of self-awarenss by the time they reach college. Self-awareness is the realization of the value of one's self and the realization that as an individual one must meet life and its issues on an individual and personal, rather than on a more anonymous group level. When we have reached this period of self-awareness, personal growth can occur.

At college, personal growth can continue spiritually, intellectually, and socially. Spiritual growth sometimes appears slow or even non-existent. Many students are not content with the often shallow solutions and answers of the parents and churches to various theological, moral, and ethical problems and issues. Thus the often confusion-creating confrontations with these issues seem to make our spiritual growth lag because of newly created confusion or intensified scepticism. Related to this scepticism is intellectual growth. With the gaining of more knowledge, confusion and scepticism result because the new has not yet been integrated into one's view of life. But spiritual growth can and will occur if one is sincere in the search for truth and a meaningful life.

Social growth should occur simultaneously with intellectual and spiritual growth. Social growth comes with the ability to communicate with others and with the desire to live responsibly with others. Being oneself by no

> *means allows for or excuses petty jealousies, voluntary ignorance, purposeful snobbishness, selfishness, or evasion of responsibility. The individual must try to eliminate such deficiencies of character if a group is to grow. And it is only when there is personal growth that the college life can grow.*[2]

While a number of constituents, within the Mennonite churches that owned and operated CMBC, could have echoed the sentiments expressed in the article above, not *every* member would have endorsed them. The broader constituency of the College represented the same diversity of opinion held by students.

EXPANDING HORIZONS INFLUENCE INSTITUTIONAL CHANGES:

Since its inception in 1947, Canadian Mennonite Bible College carried the clear mandate to educate its students for a life of Christian ministry generally. The College's responsibility to train members for professional ministry was more open, however.[3] As numerous catalogue descriptions indicate, the College tried to fulfill the dual capacity of being both a Mennonite biblical training center and a Canadian college offering a university-approved post-secondary education in a Christian environment. Generally, this two-fold purpose of CMBC resulted in three basic responses from those within its sponsoring Mennonite constituency in Canada.

Some thought that professional theological training should be the primary emphasis of the school and they looked to the College to supply pastors and ministers for their congregations. Frequently, these members criticized the College for not producing enough graduates who were interested in church ministry as their vocational goal. Others

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[2] Jake Goertzen, "Editorial", The College Scroll vol. 8, no.1 (10 April 1968), 9-10.
[3] Waldemar Janzen, "Preparation for Ministry at CMBC", Alumni Bulletin (Fall 1990), 3-4.

in the churches, however, recognized that many members, not just the pastor and choir director, needed theological training to be effective as the church in the modern world. This group argued that the average Mennonite needed a theological education so that each could know what they believed, why they believed it, and how they could influence others to believe it.[4] It was strongly suggested that all Christians were called to the crucial task of witnessing for Christ in whatever place God has placed them and it was expected that the College could prepare them for this task. This group viewed the College, with optimism, as a place where the voice of the Mennonite constituency, and especially that of Mennonite theologians, was being developed for a wider acceptance than ever before in the history of the Mennonite church. [5] A third response focused primarily on the objective of offering a quality post-secondary education that equaled university standards. This group argued that students needed an education that would allow them to lay aside their prejudices and prior concepts of life so they could be fully "enlightened". Receiving such an education in a Mennonite school would hopefully reduce the risk of students losing their Mennonite identity. This group wanted the benefits of a liberal arts university education that would teach students "to think" in an environment that would prevent Mennonite students from becoming fully absorbed into general Canadian society. It was argued that some assimilation was beneficial since there were "certainly favorable characteristics in our Anglo Saxon neighborhood which would enhance our own Mennonite culture" but "wholesale assimilation" should be avoided.[6]

Most students, faculty and alumni were part of the second or third group, which

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[4] Student reflections, CMBC College Scroll, 2, no.7 (4 Dec.1962).
[5] Bill Krueger, College Scroll, XVIII (December 1960), 6.
[6] Students and faculty involved in a panel discussion on "Education – Assimilation or Enlightenment?", 20 Oct. 1961, as reported in the College Scroll, 1, no.2 (November 1961).

favored the development of a larger Mennonite worldview at the school. In 1960, Peter Sawatsky, a 1950 graduate of CMBC, argued the following for the College paper in response to the question "What is the greatest need in the Mennonite church today?"

> Until recently, the rural churches were the backbone of our conference, and the city was a mission outreach. Unless our leadership is such as to make the city churches assume greater responsibilities than in the past, our entire work is in danger of a relapse. Mennonites moving into the cities are entering new and varied vocations, and again it is up to the leaders to be able to give counsel and direction. No longer are we "die Stille im Lande", nor do we feel justified in maintaining ourselves irrespective of what happens on the political scene or in an international crisis. The society in which we live - even the Christian church - extends far beyond our church, and we feel that the Mennonite church has a message of love, peace, and reconciliation to share with a confused, bewildered and lost world. Such leadership must be well trained, experienced and above all, dedicated to God.[7]

The College was expected to produce leaders qualified and capable of meeting the manifold needs of the world inside, and outside, of the Mennonite community.

The College moved through two major phases between 1947 - 1970 in response to the three options listed above. Until the 1960s, a majority of students attended CMBC as preparation for church work and, generally, those promoting the College included statistics that would reassure the first group of constituents mentioned above. For

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[7] Peter Sawatzky, "What is the greatest need in the Mennonite Church today?" College Scroll, XVIII (December 1960), 5.

example, in 1961, David Schroeder (a CMBC faculty member who later became president of the College) gave the following criteria for assessing whether or not the College was doing what it needed to be doing:

> One way of checking whether the College is fulfilling its task is to see what the graduates and ex-students are doing. We are all too conscious of the many things that could be done by CMBC to meet present needs in the world and in the churches, but it is a comfort to know that most of our graduates and some of the ex-students are even now active in many and varied fields of Christian service... Graduates have entered rather directly into Christian service of one kind or another.[8]

Schroeder indicated that over half of the one hundred and fifteen graduates from CMBC by 1961 were directly involved in church work as missionaries, private school teachers and ministers. A number of the remaining graduates were still studying or had already been trained as teachers and nurses prior to attending CMBC and had returned to those positions. At that time, graduates and former students were involved in the following areas:

24 graduates	-	teachers in private Mennonite Bible and high schools
15 graduates	-	teachers in other schools
21 graduates	-	missionaries with the CMC Mission Board
10 + students	-	missionaries with the CMC Mission Board
7 students	-	missionaries with other organizations
26 graduates	-	ordained as ministers.[9]

[8] David Schroeder, "Is the College Fulfilling Its Task?" CMBC Alumni Bulletin (June 1961), 4.
[9] Schroeder, 4.

Schroeder went on to note, however, that many students, were attending the College for just one or two years, and not continuing through to graduation.

These students were coming to college for reasons that necessitated the second option – preparing the Christian students for a vocational or professional life in a secular world. Since this group was growing in number, the college would need to expand its task accordingly. Schroeder believed that, while a suitable curriculum was in place, more could be done.[10] The last half of the sixties, and especially during the seventies, increasing numbers of students continued to indicate, both through their younger ages and vocational aspirations, that they did indeed view their studies at CMBC as a broad and general preparation for Christian life and service, and not as preparation for church ministry.[11]

As the sixties progressed, it became increasingly clear to many that it was imperative for CMBC to offer an education that would suit the purposes of a new generation. To do an adequate job of this task, some in the constituency realized that the College would probably need to become affiliated with a major university. This would make it possible for students to attend the Bible College for a year or two, and then transfer some of their work to another institution for academic credit. In one short decade, CMBC realized the need to expand to adequately fulfill not just two, but three, visions of its constituency.

LEARNING TO WORK TOGETHER - THE CMC AND THEIR COLLEGE

Most of the students who attended CMBC during the 1960s came from church congregations belonging to the Conference of Mennonites in Canada (CMC), the official

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[10] Schroeder, 4.

sponsor of the College. The organization of the CMC was established in 1903 as a means of linking the Bergthaler Mennonite Church in Manitoba with the Rosenorter Mennonite Church in Saskatchewan. The history of the CMC, until the mid-seventies, can be divided into two relatively distinct structural eras that mirror the changes at CMBC. Between 1903-1954, the conference was governed by a very simple associational structure. Elected and appointed committees executed conference matters under the leadership of a three-man executive committee that consisted of the chairman (Vorsitzer), a vice-chairman and a secretary. However, during those fifty years, a relatively entrenched ecclesiastical elite began to control the affairs of CMC and concerns about authoritarian leadership led to a reorganization of the conference into a board structure.

The area of education initiated this structural change. The first discussions related to restructuring began in the early fifties when significant overlap developed in the work of committees related to the area of education, and the first attempt at change occurred in 1953 when conference delegates accepted the recommendation to reorganize the educational committee into a board structure.[12] The reorganization of the educational committee also created the first salaried position in the CMC with the appointment of a half-time field secretary. By 1959, a second constitution describing the board system was put into place for the entire conference. This board structure remained in place till a third constitution, adopted in 1975, reduced the number of boards and ushered in an era that reflected more consultation and cooperation with the congregational members.[13]

Initially, the shift to a board structure in the early fifties did not reduce the strong

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[11] Waldemar Janzen, "Preparation for Ministry at CMBC", Alumni Bulletin (Fall 1990), 3-4.
[12] CMC Yearbook 1953, 63-65.
[13] Jacob Peters, "Changing Leadership Patterns: Conference of Mennonites in Canada", JMS 7 (1989), 167-180.

ecclesiastical influence at CMBC. Many of the board members, and especially its chairman, J.J. Thiessen, held a great deal of power within the CMC community at this time. All of the board members were elders (Reverends) of the church and therefore their authority was largely unquestioned by the constituency. The board held much control of the school until a major crisis in the late fifties brought the faculty into confrontation with the board.

