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The History and Philosophy of the Christian Doctrine of Nonresistance in the Brethren in Christ Church

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THE HISTORY AND PHILOSOPHY OF THE CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE OF
NONRESISTANCE IN THE BRETHREN IN CHRIST CHURCH

A Thesis
Presented to
the Faculty of
Western Evangelical Seminary

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Divinity

by
John A. Fries, Jr.

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

At a time when many nations are being destroyed by conflicts, "brush wars" and "police actions," it is observed that in the United States numbers of young men are opposed to war. They are demonstrating against what they believe to be "the immorality" of war. Historically, their position is not a new one, for from the time of the early church there have been Christians who have demonstrated the Christian doctrine of nonresistance at the cost of their very lives.

The Brethren in Christ Church, from its inception in the mid-eighteenth century, has joined the ranks of "historic peace churches."¹ One of the basic doctrines which it has taught and lived is the Christian doctrine of nonresistance. It has demonstratively lived this doctrine at great cost. The injunction of the word of God says, "And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength. The second is this, thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" (Mark 12:30,31, ARV).

¹In July, 1940, the various branches of the Mennonite, Friends, and Brethren in Christ Churches organized what was known as a "Conference of Historic Peace Churches."

This is an injunction which the Brethren in Christ feel must be truly lived to rightly fulfill the word of God.

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

The gravity of the present world crisis has focused on the position of nonresistance with regard to the Christian task of evangelization in a strife-torn world. In the light of the contemporary picture every young man in America, and other nations of the world, faces the possibility of being drafted into the armed services. This is a picture which the Brethren in Christ Church feels is diametrically opposed to the New Testament concepts as taught by the Lord Jesus Christ. It feels that mainstream Protestantism has been historically grounded in the Constantinian concept of an imperial Christian government. This view, it holds, was later elaborately substantiated by the Augustinian philosophy of "Just wars" and characterized by such arguments as, ". . . when God commanded wars He did not act in cruelty, but in righteous judgment."² Although a number of mainline churches have continued to teach this position, there are others who are critically reviewing this conflicting attitude. This may be seen in the contemporary news media as young men radically take a stand for peace

²Guy Franklin Hershberger, "Nicene and Post Nicene Fathers," War, Peace and Nonresistance, ed. P. Schaff, New York 1901 (Scottdale, Penna.: The Herald Press, 1944), p. 65.

and give either religious or secular reasons for their position. It is also seen in the symbolization of peace by young and old, the demonstration marches, sit-ins and organizations vying for peace.³

In contrast to mainline Protestantism and the present peace demonstrators, there has been a minority tradition which has seen nonresistance as a vital part of the Christian testimony to the world. The sixteenth century Anabaptist embodied this position.

The early Mennonite Church (an Anabaptist group),⁴ therefore, was a brotherhood of regenerated believers who accepted the word of God as the only rule of faith and practice. Great emphasis was placed on discipleship: a literal obedience to the commands of Christ, and faithfully following his steps Among the doctrines which they stressed were freedom of conscience, the separation of church and state, and nonresistance They believed, indeed, that the state was necessary and ordained of God for the maintenance of order in the unregenerate society of this world. But it also believed that according to the Scriptures the Christian could have no part in the use of force, whether as a soldier in the army or as a magistrate in the civil government. The use of the sword, the exercise of vengeance and the taking of human life were strictly forbidden to the disciple of Christ.⁵

It was this Anabaptist position which gave guidance to the structuring of Brethren in Christ thought and life.

³The author refers to the "broken cross" symbol and the "V" formed by the index and second finger as is demonstrated by small children and adults alike. These have been commonly adopted across the nation as peace symbols.

⁴Author's explanation.

⁵Hershberger, pp. 73-83.

It was the purpose of this study to make an intensive investigation into the historical development of the doctrine of nonresistance in the Brethren in Christ Church from its initial beginning to the present time. The doctrine itself is closely tied to the history of the denomination. Corollary to this study was included an investigation with respect to the changing philosophy of the doctrine of nonresistance as it related to the history of the church.

JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY

In his History of the Brethren in Christ Church, Dr. Asa W. Climenhaga preserved the history of the church until 1940. His historical account included the doctrine of nonresistance.

There were other writers in the church such as Bishop E. J. Swalm and Dr. Martin H. Schrag who have written on selective segments of the doctrine, but none has written a history of the doctrine in the church. In view of the intensive interest which young people have in present world events and in light of the draft status of America's young men, the history of this doctrine is pertinent to the Brethren in Christ Church.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The scope of the study was limited to the history and philosophy of the doctrine of nonresistance in the

Brethren in Christ Church. It did not seek to justify the doctrine, nor was it to be an apology for this doctrine of the Brethren in Christ Church. Other doctrines of nonresistance were referred to, but this study centered in the Christian doctrine of nonresistance; therefore, other doctrines were not studied in detail.

METHOD OF PROCEDURE

The materials used in this study were gathered from two sources: documentary and personal interview. Histories and biographies were studied in an effort to glean pertinent information and facts. Other sources which were searched were official records of the denomination in the archives of the church at Messiah College, Grantham, Pennsylvania; the published minutes of the denomination; hymnals; catechism; Manual of Doctrine and Government and pertinent information from the denominational magazine, "The Evangelical Visitor."

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Christian Doctrine

A doctrine practiced by those who recognize Jesus Christ as their Lord, delineated in this manner to distinguish it in contrast with other doctrines which are non-Christian.

Nonresistance

Both a doctrine and a way of life. It involves

not only the Christian attitude toward war, but it also gives direction to many other areas of human relationships. It repudiates acts of violence which seek the injury of others, whether committed by individuals or groups, and whether physically, socially or psychologically inflicted. It is characterized by selflessness, sacrifice and service to others, even at the cost of life, rather than take the life of another person. It is a testimony of peace and good will toward all men.⁶

General Conference

A representative body through which the denomination acts to carry out its objectives. Supervisory, legislative and policy-making powers are vested in the General Conference (hereinafter referred to as "Conference").

Peace Committee

A permanent committee appointed by the General Conference of 1939 which was to promote programs, literature and to keep the issue of nonresistance alive in the church.

Relief and Service Committee

The new name given the Peace Committee by the General Conference of 1941. The name was changed because its duties went beyond the promotion of peace

⁶Manual of Doctrine and Government of the Brethren in Christ Church, 1961 (Nappanee, Indiana: Evangel Press, Revised in 1968), p. 32.

and peace negotiations. The new demands included war relief, refugee work and civilian public service.

Labor Union Committee

Appointed by the 1938 General Conference of the Church. It was appointed to formulate a tract or booklet declaring the attitude of the church toward labor unions. This committee later became the Industrial Relations Committee.

STATEMENT OF ORGANIZATION

Chapter 2 contains a brief historical survey of (1) the European background of the Brethren in Christ Church; (2) the transfer of the church to America; (3) its confrontation in America; and (4) its formation in America.

In Chapter 3 were reviewed (1) nonresistance in the early primitive church; (2) contributing Confessions of Faith; (3) Confessional comparisons; (4) forms of Pacifism; and (5) the development of the Confession of the Brethren in Christ Church.

In Chapter 4 was examined the involvement of the doctrine of nonresistance in the world between the years 1870-1971.

Chapter 5 contained a summarization and conclusion of the research.

The Bibliography follows Chapter 5 with references to (A) Biblical, (B) Primary, and (C) Secondary sources.

The Appendix which follows contributes additional material that could not be incorporated into the text but is of such a related nature that it is profitable for further study.

Chapter 2

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE BRETHREN IN CHRIST CHURCH (1770-1870)

EUROPEAN BACKGROUND OF THE BRETHREN IN CHRIST CHURCH

The issues which were involved in the birth pangs of bringing forth a new denomination were sociological, philosophical, cultural and religious. For the Brethren in Christ, it involved the larger thought and practice of American Christianity in the 17th century in which faith and culture were identified with one another. This is contrasted to their Pietistic and Anabaptist backgrounds inherited in Europe, which faith and culture were in contrast to one another.¹

The beginning of the story is in the year 1682 when thousands of Germans migrated to Pennsylvania.² By the time of the American Revolution it is estimated that there were 100,000 Germans resident in Pennsylvania. Among the religious groups which came to Pennsylvania

¹Martin H. Schrag, "The Brethren in Christ Attitude Toward the World" (unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, Ann Arbor, Mich.: University Microfilms, 1971), pp. 1-8.