The crisis occurred, in 1958, when the contract with a CMBC faculty member, David Janzen (1948-1958), was not renewed by the Board because of growing concerns about Janzen's liberal theology. The initial board vote on January 14, 1958 was 7-6 in favor of retaining Janzen with two members abstaining. At that point, President I.I. Friesen (1951 - 1959) announced that he would not continue his presidency under those circumstances and the matter was brought to a re-vote at which time the secret ballot resulted in 3 votes for reappointment and 11 against, with one member abstaining. Outrage was expressed by both faculty and students at the college when they learned of the decision to dismiss Janzen. A number of faculty members argued that if Janzen's contract was not to be renewed, neither should theirs be since they shared Janzen's theological views. Faculty and students petitioned the board with appeals that the dismissal would jeopardize the recent accreditation CMBC had arranged with the University of Manitoba, as well as greatly decrease the morale at the college. The board persisted, however, with its decision to dismiss Janzen.[14]

It is unclear what type of theological ideas created the call for Janzen's dismissal. The faculty response to the issue, however, revealed the need for improved board-faculty

[14] Bruno Dyck, "Half a Century of Canadian Mennonite Bible College: A Brief Organizational History", JMS 11 (1993), 204.

relations. A series of special meetings were arranged for the board and faculty of CMBC to meet. The first meeting took place on September 25, 1958 and brought to light a number of issues. First, since Janzen was dismissed for expressing theological views that were considered "liberal" within the CMC, there was the need to decide how much theological diversity would be acceptable at the school. At this meeting, the opinion was voiced that CMBC did not carry the responsibility to convey *only* the accepted theology of the local church members but had the right to expose students to ideas that went beyond a traditional Mennonite worldview. Second, it was recognized the constituency did not fully trust the faculty at CMBC. Generally, the College was judged on the basis of the maturity and quality of its students, and it was argued that this was, perhaps, an inadequate assessment of the school. It was suggested that the time had come for the board to place more confidence in the College faculty. At that time, faculty members were under continual scrutiny and contracts were renewed on a yearly basis. This arrangement needed to be changed to depict a more significant trust relationship between board and faculty. By 1960, the board was discussing three year trial appointments for faculty members, with the decision of tenure to follow.[15] This decision helped to create a greater spirit of co-operation between the board and faculty of CMBC.

A NEW MISSION - GROWING TO FULFILL THREE TASKS

While the board worked at strengthening its relationship with the faculty, it was faced with another major concern. In 1959, CMBC lost its accreditation with the University of Manitoba because of reorganization within the UM and its affiliated colleges. At this time CMBC was considered to be primarily a professional school for

[15] Dyck, 204.

theological studies at the undergraduate level and the university was reassessing its decision to associate with such a school.[16] A number of changes needed to take place at CMBC to prepare it for re-accreditation. First, CMBC's purpose changed from being specifically a place to prepare Mennonite church ministers to offering a "non-professional theological education" on a "college level".[17] Secondly, the courses and structure of the academic departments at CMBC were re-arranged to more closely parallel the UM. Eventually, on October 24, 1964, the University of Manitoba Senate again approved CMBC as a teaching center empowered to offer selected coursed in the Faculty of Arts and Science.[18]

CMBC faculty member, Waldemar Janzen (1956-1997), was a key player in re-establishing an academic association with the UM. Janzen recounted that he, as registrar/dean along with CMBC president, Henry Poettcker (1959-1974), were both confident and daring in their requests to the University. When they approached the UM for accreditation, CMBC had only been in existence for seventeen years and had fewer than a hundred students. Janzen reflected that the University had almost nothing to gain in terms of numerical, political or image benefits when it responded to CMBC with the innovative and creative proposal that the College become an Approved Teaching Centre for the University. On the contrary, the U of M "laid itself open to severe criticism" from the public at large and "within its own academic ranks" when it chose to become associated with a church institution like CMBC.[19]

The Approved Teaching Centre set in place a policy to both safeguard the

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[16] F. Stambrook, "A Sensible Resolution: The Canadian Mennonite Bible College and the University of Manitoba", CMBC Alumni Bulletin (Spring 1990), 7.
[17] CMBC catalogues 1962-63 and 1964-65. See Appendix F for programs offered during the sixties.
[18] Stambrook, 5.

independence of CMBC and to insure the College would be teaching on a post-secondary level according to the academic standards commensurate with the UM. Janzen stated that over the years, trust grew between the two institutions and certain restrictions fell away as the policy was revised throughout the years.[20] This liaison was definitely enhanced by the fact that the school was recognized, by the university, for demonstrating "that it is possible to offer an education that emphasizes logic, analysis and critical thinking as taught in the university, and still to allow the Biblical message to determine the objectives."[21] It was recognized, as well, that some of the students "who have come to the University to complete degree programs in philosophy, religious studies, etc. have been students of an exceptionally high caliber who, but for the University's connection with the (Approved Teaching) centers, would have studied elsewhere in Canada."[22]

The commendations offered to CMBC by the University of Manitoba were not echoed by those in the Mennonite constituency who wanted to see the school reflect the goals of the previous era. This group, which included some former students, continued to judge the College on the basis of its graduates and in comparison to other Bible institutes across Canada. The questions were asked, "Why is it that CMBC doesn't produce evangelists? How come CMBC students don't have that real spiritual zeal? Why is the student enrollment so low at the college?" Menno Wiebe, alumni president in 1965 offered the opinion that CMBC was consciously knocking down the communal criteria for measuring the school. Many at the College were deliberately not interested in "a criteria of success and of numbers and of pulpit oratory" because they believed it was an

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[19] Waldemar Janzen, "CMBC Then and Now", Alumni Bulletin (Spring 1990), 4.
[20] Janzen (1990), 4.

inadequate one. The measurements of numbers, oratory and performance were those held up by the business world and the world of entertainment and it was strongly suggested that CMBC did not want to let the "criterions of the world be the yardstick" for measuring the church or the College. The argument was that it would be possible to produce a "lush growth of spiritual enthusiasts coming from the school who are perpetuators of someone else's enthusiasm" but that this was dishonest. The faith those at the College were interested in producing was not an imposed faith but one that was germinated in the Word of God and grew out of thorough conviction.[23]

Wiebe noted that a few students had been unhappy with their experience at the College when professors would "work at" the faith of their students by exposing them to new ideas and causing them to reevaluate what they believed. Later, however, many of them discovered that, in reality, the type of theological training they had received at CMBC had become the "fertile soil for the growth of a wholesome faith". Students had been given a theology that was able to sustain a faith in Jesus Christ that was able to handle both the successful moments of life and the less successful times. CMBC was interested in producing a faith in its students that would also be able to stand against the popular spiritual movements that were currently available. Wiebe describes this kind of faith:

> Am I talking about an orthodox inflexible, purely dogmatic faith? I certainly hope not ... It is a faith that is able to stand off and evaluate what is going on in the life of the church - and then let it proceed to make us talk, and live, and

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[21] CMBC catalogue reference quoted by Dr. F. Stambrook, Vice President (Academic) at the University of Manitoba in the CMBC Alumni Bulletin (Spring 1990), 10.
[22] Stambrook, 10.
[23] Menno Wiebe, Alumni Bulletin IV, no.3 (March 1965).

> convince our families and our fellow employees that Christ is the determining person in our life... [24]

Both the students and the College were viewed as a prophetic voice within the Mennonite community and in the world at large. To fulfill this mandate, the students were responsible for examining their faith and, as a teaching center, CMBC was obligated to set the direction of the church in the future. The school could not simply be an embellishment of what had always been taught and believed in Sunday School. The Board, faculty and students were given the mandate to work very hard at discovering what God was telling the church at that time and to not be satisfied with borrowing from the resources of a past generation.

LISTENING TO ALL THE VOICES:

CMBC did have a reputation for breaking with the traditions of the past. Both students and faculty, in their own way, challenged the churches to break out of the trends and ideas of previous generations. As noted above, whether rightly so or not, CMBC was often judged on the basis of its graduates and its students. The vocational choices, theological opinions and conduct of students were continually under review by the constituency. Controversy often accompanied the activities and developments taking place at CMBC. A review of the school paper *The College Scroll* reveals that a number of the students were not afraid to initiate changes which threatened the existing Mennonite ethos during the sixties. The first social of the 1961 school year created a significant disturbance. The event was held in early November and was intended to mimic a Halloween party even though it was slightly late.

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[24] Wiebe, 1965.

The party was surrounded by controversy. Not all of the students or the members of the larger constituency agreed that Halloween should be celebrated by Christians. Some were concerned about a school-sponsored social, in general, because partying was considered "worldly". Others just wanted to insure that the College reputation would not be damaged by any of the activities. Not enough concern was expressed for those troubled by the social event. The party was a masquerade social and a number of "border-line" costumes were worn by the students. The comment was made that these costumes "were not seen on the supposedly immature freshman, but on upperclassmen who one might have expected to show more discretion, especially in view of the controversy which already existed". Even a few of those who attended the party and enjoyed the chance to "unravel (their) threads of tension" doubted that the school could boast of the Halloween social "as being up to the level of a good Christian social". Concern was expressed that "quite a few people will be disappointed in the college when they hear about it."[25]

A month later, another social event created a similar opportunity for disappointment. Approximately twenty-five young men from the College went swimming at a municipal pool in early December and were described "as taking the pool in force, acting crazy, out-clowning each other, having some good fights and in general doing everything which the management (lifeguard) insists shouldn't be done." The indiscretions were mainly confined to crude behavior but it was acknowledged that the students did allow their actions to "fall a little below par".[26] Even though the young men participated in some rowdy social behavior, they were able to conclude the evening with

[25] "Social Life at CMBC", College Scroll 1, no.2 (November 1961).
[26] College Scroll 1, no.4 (December 1961).

a religious devotional dealing with their faith. Though it was an awkward effort, the students had attempted integrate their faith with their social life.

A number of articles written by students and included in The College Scroll during the early sixties reveal a latent frustration with an outdated Mennonite ethical standard and so students tried to redefine the limits of what was acceptable behavior. It is apparent that a number of students felt their extended Mennonite communities continued to uphold a moral code that could not be fully supported by their religious belief system. The ethical standards of the Mennonite community were being described in religious terms but did not seem to be logically or philosophically integrated into an explicit Mennonite theology. The questions of "Why do we do what we do?" or "Why can't we do what we want to do?" became a crucial question for many students. Many were willing to rethink the standards that were assumed by the constituency at large. Community prejudices, for example, became open for examination much to the chagrin of the members who preferred the status quo.

A social event in 1962 revealed to some students that at least one prejudice needed to broken down. The First Mennonite Church, a CMC congregation in Winnipeg, had the reputation of being a "liberal" church. Many of the rural CMC churches, in particular, consider the members of this church to be too "worldly" in theology and conduct. The CMBC students were invited to play volleyball with the young people from the First Mennonite Church in October, 1962. The event triggered the following response:

> For some reason we at the college have not been able to make good contact with various city young people. Our public relations in this area is negligible.

> The problem presumably lies in the area of communication. We do not fellowship together, and we do not understand each other The church took the initiative. Getting together informally helped to break down some of the prejudices standing between the two groups. The important thing is that we get together. In the past we have been guilty of formulating hasty, biased, and unfounded judgments on some of the youth groups in the city. Because of this they see us as pious, egotistical Pharisees. Let's break down these walls that pervert our Christian fellowship. [27]

The prejudices ran in two directions. The more progressive, urban churches and the generally more conservative, rural congregations did not understand each other well and did often hold strong negative opinions of each other. The fact that many rural students were attending an urban centered school increased the opportunity for the two differing parts of the Mennonite community to connect and created a hybrid of Mennonite thought at the College. This way of thinking was not necessarily mirrored in the local congregations to which the students returned. The dichotomy led many to view the College as a place where traditional ideas and values were being challenged. Some appreciated the challenge, others did not.

Throughout the 1960s, CMBC struggled to please the differing elements within the community. Students, faculty, and alumni all worked at negotiating the transitions taking place. Members of the student government at CMBC in 1960 indicated that it was difficult to represent a student body of ninety-five because of the varying ideas the students held. This was magnified when the opinions of all the others involved with the

[27] College Scroll 2, no.5 (6 November 1962).

school were to be kept in mind. The school council felt a sense of responsibility to the students, as well as to the faculty and the constituency. A council member stated that it was frustrating and problematic to try to "satisfy a group of ***progressive*** students, an ***accomplished*** faculty, and a ***conservative*** constituency".[28]

The faculty of the College was well aware of these three groups and the interaction between them. College president, H. Poettcker indicated that the students, faculty and constituency were all a vital part of the school, and the College existed for the benefit of all. When disagreements erupted between any of the three groups, it could become difficult to determine whom to please. It was especially problematic when displeasing the constituency meant that they would withhold financial assistance as a means of communicating their dissatisfaction.

Dissatisfaction was plentiful. Poettcker wrote the following to describe the situation:

> Critics on every side describe the school as too radical or too conservative, as too ambitious or too cautious, too mediocre or too innovative. One group suggests the faculty just dig in and hold the line. This they say, is the only way that we will manage to safeguard some of the values which our brotherhood, our churches, have acknowledge over the past decades.[29]

Poettcker suggested that these concerns raised a number of basic questions: "Whom does the school serve - the constituency, the student, or both?" "How should the College serve - by holding the line or letting the majority opinion determine specific actions?"

Poettcker asked the alumni of College to join in the discussion because he felt that

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[28] College Scroll XIII, no.2 (April, 1960), 4. Emphasis is mine.
[29] Henry Poettcker, Alumni Bulletin X, no. 2 (December 1970), 7.

they, in a real sense, belonged to two of the groups. They had been students at CMBC and therefore had an intimate knowledge of how the school operated, and they were now a part of the larger constituency. Poettcker believed that the alumni's concerns and criticism were necessary for future decision making at the school.[30]

Alumni did speak out. While some were critical, the overwhelming number of past students were supportive of the school for various reasons. Lydia Harder, a 1964 graduate, wrote of her experiences as being "the richest years of her life". She came to the college after teaching for two years. She, like many of the other students during the early sixties, was in her early twenties and had some post-secondary education when she attended CMBC. Lydia appreciated the luxury of reading and studying, and the opportunity to reflect on "many questions of ultimate reality in the midst of a community that treasured both worship and critical thought".[31] CMBC became a safe place to ask questions, including those she had about her home community. Her experiences within the Mennonite community had led her to become disillusioned with the local church. The time of study at CMBC did not pull her further away from the Mennonite church but, rather, helped her to see the community in a new light and to recognize her responsibility to it. Lydia wrote the following for an alumni publication:

> I came to believe that God had chosen to communicate with us not outside human mediation but through the human Bible and the human church. The possibility that God, in grace and love, could then also use me became a promise that brought meaning and purpose to my life.[32]

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[30] Poettcker, 7.
[31] Lydia Harder, Alumni Bulletin 32, no.1 (Winter 1993-94), 17.
[32] Harder, 17.

The sentiments expressed by Lydia Harder were echoed by others.

Generally, it seemed that the students spoke of the College as having invigorated a sense of individuality and purpose in them. Many students during the sixties felt repressed by the conservative nature of their Mennonite communities and were eager to break out of traditional conformity. Some of their peers were choosing to leave the Mennonite church to associate with other denominational groups. Bernie Wiebe, a young Mennonite man, was in middle of making this move when he made the decision to attend CMBC. Bernie and his wife were working for the Gideons, an inter-denominational group and worshipping with a Baptist congregation when Bernie felt the need for further biblical training. The Baptists offered a scholarship to their college in Minnesota however Bernie decided he should explore his Mennonite roots rather than becoming more involved in the Baptist church. He chose to attend CMBC in order to do so.[33]

As an older, married student, Bernie quickly became involved in the ministry activities of the school. At times he would travel with a small group to visit small congregations outside of Winnipeg and occasionally these trips meant he would be away from his own congregation on Sundays. At one point he was criticized for missing a communion service at his own congregation because he was away ministering to another church. Bernie thought it was silly that he would be chastised for missing a local church service especially when he had been busy working at another. He resisted conforming to standards he could not agree with and responded to the criticism by publicly exploring the issue of conformity for the College paper.

According to Bernie, student conformity took place in a number of ways at

CMBC in 1960. He described four situations where he thought students had been confronted with the issue of conformity. First, he noticed that a number of the College women began to openly wear makeup at the school after some American female visitors to the school did so. Most young women attending CMBC did not wear make-up because it was frowned on by many in the constituency. Bernie suggested that sometimes strength lay in numbers - "It is easier to become a non-conformist together with a group than as individuals".[34] Second, he observed that some of the older students had been quite persuasive in getting other students to choose roller-skating rather than church on a Sunday night. He noted that " there were those present who heartily disapproved (of the roller-skating) but wouldn't risk being called non-conformists by telling them so".[35] Third, Bernie noticed that the very students who had criticized him for missing church on a Sunday night were now joining other students in skipping church to do their homework on Sunday nights. Bernie then described hearing a mother speaking a very poor German to her young child. He noted how parents at CMBC were trying to teach German to their children even though they didn't know the language well because they were following the custom of some Mennonites to speak German in the home. Bernie closed his article with the warning that Christians could not afford to compromise with "the group" or with "the world" for an instant.[36] In a day of conformity, Wiebe put out a challenge to other students at CMBC to be non-conformists.

This message of non-conformity was repeated by other students at CMBC. Ernie Klassen, a student in 1960, noted that conformity was a "persistent threat to the

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[33] Bernie Wiebe, "By Chance and by God's Grace"in Why I am a Mennonite: Essays on Mennonite Identity, Harry Loewen, ed. (Kitchner: Herald Press, 1988), 31.
[34] Bernie Wiebe, College Scroll XIII, no.1 (Feb. 1960), 2.
[35] Wiebe, 2.

individual". While there was a great deal of comfort to be derived from "being in line with the set standards of a group", conformity was to be kept in its "rightful place". Unreasoned conformity, Ernie argued, was dull and dangerous within a Christian community because it was this that "numbs the brain, stifles all creative possibilities, and obstructs the working of the Holy Spirit in the individual and therefore also in the group".[37] Both Wiebe and Klassen were able to express their sentiments openly at the College because CMBC was a place where non-conformity could be practiced, in moderation at least. The students were asked to engage in critical thought and to explore the possibilities of their individual creativity under the sanction of God and the church.