²Clifton E. Olmstead, History of Religion in the United States (N.J.: Prentice-Hall Inc., 1960), p. 114.

were some significant sectarian groups of Mennonite and German Baptist brethren which were deeply influenced by Pietistic and Anabaptist movements prior to leaving their fatherland.

There were other later migrations, some of which were Swiss immigrants who joined the German residents.

In 1750 a group consisting of about 30 Mennonite families in the Canton of Basel, Switzerland, after a long period of persecution, . . . decided to immigrate westward. One company including John and Jacob Engle and others . . . settled near the Susquehanna River in western Lancaster County, Pennsylvania in early 1752.³

In order to understand properly the doctrine of nonresistance in the Brethren in Christ Church, it was necessary to investigate their European heritage.

WAR AND PERSECUTION

The period which contributed to the early history of the brethren first coming to America was fraught with war, persecution and continued stress. Kent described the climate for religious growth at that time as ". . . an impossible situation in Europe."⁴ The state churches also contributed to this stress situation by insisting upon infant baptism. They enforced this doctrine with

³The Mennonite Encyclopedia I, A-C (Hillsboro, Kansas: Mennonite Brethren Publishing House, 1969).

⁴Homer A. Kent, 250 Years . . . Conquering Frontiers, A History of the Brethren Church (Winona Lake, Indiana: The Brethren Missionary Herald Co., 1958), p. 28.

persecution.⁵ At this time William Penn and his associates were advertising religious freedom in his colony.⁶ This opportunity added fuel to the fire which had been stirred in many a bosom by personal letters from America which described the land and the unlimited horizons which were available to all.⁷ Contrasted to this, men were weary of the thirty years of war and disease that had ruined much of Europe, and particularly Germany. In Switzerland there seemed to be no hope before them. The governments insisted on drafting men into the army, an experience which members of these churches sought to avoid at the cost of their property being confiscated or even their lives being destroyed.

TRANSFER TO AMERICA

This setting formed the backdrop for the declaration which Saltzman records:

Be it hereby known that several of our people here in the Bishopric of Basel territory have decided to travel to America. Among these are several poor ones who appealed to the ministers and deacons of the church in the above Bishopric for support. Therefore it has been decided to help as follows:

⁵Asa W. Climenhaga, History of the Brethren in Christ Church (Nappanee, Indiana: E. V. Publishing House, 1942), pp. 24-25.

⁶Kent, p. 33.

⁷Bernard E. Fogle, "Martin Boehm, Co-Founder of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ" (unpublished work, Dayton, Ohio: mimeographed by the Historical Society, Pennsylvania Conference of the Evangelical United Brethren Church, 1956), p. 4.

Hans Burkholder	180
Jost Schonauwer	180
Barbra Schanck	160
Catdrina Baumgarner	120
Madlena Neuenschwander	100
Total	740

Which is seven hundred forty Kronen.

Which sum the ministers and deacons resident at the above Bishopric have delivered and paid to Ulrich Engle in cash money and shall be turned over to the above mentioned persons . . . when they arrive in America in Benzylvania [sic] and by the blessings of God they or their families can accomplish it, to secure and to pay the above sums with the condition, however, that this is well arranged and shall be for the poor there. As an aid to remembering this at all times we have made two copies of this, the same word for word, and the ministers and deacons have signed as follows:

Made in Munscher [sic] One Thousand Seven Hundred and Fifty-Four and written Aberill 19, 1754 [sic].

Preachers (Diener Zum Wort)

Deacons (Eltiste Diener)

Peter Oberlly

Peter Ramseier

Cristen Aschliman

Hans Hahberger

Hans Engell

Peter Ramseier

Hans Domi⁸

Ulrich Engel, who was mentioned as one of the Mennonite families immigrating to America, was the father of Jacob and Hans, the founders of the Brethren in Christ Church. This group had certain financial underwriting by the churches at home in Switzerland. They also looked forward to the promises of William Penn which spoke of land prices beyond their fondest dreams. The rate was 5000 acres for 1 lb. sterling and a quitrent of one

⁸H. S. Bender, Mennonite Quarterly Review XXXIV, No. 4 (Scottsdale, Penna.: Mennonite Publishing House, 1960), pp. 308-9, cited by H. Royce Saltzman, "A Historical Study of the Function of Music Among the Brethren in Christ" (unpublished Doctoral dissertation, Ann Arbor, Mich.: University Microfilms Inc., 1964), p. 6.

shilling for each acre.⁹ The place where they were going to settle was not a problem for them because other families from the peace churches had formed communities at Germantown and in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania.¹⁰

The journey to America on the rough Atlantic was a frightful experience of sickness, disease, some cruelty, storms, and the loss of one entire vessel which contained personal possessions.¹¹ Only one child, Jacob Engle, survived the journey.¹² The group landed in America in 1754.

The passenger ship Phoenix which landed at Philadelphia on October 1, 1754, included the name of Ulrich Engel [sic], Hans Burkholder, and Jost Schonauwer, and further stated that 25 Mennonite Swissers were on board.¹³

A journey of this nature by these "quiet people" was taken in full trust and dependence on God. When storms tried every fiber, they were found praying or singing. The testimony which the various groups lived as they made this crossing often spoke to the crew of the ship or to other passengers such as we have an example of

⁹Floyd E. Mallott, Studies in Brethren History (Elgin, Ill.: Brethren Publishing House, 1954), p. 43; see also Edwin B. Bronner, William Penn's Holy Experiment (New York: Temple University Publication, 1963), p. 6.

¹⁰Kent, p. 34.

¹¹Climenhaga, p. 340. ¹²Climenhaga, p. 344.

¹³Saltzman, p. 7.

in the life of John and Charles Wesley.¹⁴

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CONFRONTATION IN AMERICA

Church-State

Upon entering America, the little group was met with another test to their faith. After September 17, 1717 all persons entering the country were required to take an oath of allegiance to the king. However, provisions were made for Mennonites and other similar groups that they would give some other sign of assurance of their allegiance to the government.¹⁵ The Mennonite and Dunker position with regard to state and national relationship was that of living as guests in a country, while the Friends position was one of accepting the duty and responsibilities of citizenship and government.¹⁶ The church-state relation which was assumed by the Brethren was one which had precipitated a great deal of tension. However, as Mallott stated:

The tension between church and society has been present always and has been keen at times . . . The nonconformity is a result of the spirit of Jesus within. The usages, ambitions and viewpoints of the envioning society are felt to be at variance with the spirit of Jesus.¹⁷

¹⁴Olmstead, p. 134.

¹⁵Rufus D. Bowman, The Church of the Brethren and War (Elgin, Ill.: Brethren Publishing House, 1944), p. 67; see also Raymond W. Albright, A History of the Evangelical Church (Harrisburg, Penna.: The Evangelical Press, 1942), p. 22. Signing of the "oath of the port" meant the denying of any further allegiance to any foreign political or religious power.

¹⁶Bowman, p. 67.

¹⁷Mallott, p. 20.

Coupled with the relation to the church-state attitude was the brethren's concept of discipleship, which for some was stated by Durnbaugh as being, ". . . anti-intellectualism, anticreedalism, voluntary personal decision, inward commitment and devotional immediacy."¹⁸ However, this relation is even greater when seen as

. . . following after (the German word Nachfolge puts it better than any English word can). It is our following after Christ who is the Leader-Lord making his way (and a way for his people) through the world toward the kingdom.¹⁹

Though the brethren maintained their radical convictions of faith against all odds, they were freely accepted into America. The following naturalization papers sent to introduce Daniel Pastorius and the first group of Mennonites to come to America, indicated the commitment which William Penn made with regard to these Christians.

Naturalization papers of Francis Daniel Pastorius and of sixty-two High and Low Germans:

Germantown
From
William Penn, Esq.
Dated 7th May 1691

I do declare, and by these presents, confirm them the said inhabitants before named, to be Freemen of this government, and that they shall be accordingly held and reputed in as full and ample manner as any person or persons residing therein. And that they, the said Freemen, have liberty and freedom hereby to trade and traffic in this colony or in any of the King's

¹⁸ Donald F. Durnbaugh, The Church of the Brethren Past and Present (Elgin, Ill.: The Brethren Press, 1971), p. 41.

¹⁹ Durnbaugh, p. 41

Dominions and Plantations, as other good subjects may lawfully do without any matter lett, hindrance or molestation whatsoever.

Recorded in the Rolls Office at Philadelphia
The Thirteenth day of the Third Month, 1691²⁰

Denominations

After entering America, the Mennonites, Dunkers and Friends often settled in the same area.²¹ Durnbaugh states that, ". . . in most places where the brethren (Dunkers) came they were considered to be identical with the Mennonites and, therefore, enjoyed similar tolerance."²² By enjoying one another's fellowship in this manner, they were also able to continue the maintenance of their own unique faith. The difficulty to differentiate between these similar groups is still existent today among those who are outside the membership of any one of the denominations. However, the denominations are often quick to point out the distinction to keep clear their heritage. Durnbaugh, speaking of the Brethren (Dunkers) indicated the distinct difference of the Brethren in Christ:

Though the Brethren (Dunkers) have had contacts with the Moravian Brethren, the Brethren in Christ (River Brethren) and the United Brethren, they should not be identified with any of them. They are all distinct entities.²³

However, the study of the historical background of the Brethren in Christ Church and the doctrine of nonresistance

²⁰ Bowman, p. 65.

²¹ Durnbaugh, p. 16.

²² Durnbaugh, p. 11.

²³ Durnbaugh, p. 9.

which they accepted and maintained naturally included some of the history of these denominations because of the heritage involved in family ties, but also because of the obscurity of the early history of the church.

The story of the beginnings of the River Brethren must be approached indirectly, for there is no first-hand account written of the origin of the body. One of the earliest available secondary reports, that by "A Familiar Friend," in the History of All the Religious Denominations in the United States, published in 1848, states, "As they keep neither written or printed records touching their ecclesiastical proceedings, in the absence of these, oral history or tradition alone can be relied on as to the precise time of their church organization and who were first ministers among them."²⁴

The communities formed by these brethren in Pennsylvania were tightly-knit brotherhoods, or Gemeinde²⁵ that went about their business of carving a home and living out a crude frontier. Typical of these were the Mennonites

²⁴John Winebrenner, "History of the River Brethren," History of All the Religious Denominations in the United States, ed. A Familiar Friend (Harrisburg, Pa.: 1848), cited by Owen H. Alderfer, "The Mind of the Brethren in Christ: A Synthesis of Revivalism and the Church Conceived as Total Community" (unpublished Doctoral dissertation, Ann Arbor, Mich.: University Microfilms, Inc., 1964), p. 30.

The historical material written by "A Familiar Friend" is assumed to have been written by a Bishop, minister or teacher in the denominations. John Winebrenner, the editor of the work, indicates in his introduction that the work of each denomination was done by some official in the church who was familiar with its history.

²⁵Durnbaugh, p. 43. Gemeinschaft is a German term for which there is no adequate English equivalent. It denotes the intimate sense of union that comes as a group shares some deep commitment in common. This family feeling extended beyond the confines of a congregation.

and Dunkers. "They stressed a gathered church of believers, the discipline of church members, a nonresistant approach to the state and a theology of obedience" ²⁶ When entire communities live testimonies such as these it is not long until their peculiar testimony is common knowledge. One historian has said of them, "They are meek and pious Christians." ²⁷ Another has stated, "First of all, the brethren were of the genus of 'the quiet ones in the land' (Die Stillen in Lande) who lived to themselves and bothered no one." ²⁸ These statements were typical not only for Dunkers but for each of the similar groups which formed the Pietistic-Anabaptist heritage of the Brethren in Christ. This position was both a blessing, to keep and maintain their own life and doctrine, and a curse, for the new nation was in the process of cutting all ancestral ties. Groups such as these were therefore under suspect. ²⁹ Despite hardship, the gospel message spread among the German-speaking people. A Dunker historian records:

It was no small matter to travel long distances in a wilderness, preach in private houses, organize new congregations and at the same time maintain a growing family in a new country. Add to this the fact that the brethren were all German, that their message was only

²⁶Durnbaugh, p. 11. ²⁷Durnbaugh, p. 11.

²⁸Durnbaugh, p. 11.

²⁹William Warren Sweet, Revivalism in America-- Its Origin, Growth and Decline (New York: Charles Scribners, 1944), p. 177.

to Germans, that the population was dominantly English, their success is wonderful.³⁰

By the time America reached the decade of the 1760's many forces were at work for independence. There were also revival forces which were taking place among the German-speaking people. A few years earlier George Whitefield had brought revival fires to America and other great evangelists had joined him, but they did not have a great deal of effect on the German-speaking communities.³¹ Men such as Muhlenburg, Schlatter, Otterbein and Boehm now reached these communities. However, ". . . the life of the Mennonite Church was at low ebb. Revivalistic efforts were stopped by expelling the Revivalist."³²

Another problem became apparent among the revivalistic groups. "The German community of eastern Pennsylvania was surrounded and infiltrated by the ethnic backgrounds of other early Americans."³³ Revival efforts swept some of the surrounding community into the churches

³⁰ Martin Grove Brumbaugh, A History of the German Baptist Brethren in Europe and America (Elgin, Ill.: Brethren Publishing House, 1899), p. 333.

³¹ Charles Hartshorn Maxson, The Great Awakening in the Middle Colonies (Gloucester, Mass.: Peter Smith, 1958), pp. 20-25.

³² Owen H. Alderfer, "The Mind of the Brethren in Christ: A Synthesis of Revivalism and The Church Conceived as Total Community" (unpublished Doctoral dissertation, Ann Arbor, Mich.: University Microfilms, Inc., 1964), p. 30.

³³ Albert T. Ronk, History of the Brethren Church (Ashland, Ohio: Brethren Publishing Co., 1968), p. 68.

of these people. They asked questions of the churches. "The whole fabric of doctrine so carefully wrought by the colonial churches was put to test by the new influences. The doctrines of the church were on trial."³⁴ Peaceful life for the "quiet ones" became a very elusive dream.

Revolution

The church doctrines were to be tested still further only now by government which hitherto had been rather friendly. "As early as June 13, 1777 the legislature of Pennsylvania made it a duty of every citizen to abjure the King of England and take an oath of allegiance to the State of Pennsylvania."³⁵ This imposed a double hardship on all Mennonites, Dunkers, Quakers and Brethren in Christ (River Brethren), for they were opposed to all war and all oaths.

Brumbaugh has stated the unique position of many in the Church of the Brethren at the beginning of the Revolutionary War: "The Revolutionary War was a severe test. Many of the members were anxious to see the new government prosper and succeed. But they could not and did not fight."³⁶ The largest circulating German newspaper in the colonies distinctly opposed war. Its owner, Christopher Sauer, dared to advocate his hostility to war in the perilous hour of war.³⁷ Because of the dual hardship which

³⁴Brumbaugh, p. 413. ³⁵Brumbaugh, p. 414.

³⁶Brumbaugh, p. 538. ³⁷Brumbaugh, p. 414.

the churches faced, some suffered greater than others. For Christopher Sauer, in May 1778, it meant the loss of his entire fortune of more than one hundred fifty thousand dollars, along with humiliation by the armies.³⁸

The experiences of elder Sower [sic] and others threw the eastern Pennsylvania members of the Brethren Fellowship into panic. Many of them hastily loaded their goods into covered wagons and with their families driving their livestock, they abandoned the real estate they could not hastily sell and fled the state.³⁹

For many of the peace church members the memory of the trials of their fathers was very fresh and vivid.