College standards reflected this emphasis on the development of the critical-minded individual. Throughout the sixties, the CMBC catalogue stated that "the priesthood of all believers" lay behind both the purpose and the basic orientation of the school. The College sought to provide a Christian context in which each student would find their individual, personal faith deepened and strengthened. The College consciously chose to give students the principles for making ethical and vocational decisions rather than a handbook with specific rules and mandates. To reflect this choice, the College called the school standards "principles" rather than "regulations". Some students felt that "dead-set conformity" was avoided in this way. One student argued that this method worked, however, only as long as students didn't begin to "confuse principles with prejudice and try to force these on others". The only way to avoid the extremes of conformity were seen as stemming from "respecting the rights of others and showing interest in others as persons and not regarding non-conformity as necessarily a sign of

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[36] Wiebe, 4.
[37] Ernie Klassen, College Scroll XVIII, no. 2 (April 1960), 2.

neurotic disturbance."[38]

College publications written during the sixties reveal that students and faculty were continually challenging one another to respect and tolerate others. Self-critique was held up as a continual process for both the institution and the individual students. Comments like, "There is a constant need for our vision to become clearer, so that we may fulfill our task faithfully - the task of presenting God's love to man in word and action" are frequently found.[39] The institution struggled to be respectful of both the community and the students. The College attempted to "stick with the Conference and its churches" it sought to understand the constituency's criticisms of and aspirations for the school. CMBC consciously tried to resist moves into "academic circles and ambitious strivings that would cut (its) close ties to the community of faith".[40] At the same time, the College tried to gain the confidence of their students by being aware of the world and context in which the younger generation were growing up. Those working at the College did not believe they were breaking the ties between the generations represented in the pew and in the classroom but that at many points they were helping to mend them. CMBC carried a conscientious mandate of inviting students to CMBC " for serious study, for genuine conversation, and for building Christian fellowship".[41]

The principles of diligence, respect and love were upheld for all at the school. The graduates of CMBC were presented with the responsibility of respect for others. In the early 1960s, CMBC alumni had to transfer their credits to other schools to receive a recognized degree. For years, many students attended Bethel College in the United

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[38] Klassen, 2.
[39] Henry Dueck, "A Greater Vision" in the College Scroll, XIII, no.1 (Feb. 1960), 5.
[40] Waldemar Janzen, "Canadian Mennonite Bible College – 25 years of ministry to youth" in Mennonite Reporter, 24 July 1972, Section A, 4.

States for a year to obtain a BA degree. Bethel College had a reputation of being a fairly "liberal" Mennonite institution and, therefore, some CMBC students approached the school with a certain trepidation. This fear was directly challenged by some students and faculty at CMBC. An editorial in the school paper describes the situation in the following way:

> Some would say "CMBC students attending Bethel rush through their courses so as not to "get their feet dirty". What is there about us that gives the people the impression that we have a "holier-than-thou attitude". Is there a trace of self-righteousness? Do we consider that people who are in any way different from us cannot possibly be true Christians? And woe betide anyone that tries to tell us something about theology that we don't know. We've been to Bible college... Two types of students are not needed: those who have all the answers to Bethel's needs and those who, because they consider themselves superior, withdraw to the point of remaining uninvolved even in SCF activities. The tendancy is to forget that Bethel's ideals are as high as any school's and that its faculty is dedicated to the cause of Christian education. The school must not be judged by those students who do not share the convictions of those who administer and support it. In every location, in every group of people there are differences, and adjustments need to be made. But before condemning - or condoning - careful and prayerful evaluations must be made.[42]

Those who left CMBC continued to be challenged by the College ideals of respect

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[41] Janzen, 4.
[42] Editorial, College Scroll XIII, no. 1 (Feb. 1960), 5.

for each individual, tolerance and good will toward fellow believers.

These ideals were prevalent in the Bible Week Lectures held in the fall of 1963. C.J. Dyck, noted American Mennonite historian, came to CMBC to address the students and constituency on the matter of the Christian Calling and Ecumenicity. Dyck challenged the audience with the idea that the New Testament abolished the laity and designated all believers as "priests". He argued that *all* Christians had been called to be ministers in the world. Dyck asked the Mennonite community to rethink its ideas of seperateness when he stated: "Our problem is not so much to get people into the church, but to get the church out into the world. We must penetrate the world and its social order". This would not be accomplished, he argued, if Christians continued to disagree with each other and condemn one another. Dyck is quoted as saying:

> All schism is sin. Division makes a mockery of the gospel. No Christian ever breaks communion with a fellow man. We do not recognize the faithful ones by building ecclesiastical bulwarks and firing broadside at each other.[43]

Despite the warnings, criticism and division were continual realities for those related to CMBC. Both the students and the faculty of the College encouraged a spirit of openness and universality that was subject to constituency critique.

One student expressed her discomfort when she went home at Christmas in 1966. Expecting to enjoy a quiet holiday, she was surprised by the response from members in home church. She found it hard to share her college experiences because those at home did not seem to understand her, or her new Christian colleagues, and were quick to

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[43] Helmut Harder, "Some Reflections from the Bible Week Lectures", College Scroll, 3, no.5 (Oct. 31, 1963), 6.

criticize them severely. She felt alienated from her home that seemed to have "more form than spirit", hindering her from having a meaningful religious experience.[44]

Similar sentiments were expressed by other students. A fellow student wrote an insightful piece entitled "Looking Into a Mirror" in 1967 for the college paper:

> Often we laugh at the type of questions people ask concerning CMBC. We think they are 'out to get us'. They usually begin their questions by saying, "We hear that ..., is that right?" And so one tries to explain what really happened, possibly making it sound as if it really wasn't anything at all. They also ask straight forward questions, such as, "Are the students living a dedicated Christian life? Are they seeking God's will for their lives? What is their relationship to the Lord?" These are questions hard to answer, yet to leave them unanswered would not be right either. So one stereotypes and says, "Yes, in most cases there is a genuine concern, first of all, to know what our relationship to God is, and secondly, to seek the will of God for our life." An answer like that makes them happy and me too, hoping that the interrogation period is over. But it isn't. Another favorite question asked is, "What type of entertainment do the students participate in?" Why does he have to ask that question? Again I try to explain but get caught in a snare. I'm not as slick or as smooth as some people are in explaining the reasons <u>why</u> for all the types of entertainment in which we participate. Possibly our field of entertainment is too wide. Maybe we should evaluate some of the things we do or to which we go. Or maybe we should ask ourselves if what we

[44] Annie Janzen, "Christmas 1966 wasn't easy", <u>College Scroll</u>, 6, no. 11 (Jan. 17, 1967), 5.

> do corresponds with what we say; does it help to establish a closer relationship to God, or is it only a personal matter? I am confused about this last one, I really am.[45]

The confusion was not unique to this one student. Others were equally unsure of themselves in an environment that forced them to individually examine the implications of their religious faith. CMBC did not have a uniform, static ideal of the Christian life that the students could embrace.

The opposite was considered to be the genuine expression of the Christian faith. Diversity and variety were valued. Peter Fast, a new faculty member to CMBC in 1966, expressed this opinion clearly for the college students in 1968:

> Members of Christ's body are not like a collection of stamps in an album, not like a specimen of a species nor like a member of a class or a club. Similarity is not the feature which characterizes the body of Christ, but rather diversity. Health is not determined on the basis of conformity. Uniformity is not the return of the temperature of the body to normalcy and thus a sign of health. On the contrary, uniformity of the members of Christ's body is a sign that the body is sick, critically sick! Chances of survival are slim unless one injects several shots of diversity to bring down the fantastically high temperatures of uniformity.[46]

The religious devotion of the students at CMBC was not going to be strait-jacketed. Nor were students to view their spirituality as something they could measure. Rather, they were to let the internal reality of their Christian faith become more significant than their

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[45] Werner Froese, "Looking into a Mirror", College Scroll, 6, no.12 (Jan. 313, 1967), 3,4.
[46] Peter Fast, "Christ in a Strait-jacket?" College Scroll, 7, no. 1 (March 15, 1968), 1.

outward signs of devotion.

The kind of faith experience, advocated for at CMBC, took time to develop. Some students recognized that it would take more than one year of studies at the College to "do justice to oneself and to the school".[47] Those who attended for less than two years often found they had more questions than answers when they left. These students often had the poorest impression of the College and, as one student expressed it, "do its public image the most harm by making remarks such as 'They study all about the Bible but not the Bible'".[48] Some students recognized that during the first year academic expectations were fairly high, and it could feel like nothing was being gained in a spiritual sense. During the second year, however, the learning began to become an internal part of themselves, as they continued to live together in community dormitories and were exposed to more teaching and discussion. Additional time and the relatively small student numbers allowed for a significant level of student-student and student-teacher relationships to occur.

A student in 1967 described the dynamic experience of living within the CMBC environment:

> That CMBC is a Bible College, a Christian community, increases the opportunities, as well as the responsibilities. This is especially as with respect to discipline. The absence of strict laws can be abused, but if viewed responsibly, it both tests and increases the individual and communal maturity. It is more desirable and acceptable to share in mutual admonition and to be subject to internal discipline than to be

[47] E.Lorne Brandt, "Reflections on a CMBC Experience", College Scroll, 7, no. 2 (Apri 4, 1967), 5-10.
[48] Brandt, 8.

subjected to an outside law.[49]

This student reflection went on to describe CMBC as a place where intellectual, personal and spiritual development were all part of his three year stay. He left the College hoping that he had been able to give something in return.