"Indeed they were also like their forefathers in Germany who because of the stress of the times left home for America."⁴⁰ The cost was very high for many of the families. "In following this course of action they often had to leave behind them most of their earthly possessions, taking with them only that which could be transported in wagons, on horse back or in boat."⁴¹

The churches did not stand by passively permitting these things to come to pass. They sought to petition local and state government with regard to their position and beliefs. One such petition was filed with the

³⁸Ronk, p. 73.

³⁹Ronk, p. 73.

⁴⁰Homer A. Kent, 250 Years . . . Conquering Frontiers, A History of the Brethren Church (Winona Lake, Indiana: The Brethren Missionary Herald Co., 1958), pp. 48-50.

⁴¹Kent, pp. 48-50.

Pennsylvania Assembly 1775 by the Brethren and Mennonites.⁴²

Officially the governments of Pennsylvania and Congress did not press these church members for military service. However, the attesting oath brought pressure to bear along with another problem.

Although the Continental Congress and the Pennsylvania Assembly did not require military service from Religious Conscientious Objectors, the feelings of the "associators," the active supporters of the revolution, became more belligerent toward the peace groups. In some instances outbreaks of mob violence were directed against Mennonites in parts of Lancaster County.⁴³

In addition to these pressures there were others which the government did bring to bear.

The Assembly (Penna.) required that all males who refused to bear arms were to contribute an amount of money equivalent to the time others gave in acquiring military discipline. A few months later it decreed that all weapons should be collected from nonparticipants. Then, in the spirit of intense patriotism, the assembly required an oath of allegiance in an Act passed June 13, 1777.⁴⁴

This was to be taken by each male age fifteen and older.

There were those who had taken the oath while others

⁴²Durnbaugh, p. 16. "The Assembly advice to those who do not find freedom of conscience to take up arms, that they ought to be helpful to those who are in need and distressed circumstances, we receive with cheerfulness toward all men of what station they may be-it our principle and to give the thirsty drink. We have dedicated ourselves to serve all men in everything that can be helpful to the preservation of men's lives, but we find no freedom in giving, or doing, or assisting in anything by which men's lives are destroyed or hurt. We beg the patience of all those who believe we err in this point."

⁴³Dale W. Brown, Brethren and Pacifism (Elgin, Ill.: The Brethren Press, 1970), p. 27.

⁴⁴Brown, p. 28.

simply fled. Those who took the oath were placed under a ban with loss of fellowship. At a later date they were granted restoration to fellowship if they would repent of their act. The historian Sweet records other reaction in the churches. There were some Mennonites who were:

. . . active supporters of the Revolution, though they did not advocate participation in the war itself. Christian Funk, for instance came out strongly for the American cause and advocated the payment of war taxes, stating that, were Christ here he would say give to Congress that which belongs to Congress and to God what is God's.⁴⁵

The atmosphere throughout Colonial America was electrified with the words freedom, liberty and revolution. The churches were involved with this desire for freedom in all areas of the colonies. The historian Sweet indicates succinctly the situation:

. . . in America at the end of the colonial era there was a larger degree of religious liberty than was found among most of the people of the world, and possession of religious liberty naturally leads to a demand for political liberty.⁴⁶

Then operating within the scope of such a desire among the people, were ministers who were seeking to help them.

"Pulpits thundered as they dwelt more and more on the right of resistance. Also, ministers became known as 'fighting

⁴⁵ William Warren Sweet, Religion in the Development of American Culture 1765-1850 (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1952), p. 44.

⁴⁶ William Warren Sweet, The Story of Religion in America (New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1950), p. 173.

parsons' in New England and the Middle Colonies."⁴⁷

Revival

Contrasted with this atmosphere were groups of German worshippers who were coming alive spiritually under the preaching of the great evangelists Otterbein and Boehm. The whole desire for these people was also freedom, but a freedom which kept them from war and permitted them to worship and to live to themselves. This, of course, introduced the tensions which occurred with their neighbors and neighboring churches. "A practice very common among 'respectable churches' is to denounce these underprivileged groups; to call them 'Holy Rollers,' to sneer at them as troublemakers."⁴⁸ The opposition of Christian churches intensified the situation. The role which the churches should have taken then in that point of history was pointed out by Sweet: "If religion is to continue as a vital force in America, it must not lose the personal and individual emphasis. At the same time it must concern itself about the sins of society."⁴⁹ It was at this point that the Mennonites, Quakers and Brethren in Christ Churches petitioned the Pennsylvania Assembly.⁵⁰

⁴⁷Sweet, Story of Religion, p. 176.

⁴⁸Sweet, Revivalism in America, p. 177.

⁴⁹Sweet, Revivalism in America, p. 182.

⁵⁰Durnbaugh, p. 16.

Migration

While this trial in the life of the brethren was drawing to a climax, which would demand a decision by each one, to the North, Canada was desirous of developing its untapped resources. "Being especially desirous of settlers of good reputation, the Canadian authorities offered exceptional inducements including military exemption to Quakers and allied groups."⁵¹

The brethren were opposed to political revolution. They had been guaranteed in Pennsylvania religious toleration and military exemption, which was now hard to find. All that had looked like such a glorious hope to them and their fathers was now tumbling about them. The Canadian government offered free land and new hope. The river valleys presented easier routes to the North's rich land than the mountains to the West. It was at this point in the history of the Brethren in Christ that Hans Winger and a group of brethren immigrated to Canada in 1788. To contribute to this speculation is a letter written by Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe to Henry Dundas in 1792 in regard to the migration of plain sects:

. . . every prospect of very great migrations taking place out of the United States into His Majesty's Dominions and I have not hesitated to promise to the Quakers and other sects the similar exemption from

⁵¹C. Henry Smith, Smith's Story of the Mennonites (Newton, Kansas: Mennonite Publication Office, 1950), p. 558.

militia duties which they have always met under the British Government.⁵²

There were many people in the church who were grateful for another opportunity to live a life of nonresistance.

There is no way of knowing whether Simcoe made these promises of exemption directly to members of the church in Pennsylvania, but it is highly likely that the offer was known before the immigrants came to Canada.⁵³

FORMATION OF THE CHURCH IN AMERICA

It has been established that the River Brethren became an American born church, founded contemporarily with the founding of the nation. This part of the study examined the historical setting of the church during the period of 1770-1870, reviewed the structuring of the church and its place in American Protestantism, and explored the effectiveness of the doctrine of nonresistance in the life of the church during this period.

Name of the Church

The "Brethren in Christ" were known as River Brethren for many years and are still at times referred to in that manner. According to tradition, the River Brethren formally accepted the name "Brethren in Christ" during the time of the American Civil War.⁵⁴

⁵²E. Morris Sider, "The Peace Testimony of the Early Brethren in Christ (Tunker) Church in Canada," Notes and Queries in Brethren in Christ History, XI, No.2, ed., C. O. Wittlinger, April 1970, p. 16-17, citing E. A. Cruikshank, "Simcoe to Dundas," Aug. 20, 1792, The Simcoe Papers I (Toronto: Ontario Historical Society, 1923), pp. 198-99.

⁵³Sider, p. 17.

⁵⁴Schrag, p. 6.

They have also been called "Dunkers," but this term is more commonly given to the German Baptist Brethren (The Church of the Brethren). The churches in Canada were called "Tunkers" and are still occasionally referred to by this name. The American churches with similar views which have influenced the views of the Brethren in Christ were the Church of the Brethren, Quakers, Mennonite, United Brethren in Christ, the Evangelical Association and Moravians. "The Church of the Brethren and Mennonites, perhaps, had the most influence on the views of the Brethren in Christ."⁵⁵

Official Date of Origin

There was no adequate documentation for any exact date of the origin of the church. The date of actual organization falls between 1770 and 1788. The 1770 date is highly improbable because at this time Jacob Engle would have been too young to be a leader. The 1788 date is more probable which was set by the petition of the Canadian Tunkers to the English crown for a grant of crown land. This date was documented. The River Brethren had already begun to grow and to move to Canada. They were already mentioned in the Militia Act of 1793 by the Canadian government.⁵⁶ The church in the United States

⁵⁵Climenhaga, p. 30.