A fellow colleague, Ruth Heinrichs, left the College at the same time enthused with her new found knowledge. She was eager to get back to her home church to make a difference. No longer satisfied to be part of the *status quo*, she was ready to address what she had come to believe were theological inaccuracies. It was likely that, in doing so, she would create a great deal of controversy. She was particularly upset that children in Sunday School were being spoon-fed "bunk" – "I feel uneasy about telling stories such as the creation, the fall of man, Noah's ark, the plagues and the Red Sea as though these events literally happened". [50] She disliked giving the children the impression that God had been reduced to the status of a magician, and she described her vision for Christian education in the church:

> We must also keep in mind that primary aged children read books about evolution now-a-days! ... It would help if some of these 'literal' ideas were given a good shaking up in high school Sunday School classes. This is usually not the case. In my experience, at least, the lessons took on a moralizing tone. There was little theologizing (presumably because it would upset too many people). Instead, the lessons had to do with generalities such as why we shouldn't go to war, hate our neighbor or smoke. (I am not saying we should not discuss these things.) But too

[49] Brandt, 9.
[50] Ruth Heinrichs, "Down with our Sunday Schools!", College Scroll, 8, no. 7 (Nov. 27, 1968) 1-4.

> much of a good thing is bad, as the saying goes. The result of this type of training is clearly seen when the young people go into the world. The Sunday School dogma just doesn't stand up. I have seen too many young people decide to dismiss the whole Bible as "myth". There they are, with nothing... We need a "new curriculum" for the young people of our day. I admit that I don't know the answers but I feel that something has got to happen if the Church is too grow in our time... Surely, I am not the only one with this problem![51]

These ideas, or the enthusiasm with which she would approach the COM constituency of which she was a part, were not welcomed by all. Once again, some members would accuse CMBC of filling students heads with "strange ideas" that did not conform with what they considered to be "right theology". Other members would take the time to respond to the opinions held by the students, recognizing that many influences were responsible for shaping students' thoughts.

A few months after *The College Scroll* published Ruth's ideas, the school paper printed a response from a well-known CMC preacher, D.D. Klassen, together with a reply from Ms. Heinrichs. Klassen indicated that it had been a shock to read Ruth's article but he did not condemn her for her thoughts. Offering what he hoped would be helpful, Klassen added:

> One would expect this kind of an approach from a young university student who is constantly confronted with so-called "higher criticism" of the contents of the Bible. Apparently she is in her first year at college and has not yet found her bearing in the controversial issues in contemporary theology. Or else she has

> read only books by negative theologians who take pleasure in tearing down, but give no specifics on how to build positively... Behind Ruth's desire to have a discussion of the problem, it seems to me, is a hidden plea for help. And where else than in our Bible College, in the midst of a group of Bible-believing professors, could this help be found? [52]

Klassen encouraged Ruth to get help from her professors in her interpretations of the biblical texts and offered a few insights of his own, closing his letter with the reassurance that he intended to be her "co-helper".

Ruth responded to Klassen's letter by clarifying some of her earlier opinions. For example, she maintained her position that the Genesis account of creation was "an imaginative representation of an abstract truth", rather than a historical account dictated by God to a secretary. It seems likely that some of Ruth's ideas were encouraged by the instruction she received at CMBC because they represented reliable, contemporary theological opinions. No CMBC professor was publicly associated with her views, however. Perhaps the dismissal of David Janzen, in 1958, discouraged other faculty members from expressing the newest theological propositions in a public forum, for fear of being misunderstood by more conservative members. Ruth, as student, did not fear the community's reprisal and, while acknowledging that she had stated her views "rather crassly" at first, she believed it was important to "be blunt and to the point and quit all this pussyfooting around".[53]

As noted above, many students, like Ruth, were not afraid to get involved in community discussions even if they created controversy by doing so. Faculty members,

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[51] Heinrichs, 3,4.
[52] DD Klassen, "Letter to the Editor" The College Scroll , 8, no. 9 (February 21, 1969) 1-4.

on the other hand, were not getting involved in public theological debates but focused on the need for those associated with the CMBC to work together, despite the differences. In 1969, the College acknowledged that CMBC students, in general, held an anti-institutional attitude even though they were well aware of the financial support the broader constituency offered.[54] Faculty felt the need to respond. They chose to invite students, alumni, educators and ministers to participate in a faculty evaluation of the entire CMBC program. The findings of this "self-study" were compiled into a "white paper" and presented to the College Board. Essentially, those involved with the College and its constituency recognized that the "educational system was under siege" and the CMC "church was under stress". CMBC, as a part of both institutions, would need to continually review its work to assess its relevance within the community.[55] This would not be an easy task in light of the diverse College constituency.

The wide spectrum of the CMBC constituency was discussed by Rudy Regehr, (who joined the College faculty in 1962) in 1968. At that time, the CMC had 21,500 members spread throughout 140 congregations. While the majority of members were typically middle-class Canadians, moderately wealthy, and educationally above the national average (and still climbing), the student body continued to represent a variety of Mennonite groups - each of which stressed particular cultural distinctions. There were the "Russlaender", "Kanadier", "Sommerfelder", "Alt-Kolonier", "Danziger", "Paraguayer", "Displaced Persons", as well as a few students from non-Mennonite backgrounds. This cultural variety was compounded by the theological diversity of

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[53] Heinrichs, "Reply to DD Klassen" College Scroll, 8, no. 9 (Feb. 21, 1969), 4-6.
[54] Reflection on 1968-69 included in Twenty-five Years: A Time to Grow CMBC 1947-1972 (CMBC publication, 1972).
[55] Rod Sawatsky, College Scroll 7, no. 6 (Nov 1968).

members within the CMC.[56]

According to Regehr, there were four general groups that played some role in the constituency as the sixties came to a close. Arguments and opinions came from the "Conservatives", the "Fundamentalists", the "Liberals", and the "Anabaptists". The Conservatives tended to approach the Bible in a literal and/or allegorical way and distrusted other interpretations. Fundamentalists were looking for a pure church where the "social gospel" and "modernism" would have no place. The Liberals, on the other hand, were equally as dogmatic as the Fundamentalists but their idea of the pure church was one of broadmindedness, which "very often would rather shatter a person's simplistic faith then to let him (or her) live meaningfully with it". The Anabaptists, meanwhile, were looking for a theological option other than the old "Fundamentalist-Liberal" choice. [57]

The latter option, according to Rodney Sawatsky (faculty member between 1967-1970) formed the general theological approach at CMBC leaned during the 1960s. The orientation of many of his colleagues at the College could not be described as Conservative, Fundamentalist or Liberal. Generally, all critical methodologies were employed to assist in gaining the meaning of biblical text. Sawatsky stated that, during both his time as a student and a faculty member, he heard little debate about Liberalism or Fundamentalism at the College. He credits the faculty for being able to apply a both/and approach so that aspects of each perspective were affirmed while they simultaneously rejected the weaknesses of both. In this way, they were able to adapt and contribute to the formation of an approach to the Bible that was appropriate for that time,

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[56] Rudy Regehr, "Who are the Constituency?" College Scroll, 8, no. 7 (Nov.27, 1968), 7-9.
[57] Regehr, 8-9.

while reflecting on its meaning for the Anabaptist/Mennonite tradition.[58]

Throughout the sixties, CMBC increasingly allowed for and encouraged intellectual, theological, and social diversity, without being polemic. The community was intentionally shaped by the idea that all members of the constituency were equal, and needed to be respected as such. Though criticism abounded, the College managed to remain deliberate about allowing students, faculty, board members, alumni, and other church constituents, to set its direction. Each student was encouraged to be a responsible participant in their world, regardless of the professional or vocational choices they made. While one quarter of all CMBC alumni continued to be involved in church-related professions by the end of the sixties, the majority were spread over a wide spectrum of society. The College had actively faced the challenge of meeting three tasks. CMBC provided a university academic standard while preparing a variety of Mennonite students for a responsible life, within their church community and within secular society.

[58] Rodney Sawatsky "Words Becoming Flesh", The Church as Theological Community, Harry Huebner, ed. (Winnipeg: CMBC Publications, 1990), 15-16.

CONCLUSION

TWO WAYS OF OPENING WHILE CLOSING

The earliest Anabaptists, some of whom became known as the Mennonites, were well known for their radical attempts to be the true Christian church during the time of the Reformation. Historically, the Mennonites continued to place value on sixteenth century Anabaptist ideals that, originally, were an attempt to restore the church to the early Christian model, as described in the New Testament. Generally, the Mennonites believed an authentic Christian needed to have both "correct" theology and a disciplined, ethical lifestyle. When the Mennonites migrated to new "homelands", they quickly developed "in-house" education to instill these ideals in their children. Pragmatically, all children needed to learn to read so they could eventually participate in the communal, lay study of scripture. Offering this necessary education in a parochial setting helped to shelter their young from any contravening influences and perpetuated a lifestyle that met Mennonite ethical standards. Even though the religious leaders assumed responsibility for education, each member of the community was expected to support and reinforce the communal worldview. Education within the Mennonite community played a significant role in maintaining the religious, social and cultural ethos of the community.

The Mennonites migrated from Switzerland, South Germany (Palatinate) and the Netherlands to Prussia, Poland, Russia and North America between the sixteenth century and the twentieth century. They were attracted to the regions where they could establish religious and educational autonomy. This meant that the countries they settled in often favored a political or cultural climate that allowed for the independence of minority groups. Other ethnic minority groups in Prussia and Russia, for example, enjoyed the

same freedom as the Mennonites did. A climate of pluralism did not concern the Mennonites as long they were allowed to live in separated communities, removed from the direct influences of the state. This isolation meant that Mennonites became insulated by various boundaries – geographic, cultural and religious. At a number of points in Mennonite history, circumstances would begin to erode the communal borders. In response, some Mennonites would choose to relocate to another region where they could remain relatively autonomous, while other members would stay and reestablish suitable community boundaries.