⁵⁶Schrag, pp. 21-22; see also Sider, p. 17.

was finally incorporated in 1904.

A New Church

Life on the frontier of America was different than the life the brethren had been used to in Europe. Their task in this "holy experiment" was to tame the wilderness. The task was so great and the labor so heavy that they lost much of their religious ardor. There was a concern by church elders in Germany and Pennsylvania that the new colonists would revert to paganism.⁵⁷ This concern resulted in some preachers of Pietistic background migrating to Pennsylvania to minister to their German brethren.⁵⁸ Important work was done among the German population by Henry M. Muhlenberg (Lutheran), Michael Schlatter (Reform), Phillip W. Otterbein (Reform, later United Brethren) and Martin Boehm (Mennonite, later itinerant). Otterbein and Boehm in 1766 were busy awakening the Germans in Pennsylvania and Maryland, including settlers in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania.⁵⁹ Boehm used

⁵⁷Charles Maxon, The Great Awakening in the Middle Colonies (Gloucester, Mass.: Peter Smith, 1945), pp. 1-10.

⁵⁸Sweet, Story of Religion, p. 111.

⁵⁹Discipline of the United Brethren in Christ (Dayton, Ohio: United Brethren Publishing House, 1889), pp. 7-8. Page 12 states that this account is the same as in the original discipline; see also Ulsie Perkins Hovermale, The United Brethren in Christ (Dayton, Ohio: The Home Mission and Church Erection Society, 1942).

the Grosze Versammlung, the big meeting, as his method of evangelizing these communities. The two men met in a big meeting in the years 1766-68 and joined forces; later to be known as the United Brethren in Christ. Ulrich Engle, later to be known as father of the Brethren in Christ Church founders, father of Jacob and John Engle, had been a Mennonite and attended these meetings which were attended by Mennonites, Lutherans, Reformed and Dunkers. The result of these meetings was a great revival. Resulting from this revival were zealous converts who desired a greater fellowship with other new converts and, therefore, they began meeting together in one another's homes, moving periodically from house to house. Boehm continued to minister to these brethren, developing a regular three-point circuit: Pequea Brethren, Conestoga Brethren and the Donegal or River Brethren. The brethren, at one of the Versammlung, concluded that Boehm was not true in all the aspects of the faith and, accordingly, organized themselves into a new body of believers.⁶⁰ The Brethren in Christ Church does not date back to any one man, as is the case with a number of church bodies. In this case, a small group launched out on its own initiative with the purpose of serving God as they understood.⁶¹

⁶⁰A. W. Drury, The Life of Philip William Otterbein (Dayton, Ohio: United Brethren Publishing House, 1884), pp. 139-141; see also R. Yeakel, History of the Evangelical Assn., 1750-1850, Vol. I (Cleveland, Ohio: 1909).

⁶¹Climenhaga, p. 45.

The difference which began here at this point in history still exists today, it is, . . . their theological uniqueness of synthesizing the Pietistic new birth emphasis with the Mennonite and German Baptist Brethren concept of the church and the relationship of the church to the world.⁶²

In regard to this synthesizing:

The brethren believed, at this time, that the central purpose of God's redemptive activity was the creation of a new society consisting of the converted, committed, shared and disciplined people called out of the church which so largely formed their attitude toward the world.⁶³

Later in the 19th century there were innovations which modified this synthesis.

Organization of the New Church

While the beginning of the denominational structure cannot be said to have started with any one man, there were some who definitely became leaders or overseers in the early history of the church. "Some of the first ministers were Jacob Engle, Hans Engle and Hans Winger."⁶⁴ It is noted that some of these brethren had Mennonite background. "Melchoir Brenneman, a Mennonite minister and eye witness to the Brethren founding, wrote (1807) that the River Brethren separated themselves from their source, the Mennonites."⁶⁵ He notes that, " . . . they did not join the Dunkers (Church of the Brethren),⁶⁶ that they in turn

⁶²Schrag, p. 4.

⁶³Schrag, p. 5.

⁶⁴Climenhaga, p. 326.

⁶⁵Schrag, p. 13; see also Climenhaga, pp. 337-9.

⁶⁶Author's note.

immersed themselves and formed their own fellowship, that some had Swiss background and that almost all the preachers wore beards."⁶⁷

It has been pointed out by Dr. Martin Schrag that, "The evidence does not indicate that the Brethren were a Mennonite schism but rather that some of the first leaders had Mennonite background."⁶⁸ He further indicated that, "Such Mennonite connections represent a possible channel for the transmission of Mennonite ideas."⁶⁹ Following the broken relationship with the evangelist Martin Boehm, the evidence indicated that Jacob Engle assumed leadership role among the River Brethren.

The group (various accounts give the number as two, six, eight or twelve), seeking to fulfill the word as they understood it, went to some of the ministers of the German Baptist Brethren and requested baptism. They were refused. They were also reportedly refused by Otterbein. Borrowing the triune immersion concept from the Dunkers, the Brethren proceeded to baptize one another.⁷⁰ Some traditions state that Jacob Engle baptized himself and then, in turn, baptized each of the brethren.

⁶⁷Schrag, p. 13; see also Abraham H. Cassel, "Origin of the River Brethren," an unpublished article, Harleysville, Penna., 1882, cited by Climenhaga, p. 337.

⁶⁸Schrag, pp. 14-15. ⁶⁹Schrag, p. 15.

⁷⁰Climenhaga, p. 338; see also Schrag, pp. 19-20.

While he (Jacob Engle) and his co-laborers met together in council, and after deep meditation, and discarding all human creeds, and taking the unadulterated word of God as a guide, and seeking to follow the primitive teaching of Christ and His apostles, and adopting the New Testament as their rule of faith and practice, founded the Church in the United States of America.⁷¹

It has been noted by Moses Miller, a Dunker historian, in his book A Familiar Friend that a group of the German Baptists (Dunkers) joined the River Brethren a few years after their beginning.⁷²

These facts indicated a close relationship to the thought and life of both denominations.

Worship and Growth

From 1779-1904 the church had a gradual growth. The first development was away from the river (Susquehanna) toward the city of Lancaster and the town of Manheim. Members were soon found in the valleys of Cumberland and Lebanon, as well as Lancaster County.⁷³

In this present day when new Christian groups initiate corporate worship by cell group methods and house meetings, it may be of interest to note that: "For many years no church buildings were built but all the services were held in barns and houses. It was nearly one hundred years before the first church building was erected at

⁷¹Levi Lukenbach, "Brethren in Christ," A Book for the Use and Benefit of the Church in Dayton District 1879. Brethren in Christ Archives, Messiah College, Grantham, Pennsylvania, as cited in Schrag, p. 16.

⁷²Schrag, p. 21.

⁷³Climenhaga, p. 326.

Woodbury, Pennsylvania, in 1867, not far from Altoona."⁷⁴

After the initial establishment of the church, its growth may be said to be a part of its missionary outreach. As pointed out earlier, by 1788 the brethren were already moved into Canada under the leadership of Hans Winger. In the United States,

"... after the church was established in Pennsylvania and Canada a growth developed westward which reached to California. The first state outside of Pennsylvania to receive members of this faith was Ohio. Soon after this some members moved from Ontario to the state of Indiana."⁷⁵

Later, there were other movements to Michigan, Illinois, Kansas, Oklahoma and Iowa.

For many years the church was mainly composed of rural people. The pastors and bishops who conducted the ministry and administration of the church were self supported; most of them were farmers with no formal education. God blessed their ministry and the church grew.

It was not until 1871 that the General Conference decided to give offerings throughout the church for a missionary fund and to appoint a Mission Board. From this date until the present the church has had a missionary fund and a Mission Board Home Mission stations started as early as 1889; but it was not until 1897 that the first candidates presented themselves for foreign work. Jesse Engle, a descendant of Jacob Engle, the first overseer of the church headed the first missionary group to Africa in 1897.⁷⁶

⁷⁴Climenhaga, p. 327.

⁷⁵Climenhaga, p. 327.

⁷⁶Climenhaga, p. 329.

Opposition to the Church and Its Doctrine

American Revolution. This was a great test of faith to the "peace churches."⁷⁷ However,

The American Revolution was by no means anti-Christian. Some of its basic ideals were from John Locke and the way for it had been prepared by the Reformed Faith and the sermons of the clergy, especially in New England.⁷⁸

The effect of the Revolution on the life of the church did not stop with the peace churches, ". . . the American Revolution brought a pause in the Great Awakening, . . . "⁷⁹ It was by no means conducive to spiritual growth which was so essential in the growth of the new nation.

Deism. Another problem which was closest to the nation and church, was the fact that, "Some of the outstanding builders of the new nation, while not antagonistic to Christianity, were more deist than Christian."⁸⁰ Thomas Jefferson and Thomas Paine were some of these men. Consequently there developed an idea within the nation and the churches that America and Christianity were equated as one, a chosen people.⁸¹

⁷⁷Brumbaugh, p. 538.

⁷⁸Kenneth Scott Latourette, A History of Christianity (New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1933), p. 1006.

⁷⁹Latourette, p. 1006. ⁸⁰Latourette, pp. 1006-7.

⁸¹Latourette, pp. 1005-9; see also Edwin Scott Gaustad, A Religious History of America (New York: Harper and Row, 1966), pp. 165-168.

French Revolution. Involved in the historical was the French Revolution of 1789. This was of major importance to the world, partly because it had repercussions throughout most of Christendom, both in Europe and America.⁸² As a result, there were many who became deChristianized. The fighting, revolution and lawlessness which followed distracted attention from religion.

Second Great Awakening. Revival swept through the colonies and onto the frontier areas. It brought a fresh faith which reclaimed the deChristianized society and also brought growth in faith among Indians and Negroes. In 1800 the first camp meetings began. They were used on the rugged frontier. The Arminian message that, "Christ died for all" was very appealing.⁸³

Christianity in America had a unique position that no other church in history had experienced. It received no state support or favoritism, yet it held a central place in initiating officials into office and in the school system. It also sought to have the entire nation live under a Christian standard. With this kind of conducive atmosphere, in addition to revival, the Protestant churches during this era had phenomenal growth. It may be noted that at the same time Quakers, Mennonites, Dunkers and

⁸²Latourette, p. 1008. ⁸³Latourette, pp. 1035-37.

others remained in the minority.⁸⁴ There were distinctive differences in the growth patterns of the churches. This can be carefully measured among the churches which began about the same time in America; for instance, the United Brethren who began at the same time as the Brethren and who shared a common understanding of the new birth experience had a membership of 108,122 by the year 1869.⁸⁵ The River Brethren gathered no statistics until 1880, and the first tabulations were incomplete. The Bureau of Census indicates there were 2,688 as of 1890.⁸⁶ It is evident then by this comparison and by growth contrasts in other German sectarian denominations that there must be a reason for this retardation. First, it may be seen that, ". . . the River Brethren did not follow American Pietism into American Revivalism."⁸⁷ This presented the Brethren in stark contrast with their contemporary sister denominations for, "One of the results of the Pietistic emphasis on the new birth as it developed in America was the strong evangelistic and missionary program."⁸⁸

⁸⁴Latourette, pp. 1037-1045; see also William W. Sweet, Revivalism in America, Its Origin, Growth and Decline (New York: Charles Scribners Sons, 1944), pp. 149-153.

⁸⁵A. W. Drury, History of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ, p. 464, cited by Schrag, p. 78.

⁸⁶Schrag, p. 82.

⁸⁷Schrag, p. 82.

⁸⁸Schrag, p. 78; see also Richard E. Wolf, "The Middle Period, 1800-1870, The Matrix of Modern American Christianity," Religion in Life XXII (1952-1953), pp. 73-74.

This kind of emphasis tended to keep pace with the explosive growth of a newly born nation. There was rapidly mounting exploration with increase in territory and wealth. There was increased industrialization along with the frontier expansions. America was an easy place to drop old world customs quickly. But along with this new life and great growth was an increase in Atheism and Deism.⁸⁹

However,

In the course of the century the Christianity of the United States became increasingly distinctive. . . Christianity had a profound effect on many aspects of the life of the United States. It was responsible for the basic and most compelling ideals of the nation.⁹⁰

With the great growth patterns in both the national and religious life one might conclude that the brethren were not interested in carrying out their responsibility of evangelism. Schrag has offered this comment:

The implication is that the brethren did not make the effort to gain as many converts as possible their ruling activity. They did not develop the evangelistic and missionary implications of their concept of the new birth.⁹¹

Their concept of the new birth did not end with the individual's personal experience. On the contrary, their concept of the new birth was freighted with overtones of the church and its fellowship-community emphasis. To them,

⁸⁹Latourette, pp. 1063-64, 1228-32; see also Sweet, The American Churches, An Interpretation (New York, Nashville: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1948), pp. 11-33.

⁹⁰Latourette, p. 1273. ⁹¹Schrag, p. 79.

"The gathered, sharing, disciplined church was the meaning of history, not a society that brought faith and culture into one whole."⁹²

To be born again, then, meant that one's entire way of life was changed and that one became a part of a fellowship of despised people, a separated people. This life of separation affected all of life.

The identification of faith and culture with the corresponding concept of the invisible church made it impossible for the River Brethren to enter into the stream of American Protestantism.⁹³

The brethren ran counter to the mainstream of American society. Contained within their concepts of the church was their strong tenet of nonresistance. As the River Brethren Church grew, their contradistinctive position became even more crucial.

Civil War. The period of the Civil War (1860-1865) magnified the distinct differences between the church and the world of which they were a part. For the peace churches located in both the North and the South it meant maintaining a consistent witness of nonresistance in the face of overwhelming pressure from both the North and the South. In the South the peace churches were destined to suffer more because of their nonresistant position and their relationship with the North; they suffered harassment

⁹²Schrag, p. 84.

⁹³Schrag, p. 87.

by unfriendly neighbors.⁹⁴ The River Brethren Church was located mostly in the northern states. However, the Dunker and Mennonite Churches felt the brunt of southern opposition. "Mennonites and Brethren were forced into army service against their will."⁹⁵ Bishop E. J. Swalm records an incident where Bishop Isaac Trump was brought before the Judge of the tribunal with regard to his induction into the Civil War, and he obtained exemption because of his uncompromising nonresistant position.⁹⁶

The leadership of the church, observing the seemingly unsolvable problem of their nonresistance stance and the Civil War, decided once again to migrate. March 1862 a group of ninety Mennonites and Dunkers fled West. The army captured and returned them to be examined by the War Department. They were then released and returned to their homes.⁹⁷

Exemption from military service was granted on the basis of fine, taxation or furnishing of substitutes for service. The Quakers disapproved of fines and taxation. The Dunkers were asked not to pay substitute money. The Mennonite and River Brethren generally approved of them, feeling they could not conscientiously do otherwise.

⁹⁴Brown, p. 34. ⁹⁵Brown, p. 34.

⁹⁶E. J. Swalm, Nonresistance Under Test (Nappanee, Ind.: Evangel Publishing House, 1949), p. 22; see also Schrag, p. 111.

⁹⁷Brown, p. 35.

General Stonewall Jackson, commenting on these people, particularly those living in Virginia, wrote:

There lives a people in the valley of Virginia, that are not hard to bring to the army. While there they are obedient to their officers. Nor is it difficult to have them take aim, but it is impossible to get them to take correct aim. I therefore, think it better to leave them at their homes that they may produce supplies for the army.⁹⁸

Most of the peace churches had entered the Civil War with a built-in bias. Their sympathies for the most part lay on the side of the Union. The Mennonite and Dunker churches had been active in initiating programs against slavery.