The latter process called for an appropriate balance of opening and closing. Usually social, economic or political changes in the larger environment would require some degree of adaptation within the Mennonite community. The community needed to be open to needed information and responsive to societal influences while resisting total assimilation into general society. Parochial educational institutions became the vehicles through which change could be introduced to the community while maintaining continuity with community interests.

Historically, there was a typical correlation between the economic stability of a Mennonite community and the development of their educational institutions. Groups of Mennonites migrated to a number of new regions, including Prussia, Poland, Russia and North America, between the 1530s to the 1940s. Usually, the period of time after a migration was a time of struggle for the Mennonites. The first years would be largely dedicated to the development of an economic base – one that was often agricultural. Educational endeavors would be meager till the communities became more fully

established. When an adequate level of financial means within the community was in place, educational facilities could be developed.

Initially, Mennonite education emphasized religious training along with the teaching of elementary rudiments. Additionally, communal educational institutions would train members for work within the developing Mennonite communities. Mennonite educational facilities in Russia between 1870 –1920, for example, supplied workers for the growing community businesses and industries while providing a parochial environment in which Mennonite students could learn the necessary skills.

The need for alternative occupations was created by two major factors. First, a land shortage in the Russian communities of Chortitza and Molotschna meant that not all young people could become directly involved in farming. New opportunities would need to be found if all were to be adequately employed. Second, expanding communities needed workers with new business and industrial skills for the development of a stronger economy. Increasingly, students were leaving the Mennonite communities to seek an education that would train them for jobs other than farming. Groups of Mennonites quickly organized to develop communal educational facilities so that students could acquire the education they needed, at home. Mennonites wanted to keep their students within the community while responding to the need for alternative employment skills. The further development of Mennonite schools, in Russia, allowed the community to be open to additional economic opportunities while safeguarding communal boundaries. The community was able to expand and develop with the benefits of higher levels of education, while minimizing the possibility of students assimilating into mainstream society.

The history of Mennonite educational institutions in Canada between the 1870s and the 1960s repeats this basic pattern. Increased levels of education and the development of a variety of educational facilities enabled the Mennonite communities to be open to new social and economic opportunities while simultaneously bearing the responsibility of keeping Mennonite students within the bounds of community life. The means by which this was achieved varied from institution to institution but, essentially, parochial schools were able to maintain some level of Mennonite identity for their students.

Mennonite schools played the crucial role of opening their community to increased social and economic opportunities while preserving a Mennonite identity, thereby closing the doors to complete assimilation into larger society. New parochial educational facilities helped the supporting constituencies adapt to the changing challenges of the contemporary world while providing a sense of continuity for the Mennonite community.

During the 1960s, the two Mennonite Bible Colleges in Winnipeg, Manitoba played this vital role for their constituencies. Increased opportunities existed in the broader Canadian society, and a specific type of higher education was needed to take advantage of the professional and vocational openings. As in the past, the new occupations appealed to a growing number of urban Mennonites who were no longer involved in the rural, farming industry. The Colleges wished to follow the historical mandate of offering the new, necessary education within a Mennonite institution, however, not all members agreed that the changes were needed.

The colleges required the financial cooperation of many members if they wished

to continue or to expand their programs. They could not afford to alienate a good number of their constituents. It proved difficult, however, to convince members with less formal education, who still adhered to the traditional, rural lifestyle as the "correct" Mennonite way of life, to whole-heartedly support Colleges that were openly associating with a modern, urban worldview. These members did not recognize the need for further development of the liberal arts programs at the schools. They wanted the schools to continue with their first priority as a biblical training center for all members, and particularly for those who would become church workers. The Colleges needed to communicate the new needs in terms that all members could relate to. They looked to the past values of their communities and reclaimed some of those ideals to help them do so.

Some of those involved with MBBC called for the continued "unity of the brotherhood". All members were asked to be supportive of *their* school in a corporate effort. It was essential to have a MB college that was able to instill the MB focus on conversion in its students. This emphasis acquired larger significance when it was articulated as part of the biblical mandate to "Go into all the world". Mennonite Brethren were encouraged to reach out to secular society so that all could hear the gospel and be given the opportunity to convert to Christianity. Faculty members, as active and respected leaders with the MB church conference, were largely responsible for articulating the theological arguments that justified broader association with general Canadian society. They argued that the task of the College was not just to train those who would participate in church work but to educate students to enter *all* avenues of the world boldly and confidently, to "build the Kingdom of God".

CMBC reclaimed the historical Anabaptist ideal that valued the participation of

each member of the church, not just the religious leaders. The "priesthood of all believers" was highlighted as students, faculty and board members worked together in a new, less authoritarian style. The earlier moves to decentralize the authority structure within the CMC were motivated by issues related to CMBC and the college continued to be an active forerunner in listening to the voices of many members, including those of their young people. All were to work together to serve the CMC constituency so that each member could fulfill his or her Christian responsibility to the world.

The Colleges played a vital role in their communities because they allowed for discussions, about the new responsibilities of Christians, to take place within an "open" and yet "closed" environment. Students, at both colleges, were stretched to think about their childhood faith in more rational and logical terms, within an environment that affirmed the values of a common religion. A Mennonite/Christian environment allowed some students to feel safer about articulating their biblical and/ or theological concerns. A university setting, alone, might not have provided the same level of security. While the students were exposed to a critical, academic examination of their religious belief system at the College, commitment to community life helped to keep their faith viable.

The previous two chapters demonstrated that the two Colleges accomplished the same vital purpose of "opening while closing" in unique ways. MBBC relied on the expertise of an accomplished faculty, many of whom had recently attended a number of respected theological institutions to complete higher academic degrees. The faculty was well-prepared to tackle questions within the classroom, and in the church community. Their frequent visits to constituency churches allowed other members to hear some of the theological arguments students were hearing in the classroom. There was a general effort

to bring all MB members to a consensus on particular controversial issues. As illustrated in chapter six, the Canadian Mennonite Brethren Conference, in 1968, was one occasion where a record number of MBs gathered to discuss possible changes to some of their ethical standards. Faculty members were actively involved in these discussions and others throughout the decade.

On the other hand, faculty at CMBC did not carry the same level of authority within the CMC community. The moves, during the fifties, to shift communal authority away from a powerful elite leadership made it was unlikely for another group to have a prominent status just a few years later. All the research related to CMBC during the sixties revealed that a familial attitude existed between the faculty and the students. The voice of the students was clearly present in all the public records of the school. Students at CMBC represented a diverse constituency and the "in-house" college discussions reveal that there wasn't any concentrated effort to get students to agree on particular issues. All students were given the freedom to develop and promote their individual ideas.

The students' opinions could be challenged by other members of the community but a general rule existed that each member was to be treated with respect and dignity. A fitting illustration is included in chapter seven. A female student voiced a critical biblical interpretation in the school paper. A well known and respected CMC pastor read the article and choose to respond to the young woman. The College paper printed his kind but direct reply to her comments, along with an answer from the student. The exchange revealed an equal dialogue between two members of one constituency. Even though the pastor was considerably older and held a high profile with the community, his young,

female conversation partner was able to participate fully. The College served as a context in which this equitable conversation was able to take place.

As this thesis has demonstrated, church colleges can play an interesting role in the life of a religious community such as the Mennonites. The two Colleges included in this study were able to call their constituencies to critique and commitment. The schools served the vital role of "opening" an ethnocentric community to critical self-examination and the recognition that it was important for Mennonites to get involved in their larger Canadian society. At the same time, MBBC and CMBC were also able to ignite a sense of purpose and commitment in their members, thereby "closing" the community with a renewed corporate identity. The Mennonite Brethren united to "build the Kingdom of God" while the Conference of Mennonites in Canada embraced the challenges of dialogue and diversity within their community. Though the Colleges made similar institutional changes to open their constituents to the professional and vocational opportunities during the 1960s, each community was invigorated by a unique vision for the future.

POSTSCRIPT:

Both of the Colleges included in this study continue to operate in the 1990s. In 1992, MBBC was renamed Concord College. The College confers two four year undergraduate degrees in Bachelor of Christian Studies (BSC) and Bachelor of Church Music (BCM). The BSC enables students to complete two degrees concurrently with the University of Winnipeg in four or five years. This allows students to plan their undergraduate work at Concord with a double concentration: Christian Studies and

another chosen minor within the university. Courses at Concord College are to provide a foundation for reflection on Christian worldview and faith perspectives as students complete a Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Science degree at the University. The Mission Statement of Concord College in 1997 indicates that the college was adamant about offering a university education that integrated high standards of academic excellence with the formation of Christian character. This kind of education was to prepare students to be servant leaders in the church, the professions and the marketplace.[1]

CMBC also stresses that its association with the University of Manitoba supported its commitment to academic thoroughness. The College continues to be an Approved Teaching Centre of the UM and through this arrangement CMBC students can receive up to two years of university credit for courses they take at CMBC. The College affirms the idea that education best serves the Christian church when the pursuit of truth is undertaken with the rigor and discipline of the university's academic standards at CMBC. These academic values are offered in the context of a Christian community atmosphere that can prepare students for effective participation in the life and work of their congregations, as well as in the context of their vocation, their community and the ecumenical and cross-cultural world.[2] As well, both Concord College and CMBC continue to state that their college communities foster a view of life that was consistent with their Anabaptist/ Mennonite heritage.

Since 1977, a new development has strengthened the presence of Mennonite higher education in the city of Winnipeg. A Chair in Mennonite Studies was started at The University of Winnipeg to expand options for students who were interested in

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[1] Concord College In Association with The University of Winnipeg pamphlet used for student recruitment. 1997.

pursuing Anabaptist-Mennonite studies. In 1980, a group of Mennonite businessmen and educators in Winnipeg, had a vision for future developments in Mennonite education. This group, known as the "Friends of Mennonite Higher Learning", came up with the idea of starting a Mennonite co-operative effort in post-secondary education in Manitoba. The proposed model integrated the work of CMBC, MBBC and Steinbach Bible College. In this model each college would have continued to teach Bible, Theology and Missions according to their own perspectives, while the Liberal Arts programs would have been a joint effort. A Mennonite Business Association would have funded the establishment of 10 endowed chairs in liberal arts, along with an endowed operational fund for a complete liberal arts complex (library, gym and music hall). Apparently, the Colleges would have been able to cut their college budgets by 30-40% and enhanced their effectiveness considerably.[3]

The proposal of the "Friends of Mennonite Higher Learning" was not accepted, however. After meeting with representatives from the Conferences supporting the colleges, it became clear that the groups would not be able to work together in this joint effort at that time. The project was shelved, but not forgotten. In 1982, members of the "Friends of Higher Learning" applied for a Charter with "degree-granting powers" for the potential college. Then, in 1985, the University of Winnipeg opened a Mennonite Studies Centre with the expressed mandate to develop a new Mennonite under-graduate studies program. In 1988, after thorough research into university-college relations across Canada, a program known as Menno Simons College (MSC), was accepted into an affiliation

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[2] CMBC catalogue 1996-1998, 18-19,

[3] Menno Simons College: Education for International Development, The University of Winnipeg, (November 1988), 2,3.

agreement with the University of Winnipeg.[4] Beginning in the 1989-1990 academic year, MSC initially offered two programs of study along with the university: Social and Economic Development Studies and Conflict Resolution Studies.[5] Like the two other Mennonite colleges in Winnipeg, the philosophy of education at the new college was rooted in the value system of the Anabaptist/Mennonite community and sought to foster good citizenship in their students who could then meet the needs of the day.[6]

In 1996, Menno Simons College joined CMBC and MBBC to form the "Mennonite College Federation Committee (MCFC). For the next two years, six representatives from each college met regularly to discuss the possibility of bringing the three schools together in a joint educational effort. An earlier task force (1994-1995) had determined that there was strong constituency support for greater co-operation among the colleges, as long as the current colleges could maintain their own identity. On January 8, 1998, representatives of CMBC, Concord, and Menno Simons signed a memorandum of understanding with the government of Manitoba which provided financial assistance for the joint educational effort, and enacted a charter giving it university-level status.[7]

The co-operative venture became known as the Mennonite College Federation (MCF) and, beginning in September 1999, MCF will be offering its first courses. Academic options will include a Bachelor of Arts degree with a broad variety of majors, Music programs, Church Ministry programs, and pre-professional tracks. Promotional material indicates that MCF will seek to create a living, dynamic learning community that

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[4].MSC (1988), 2,3.
[5] MSC Development and Conflict Resolution Calendar. Used as a supplement to The University of Winnipeg calendar. 1992-1993, 21.
[6] MSC calendar, 1992-1993, 14-15.
[7] CMBC Bulletin (Spring 1998), 14-15.

integrates career and faith by offering an academic education along with Christian values and beliefs.[8] Rationale for the federation of the three colleges argues that their co-operation will consolidate "the Mennonite witness in higher education" and significantly increase the number of Mennonite students and other students "who will benefit from an Anabaptist Christian college education because of the greatly expanded academic program".[9] It is believed that the college constituencies will be better served by a cross-disciplinary dialogue that can address the critical issues currently facing the church, and by the additional financial support from the government.[10] This financial assistance will help the colleges build a strong educational enterprise while retaining control of the Federation.[11]

As in the past, the Mennonite community has been able to find the necessary means to accomplish its educational purposes while maintaining control of their expanding parochial educational endeavors. The resistance to a joint venture of the Colleges, which was noted in the forties as well as the eighties, was substantially overcome so that the three groups could begin to work together. As in the past, government involvement is tolerated (and welcomed by some) as long as educational autonomy remains possible. The Canadian pluralistic value system is viewed as an opportunity to strengthen the distinctive identity of the Mennonites in Manitoba. As one of many ethnic groups in Canada with a deep sense of "religious" and "cultural" identity, the Mennonites seek to offer an education grounded in value systems which, while affirming a traditional heritage, also provides a setting in which personal growth and

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[8] MCF advertisement, Canadian Mennonite (4 January 1999), 28.
[9] Concord College and Mennonite College Federation, September 1997, 4.
[10] Concord College and MCF (1997), 4.

change is nurtured. An education that is based on the high standards of university-level studies is believed to encourage mature and responsible community participation.[12] The students graduating from this new Mennonite educational institution continue to carry the mandate to make a positive difference in their world, as did those who attended the Colleges in Winnipeg during the 1960s.

[11] The Manitoba government is assisting the Federation with an annual operating grant of $2.6 million for a minimum of 3 years. CMBC Bulletin (Spring 1998), 14.
[12] Rationale for Government Bursuries for Students at Religiously-affiliated Post-secondary Institutions and to Theological Students, Draft 2, MBBC files, 1979-1980.

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APPENDIX A
MENNONITE BRETHREN DISTINCTIVES

A statement first released in 1876 outlined the reasons for the separation, and the ways in which the Mennonite Brethren believed they differed from the other Mennonites:

> Main Reasons why we left the General Mennonite Churches
>
> Since our people's behavior and lifestyle is very inconsistent with existing confession, we profess the Mennonite church to be spiritually dead. Because of this we feared the judgement of God and the disfavor of our highest authorities, since we immigrated to Russia as a quiet and peaceful people. Convicted by the Word of God, we exposed their godless life. To some extent we were excommunicated by them and to some extent we departed from them. Therefore, we found it necessary to establish our own church. Then the Church Council of the Molotschna and Chortitza Mennonites (except for two elders) tried to expel us not only from their own organization but also from the colonies. Nevertheless, we survived as a church under God's protection and the favor of our highest authorities, and enjoyed freedom under the same, with a few exceptions.
>
> Main isssues on which we differ from the other Mennonites
>
> 1. Accepting Members into the Church
>
> Among other Mennonites baptism and acceptance into membership is based on a memorized confession, without examination of the condition of the heart and, as a rule, occurs between the ages of eighteen and twenty. In our church an individual may only be accepted into membership on the following conditions

a) If the individual has given a voluntary testimony of his faith to the gathered church;

b) If the church is persuaded on that basis that the individual has experienced a real change of heart, such as Jesus referred to in John 3: "Unless one is born anew," etc.

c) If the individual's daily life is consistent with the confession.

2. Baptism

Whereas other Mennonites baptize by pouring, among us baptism by immersion is the only mode. The candidate is baptized in clean garments to prevent offence against indecency.

3. a) Among other Mennonites only harlots and occasionally drunkards are excommunicated. By contrast, the godless, the scoffers and the greedy are tolerated. Among us, not only are those named above excommunicated but also all those who are living disreputable lives.

b) Among other Mennonites excommunication is usually for only fourteen days, whereas among us the time depends on improvement in behaviour and genuine remorse about wrongdoing. The excommunicated person may attend the worship service to hear the Word of God, and he is admonished to repent and return to God and the church.

APPENDIX B

The educational background of the faculty of the Mennonite Brethren Bible College (MBBC) during the 1960s reflects a wide range of theological and liberal arts exposure. For example, by the school year of 1965-66 faculty members had received advanced training in the following diverse institutions.

CANADIAN UNIVERSITIES AND NON-MB LIBERAL ARTS & THEOLOGICAL COLLEGES

The University of Saskatchewan,
University of Manitoba,
University of British Columbia,
University of Western Ontario,
United College (Winnipeg),
Waterloo University College,
Emmanuel College (Toronto),
Victoria University (Toronto).

AMERICAN THEOLOGICAL COLLEGES AND SEMINARIES

Tabor College (MB, Hillsboro, Kansas),
Theological Seminary (Philadelphia),
Luther Theological Seminary (Minnesota),
Southwestern Baptist Seminary (Texas),
Fuller Theological Seminary (Winona Lake, Illinois).
Wheaton College (Minnesota), Westminister
Central Baptist Seminary (Kansas City),
Chicago Lutheran Theological Seminary,
Evangelical Lutheran Seminary (Waterloo),

AMERICAN AND EUROPEAN UNIVERSITIES, COLLEGES AND ACADEMIES

Williamette University (Oregon),
University of Minnesota,
Nordwest Musikakademie (Detmold, Germany). [74]
San Fransisco State College,
University of Minnesota,

[74] MBBC school catalogue, 1965-66, 4-6.