In the North the pro-union sentiments of the Brethren (Dunkers), the friendly attitude of President Lincoln toward conscientious objectors, the need for good farmers to produce food, and the superior military strength combined to provide more comfortable exemptions for conscientious objectors than previously. At first such was provided by laws of individual states; . . . later Federal law outlawed this practice. They started a system of hired substitutes, or pay \$300. This was not very acceptable with many; an agreement was reached later that the \$300 was to be used for sick or wounded soldiers.⁹⁹

In Canada, to which some of the brethren fled from military service, exemptions were granted, but fines were also required. These fines, after 1837, consisted of 10 shillings for peacetime and five pounds during wartime. They were reduced at a later date and were finally repealed.

⁹⁸Brown, p. 34. (Reference is given to events affecting Mennonite and Dunker groups because the River Brethren have often been referred to by historians as being a part of these groups.)

⁹⁹Brown, p. 33.

after the church made numerous petitions to Legislature.¹⁰⁰ Schrag has noted that, "One of the principal reasons for River Brethren, as well as other historic peace church people, migrating from Pennsylvania to Canada was to maintain the belief in nonresistance."¹⁰¹

Schism. The attitude of separation by the River Brethren, which included the nonresistant position, was strongly maintained during the entire era from 1770-1870 and was historically transmitted as a very distinctive point of view. Their concepts were so ingrained, so deeply in some quarters of the church, that adamant positions led to differences and finally schism.

The Yorker Schism of 1843 came about when the River Brethren on the west side of the Susquehanna River in York County, Pennsylvania, accused their brethren of having a love that was too fleshly and of specific areas of nonconformity and nonresistance.¹⁰² The other schisms--the Brinser Schism in 1855 and the Wengerite Schism of 1840--came to the church. Neither of these referred to the matter of nonresistance, but were contentious over the important matter of the church's view of church buildings as a place of worship, and doctrinal differences. This was reviewed to indicate that the brethren desired to

¹⁰⁰Sider, p. 8.

¹⁰¹Schrag, p. 109.

¹⁰²Schrag, p. 378; Communication written by David Stoner for the Brethren, Hellam Twp., York Co., March 27, 1856.

remain true to their beliefs at all costs, regardless of internal denominational problems or external problems of the world.

Therefore in this era upon facing the Civil War the Brethren in the United States took the same position toward war as did the Canadian Brethren. A Familiar Friend (1848) stated in his article that the River Brethren are opposed to war in all its features, as being at variance with the peace--breathing precepts of the savior, contrary to the teachings of the Apostles and incompatible with the practice of the primitive Christians.¹⁰³

Draft exemption. During the Civil War it was necessary for the brethren to register once again as a nonresistant body. It was also at this time in a formal council held in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, that they decided to have the name of the Brotherhood recorded as "The Brethren in Christ (formerly known as River Brethren) a nonresistant body."¹⁰⁴

Another historic action took place during this time; Jacob S. Engle of Marietta, Pennsylvania, wrote a

¹⁰³Schrag, p. 110, citing A Familiar Friend, "History of the River Brethren," History of All the Religious Denominations in the United States (Harrisburg, Pa.: John Winebrenner, Publisher, 1848), p. 554.

¹⁰⁴Minutes of General Conferences of Brethren in Christ (River Brethren) from 1871-1904 (Harrisburg, Pa.: 1904), pp. 314-15. The Church had been commonly known up to this time as the "River Brethren," also called "River Mennonites" and "The Brethren by the River;" see also U.S. Dept. of Commerce, Bureau of Census, "Brethren in Christ: History, Doctrine, and Organization," by Rev. H. K. Kreider, Religious Bodies: 1926, II, Separate Denominations (Washington, D.C.: U. S. Printing Office, 1929), pp. 290-91, cited by Alderfer, p. 96.

letter to the Honorable Thaddeus Stevens on behalf of the Brethren in Christ Church to ask for a continuation of the commutation fee.¹⁰⁵

It is noted that,

In the Pennsylvania State Archives are located some signed exemption papers from various counties. Unfortunately, the religious denomination of the signers is not given, but the name and the place imply that some may have been River Brethren or from River Brethren families.¹⁰⁶

Politics. Closely associated with the church's doctrine of nonresistance was its attitude toward political life and voting. "Political life and voting was an area of legitimate concern one could be exempt for military service by not exercising franchise."¹⁰⁷ Its attitude toward political life and voting was that one could not participate in national and local government affairs such as serving in offices and exercising voting privileges. To do so meant that one could not rightfully claim the position of a conscientious objector.¹⁰⁸

Political life, therefore, had direct bearing on the church's nonresistant testimony. There were, however, brethren who had such high regard for Mr. Lincoln that they voted for him.

¹⁰⁵Schrag, p. 111; see also Appendix A for Thaddaeus Steven Letter.

¹⁰⁶Schrag, p. 112, citing "Pennsylvania State Archives, Records of the Department of Military Affairs," Office of the Adjutant General, Record Group #19 (Harrisburg, Penna.).

¹⁰⁷Schrag, p. 113.

¹⁰⁸Climenhaga, pp. 302-4.

Teaching the Doctrine

Home. The growth of the church during this period centered around establishing and maintaining pure church concepts. The teaching of these concepts was done in the home, which was also the place of worship. Education was limited to elementary grades. The teaching of the doctrine of nonresistance was limited to the times when the government called young men to military service.¹⁰⁹

Music. There was very little expression given to the church's peace testimony in music, which has been one of the Protestant church's main teaching instruments, as well as a means of worship.

There is an indication that within twenty years after the church was founded, a supplement to an already existing hymnal was published so that the brethren might have ready access to hymns peculiar to their faith.¹¹⁰

Dr. H. Royce Saltzman has stated regarding the place of nonresistance in the hymnody of the River Brethren Church,

. . . there is little evidence, curiously enough, that much consideration was ever given to hymns representing this doctrine. One need only look at the Table of Contents of various hymnals to see that it is a conspicuous omission.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁹Brown, p. 37.

¹¹⁰Herbert Royce Saltzman, "A Historical Study of the Function of Music Among the Brethren in Christ" (unpublished Doctoral dissertation, Ann Arbor, Mich.: E.V. Publishing House, 1942), p. 2.

¹¹¹Based on personal correspondence between Dr. H. Royce Saltzman, Music Professor, University of Oregon, and

An exception to this was referred to by Saltzman's reference to an early hymnal in which:

The Christian's armor is depicted in "Ihr Zionshelden, auf zum Streit" (No. 138). Yoder refers to an early version of this hymn which appeared in the important Camp Meeting Hymnal, Geistliche Viole, in 1835. The third stanza reads:

Paulus, ein alter officier
Lehrt, wie man sich recht exercir',
Nemmt auch die waffen deutlich,
Und wie zu streiten ritter lich.

To the Brethren in Christ, with their sturdy views of pacifism, this no doubt sounded too much like "profane battalion days". . . thus the stanza was altered in the Geistliche Liedern to remove all reference to the military:

Paulus, ein wohlgeübter Held
Lehrt, wie man sich in Ordnung stellt,
Zeigt auch die wassen deutlich an
Womit ein Jeder Siegen Kann. 112

Personalized fellowship. While the brethren failed to keep up with the general trends of evangelical Protestantism which moved ahead with Christian Colleges, church magazines, missions and revivalism, they did not fall short in developing a rich, personalistic fellowship. This was

the writer; see also Appendix B-- Hymnal Table of Contents. The earlier hymnal which Dr. Saltzman refers to is in the Brethren in Christ Archives at Messiah College. It was printed in 1795 and entitled Das Kleine Davidische Psalterspiel (a German Baptist Brethren hymn book). The supplement referred to is entitled Das Aller Neueste Harfenspiel oder Zugabe einiger Lieder auf Begehren Von J. Engle, P. Eby, C. Grosh und anderer Mitglieder der Vereinigen Bruderschaft in Pennsylvanien.