APPENDIX C

ATTENDANCE AND DEGREES GRANTED AT MBBC – 1959-1969

				Church Denomination		Degree Granted				
Year	**Attendance**	**Men**	**Women**	**MB**	**Other**	**BRE**	**BTh.**	**Music**	**BD**	**BA**
59-60	128	70	58	124	4	17	20	2		
61-62	199*	97	102	194	5	12	12	3		
62-63	204**	115	89	200	4	15	10	3	1	
63-64	180***	93	87	170	10	22	9	5	1	
64-65	164****	91	73	147	17	17	13	1	3	
65-66	157	98	59	144	13	15	10	1	2	
66-67	152	90	62	134	18	10	12	1	2	5
67-68						9	6	1		7
68-69						6	8	1	2	1

* 54 part time ** 58 unclassified/evening *** 21 part time **** 9 special/ part time

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Source: Mennonite Quarterly Review 1961-1968

APPENDIX D

ATTENDANCE AND DEGREES GRANTED AT CMBC – 1959-1969

				Church Denomination		Degree Granted		
Year	**Attendance**	**Men**	**Women**	**Mennonite**	**Non-Menno.**	**B.Chr.Ed**	**BTh.**	**Music**
59-60	99	52	47	99				
61-62	145*	83	62	105	40	7		3
62-63	163**	84	79	162	1	10	3	
63-64	163***	91	72	163		13	2	4
64-65	175	98	77	172	3	11		2
65-66	122	58	64	120	2	17		2
66-67	125	55	70	123	2	18	1	2
67-68	95							
68-69	97	50	47					

* 42 evening/not college grade ** 6 not college grade *** 24 not college grade

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Source: Silas Hertzler, "Attendance in Mennonite and Affiliated Colleges". Mennonite Quarterly Review 1961-1968.

APPENDIX E

CURRICULUM AT MBBC 1960-61

Courses of Study

The educational program of our College is not the result of blind groping, nor of arbitrary decision. It has been determined in part by present day educational standards, in part by the great variety of interests, ambitions and needs of our young people, and in part by the demands of the constantly expanding ministry and educational program of our Conference.
We are definitely challenged to "enlarge the place of thy tent ..., lengthen thy cords, and strengthen they stakes". Many of our Christian young people are willing to accept this challenge. That brings us under the sacred obligation to provide them with the opportunity for an adequate preparation that will be both general and specific enough to meet this challenge.
Following a careful analysis and consideration of the various determining factors, the Board of Education has authorized the faculty to offer the courses of instruction listed below: (p. 18)

The Theological Degree Course
Graduation requirements: a) Second year university standing
b) 102 hours of credit.

The Religious Education Course
Graduation requirements: a) First year university standing
b) 102 hours of credit.

The General Bible Course
Graduation requirements: a) Junior Matriculation or its equivalent
b) 102 hours of credit

The Sacred Music Course
Graduation requirements: a) Junior Matriculation
b) 102 hours of credit.

Program of Instruction at MBBC in 1960-61

Division of Biblical Studies

A. Old Testament - OT History, OT Poetry, OT Prophets (3 courses) and Elementary Hebrew

B. New Testament – Life of Christ, Book of Acts, Pauline Epistles, General Epistles, Johannine Writings, Introductory Greek and Greek exegesis (2 courses)

Division of Systematic Theology

Bible Doctrine, Christian Ethics, False Cults, Christian Evidence, MB Church Principles and Polity, Biblical Theology, Systematic Theology (4 courses).

APPENDIX E (continued)

Division of Practical Theology

A. Preaching and Evangelism – Evangelism (2 courses), Homiletics, Hermeneutics, Expository Preaching, Pastoral Theology
B. Missions – History, Mission of the MB Church, Missionary Principles & Methods, Missionary Survey (2 courses).
C. Christian Education – Principles of Christian Education, Educational Work of the Church, History of Religious Education, Christian Education Of Children, Christian Ed. Of Youth, The Christian Home, Psychology.

Division of Historical Studies

History of Missions, Early Church History, Medieval Church History, Reformation Church History, American Church History, History of the Mennonites, History of Medieval Europe. History of Christian Ed.

Division of Liberal Arts

German Language and Literature, English Language and Literature, History of Philosophy, General Psychology, Introductory Sociology, Biblical Languages.

Division of Music Studies

Notation Theory, Hymnology, Harmony, Ear and Sight Training, Conducting, Music Appreciation, History of Music, Counterpoint, Form and Analysis, Composition, Choir, Applied Music Courses.

Schedule of Courses

Generally, each semester required 1 OT course, 2 NT and/or Theology courses, 1 Language/ Music, 1 History and 1 Liberal Arts course.

CURRICULUM AT MBBC 1969-1970

Objectives

It is the purpose of the MB College of Arts to provide opportunities for its students to secure a broad and liberal education in an atmosphere which acknowledges Jesus Christ as Lord. The religious emphasis is not incidental in the institution but it is made to pervade the entire spirit of the College. Personal guidance by a competent faculty help the student to engage in learning experiences which develop a broader outlook on life, a keener sense of personal responsibility, and a refinement of abilities to enable worthy service. (p. 6)

APPENDIX E (continued)

Program of Studies for a BA Degree

Program I
The General B.A. 15 courses offered in conjunction with the Waterloo Lutheran University - (3rd year courses taken off campus)

Curriculum Divisions

A. Humanities - English, Other Languages, Music, Philosophy, Religious Studies
B. Social Sciences – Economics, Geography, History, Politics, Psychology, Sociology
C. Mathematics and Sciences – Biology, Chemistry, Geography, Geology, Mathematics, Physics.
D. Others – Business, Physical Education

Program II
The General B.A. with Pretheological Options - as above; include Hebrew & Greek

Program III
General B.A. with Music Options - 20 courses (equivalent to 17 full courses)

APPENDIX F

CURRICULUM AT CMBC 1960-61

The Canadian Mennonite Bible College seeks to provide an opportunity for earnest young men and women to prepare for Christian service as ministers, missionaries, youth workers, teachers, choir directors, social workers, and as workers in other fields of Christian endeavor. Its aim is: 1) To provide a Christian atmosphere in which the spiritual life of its students may become deeper and more firmly established. 2) To lead students to a fuller knowledge and appreciation of the Bible as the inspired Word of God, and as man's authoritative role in faith and practice. 3) To help students to understand and appreciate the tenets of the Mennonite faith. 4) To emphasize the importance of a fully consecrated life, revealing itself in a willingness to do God's will in whatever field of service to which He may call. 5) To provide learning in a Christian atmosphere for those desiring to receive University accreditation. (CMBC Calendar, 10)

Courses of Instruction

1. Bible Department
   OT History, NT Introduction, Acts and the Early Church, Life of Christ, Corinthians, OT Prophets, Gospel and Epistles of John, Romans, Pastoral Epistles, Galatians, Revelation, Prison Epistles, Ephesians, James and Hebrew, Peter and Jude, Greek, Psalms and Wisdom Literature.

2. Theology
   Greek Exegesis, Bible Doctrine, Systematic Theology, NT Theology, OT Theology, Apologetics.

3. Christian Education Department
   Evangelism, Devotional Life, Christian Ethics, Homeletics, The Family in Present-Day Society, Youth Work, Pastoral Work, Principles of Christian Education, Methods of Christian Ed.

4. Church History
   Our Christian Heritage, Church History, History of Missions, Mennonite Missions, History and Work of General Conference (1960), Modern Cults

5. Languages
   German Language and Literature (3 courses), English Literature, English Composition, Greek and Hebrew

6. Social Science Department
   Psychology, Sociology, Philosophy, Mental Hygiene, European History

7. Music Department
   Voice, Harmony, Counterpoint, Music Theory, Sightseeing, History.

APPENDIX F (continued)

CURRICULUM AT CMBC 1968-1969

We seek to serve the ***student*** by providing a Christian context in which personal faith may be found, deepened, and strengthened, in which a fuller knowledge of the Bible as the inspired Word of God may be gained, in which the principles which help the student to make ethical and vocational decisions may be laid down, and in which the student may develop the necessary methods and skills for Christian service. (12)

Programmes of Study

1. Christian Education
   - Bachelor of Christian Education (3 yrs.)
     Bachelor of Theology (4 yrs.)
2. Sacred Music
   - Dipoloma of Sacred Music (3 yrs. & Gr. X standing)
   - Bachelor of Sacred Music (3 yrs & ARCT standing)

Course Requirements for the Degree of Bachelor of Christian Education

First Year - NT, OT, Church History, Arts Elective, Elective
Second Year - NT, OT or Biblical Language, Church History, Elective, Elective
Third Year - NT or Biblical Language, OT, Theology, Elective, Elective

Bachelor of Theology requires 4th year – 5 courses selected with Academic Dean

Program of Studies in Sacred Music

First Year – NT, German, English, Theory, Choral Studies, Applied Studies.
Second Year – OT, Theology, Music History, Theory, Choral Studies, Applied Studies
Third Year – Bible Elective, Non-music elective, Fine Arts, Theory, Choral and Applied Studies.

Courses of Instruction

Department of Religion

Bible – OT Introduction, NT Introduction, OT Prophets, Writings of Luke, Letters of Paul, General Epistles, Writings of John, OT Literature, OT Seminar, NT Seminar

Theology – The Church in Mission, Christian Education, Practical Theology, Biblical Theology, Church and Society, NT Theology, Systematic Theology

Church History – Introduction to Church History, Mennonite Studies

APPENDIX F (continued)

Department of Arts

Greek, Greek Exegesis, German (2 courses), English Literature, History, Music in Western Civilization, Philosophy, Psychology, Sociology, World Religions, Anthropology, Sociology (The Family), Fine Arts, Journalism.

Department of Music

Theory, Sightseeing, Harmony, Counterpoint, Instrumental Techniques, Ear Training, Choir, Conducting, Form and Analysis, Pedagogy, Composition.

Every student must enroll in one of the two basic courses and choose his course load for each year in accordance with the respective course requirements, regardless of the number of years of study at the College that he anticipates. Adjustments in course requirements may be made by special faculty decision where warranted, but such adjustments are exceptional and are made only on the basis of compelling reasons.