¹¹² Saltzman, p. 143, citing Geistliche Viole . . . Zusammengetragen Von Johannes Dreisbach und Heinrich Niebel (New Berlin, Penna.: 1818); see also Appendix.

perfected in house-to-house worship, a method whereby a familistic coloration was given to the brethren fellowship.¹¹³ The church was concerned to guide--if not govern--the lives of the members in various details of life.¹¹⁴

This concern grew out of the church concept which they followed. Some of the trends of evangelical Pietism were eventually permitted. This was perceived in the church's official action to approve protracted meetings in 1872. Later, the mourner's bench was introduced in the 1890's.¹¹⁵ All of the activities of the church were done in the fear of God. It taught that each person must know for himself that his sins were forgiven. Much of its time in religious meetings was spent by the members telling of God's dealing with them individually, and how they found peace with God.¹¹⁶

Some of the first meetings which were held as organized church meetings took place at Stackstown, Pennsylvania. The first love feasts of the River Brethren were held here.¹¹⁷ One historian from outside the group, Moses Miller (a Dunker), commenting upon the development and worship of the group, stated: "I remember that one of

¹¹³Schrag, p. 98.

¹¹⁴Alderfer, p. 68; see also General Conference Minutes, 1871.

¹¹⁵Schrag, p. 82.

¹¹⁶Climenhaga, p. 51.

¹¹⁷Climenhaga, p. 51.

their ministers then said that they would not practice anything but what they had scripture for."¹¹⁸ Their unique message must have been appealing to some people outside the church, for it is recorded:

"A Familiar Friend" and Dunker historian, Moses Miller, were of the opinion that a number of German Baptists joined the River Brethren a few years after the beginning of the Brethren. Moses Miller lists as those who joined the River Brethren: Jacob Keefer, Joseph Keefer (the two were Miller's cousins), Henry Buser, Anna Brehm, Susanna Miller and Catherine Riser.¹¹⁹

SUMMARY

The combination of many factors motivated a large number of members of peace churches in Europe to move to the rugged frontier of America. Among these factors were war, persecution and State-Church domination, but the most prominent was the conviction of these people to live nonresistant lives.

Moving to America was not an easy task. The journey itself taxed the group to live a practical testimony in many adverse situations, which involved loss of their goods, sickness, cruelty and death. On the frontier in America they were confronted with new tests of faith and new trials by which they were to prove the doctrine of

¹¹⁸Alderfer, p. 60, citing Moses Miller, "The River Brethren," unpublished MS of the experience of Elder George Miller, 1722-1798, grandfather of the writer, Sept. 2, 1881 in the papers of William P. Bucher, Quarryville, Pa.

¹¹⁹Schrag, p. 21.

nonresistance in the eyes of men. They were confronted by State demands, relationships with other denominations, American revivalism, and revolution with its aftermath. These caused such tension for some that they found it necessary to migrate once again in order to maintain their beliefs.

Not all the experiences of this group were hostile, for new life came to the German people through German-speaking evangelists who brought the clear message of the gospel. A group of the brethren who met near the Susquehanna River (called River Brethren) formed a new church, one of the first American-born denominations. Its growth paralleled that of the nation.

There were many threats to this fledgling denomination. It faced these threats by consistently living a nonresistant testimony, which proved to be a walk of life contrary to the society of which it was a part. The doctrines and peculiar way of life of this group were taught in the home, through music and through Christian education. It supplemented its separated life with a very personalized fellowship.

Chapter 3

DEVELOPMENT OF FORMAL WRITTEN

CONFESSION OF FAITH

Historically men have sought to establish various forms of pacifism with regard to their opposition to violence and war. Most of these have been of more recent vintage. There have been attempts by men seeking to work with government to find a right solution. By comparison, one may see the difference between these views and the Christian doctrine of nonresistance. The Christian seeks to work obediently within the limitations of government to find a solution. In doing so he fully recognizes the divine position of government. However, he also recognizes that he cannot force his standards upon the world. As Brown has stated: "The political order exists for a fallen world. It must of necessity use sub-Christian standards to restrain evil and preserve peace."¹

NONRESISTANCE IN THE EARLY PRIMITIVE CHURCH

This position was one which had been categorically supported by the primitive Christian Church. Heering, in

¹Dale W. Brown, Brethren and Pacifism (Elgin, Ill.: The Brethren Press, 1970), p. 25.

his book, quotes an early Christian prior to AD 170, who said:

We Christians no longer take up sword against nation, nor do we learn war any more, having become children of peace, for the sake of Jesus who is our leader. We do not serve as soldiers under the Emperor, even though he require it.²

The historian Eusebius, Bishop of Caesarea, tells of an army officer, Seleucius, who had distinguished himself in war and had attained high rank in the Roman Army and who was converted and confessed Christ. By this voluntary confession and after nobly enduring bitter scourging he succeeded in getting himself discharged from military service, only to suffer martyrdom later.³

This attitude of the Christian Church toward war was continued until the time of Constantine who exalted his own faith and introduced Christianity as a state religion.

Each reform movement in the church's history sought to return to the primitive church as its ideal. Some reformation activity of the church carried this movement to the acceptance once again of the early nonresistant position of the church. It was this position which the Mennonite, Dunker, Quaker and Brethren in Christ Churches maintained.

CONTRIBUTING CONFESSIONS OF FAITH

Confessions of the Mennonite Church

The history of the Mennonite Church indicated early

²C. N. Hostetter, Jr., tract entitled "The Christian and War," (Elizabethtown, Penna.: Brethren in Christ Mission Board, 1955), p. 2, citing G. J. Heering, The Fall of Christianity, p. 23-32.

³Hostetter tract.

acceptance of the doctrine of nonresistance. This unique position was known by both liberal and conservative, and by its enemies and friends. One writer stated:

This way of nonresistance has characterized the Anabaptists from the beginning. Walter Rauschenbusch says, "Their communities were prophetic . . . They stood against war, against capital punishment, against slavery and against coercion in matters of religion before others thought of it." Sixteenth century Catholic opponents said they found among them, "no lying, deception, swearing, strife, harsh language . . . They call each other brethren and sisters, . . . they use no weapons of defense, . . . they do not go to law before judicial courts."⁴

Menno Simons, the founder of the Mennonite Church, said, "The regenerated do not go to war, nor engage in strife; they are children of peace . . ."⁵ It may therefore be seen that the way of nonresistance was adopted into the theology of the Mennonite Church. The historian Olmstead, referring to the Mennonite Church, stated, "Mennonite Theology was Biblical rather than philosophical. They considered the making of theological distinction inimical to the life of the spirit, as it undoubtedly often has been."⁶ Thus, he focused attention on the central basis for their doctrine.

The oldest known Anabaptist confession of faith is the Schleithelm Confession, adopted by the Swiss

⁴The Mennonite Encyclopedia, Vol. III, I-N, "A Comprehensive Reference Work on the Anabaptist Movement" (Scottsdale, Penna.: Mennonite Publishing House, 1969), p. 898.

⁵Mennonite Encyclopedia, Vol. III, I-N, p. 898.

⁶Clifton E. Olmstead, History of Religion in the United States (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall Inc., 1960), p. 216.

Brethren, Feb. 24, 1527, drawn up by Michael Sattler, a former Roman Catholic priest from St. Peters Monastery near Freiburg. The document is conspicuous in that no mention is made of God, Christ or justification by faith. Such basic truths were not in conflict with Luther, Calvin and Zwingli. Rather, the Confession dealt with those issues which differed from those of the Reformation. The articles discussed were Baptism, the Ban, Communion, Separation from the world, the role of the pastor, nonresistance and the oath.⁷

It should be noted that the article referring to nonresistance in this instrument was very similar to that of the early church, and also that the introductory remarks to the confession stated that these articles were discussed and they found themselves of one mind concerning them.⁸

Article 6. We are agreed concerning the Sword: The sword is ordained of God outside the perfection of Christ. It punishes and puts to death the wicked, and guards and protects the good. In the law the sword was ordained for the punishment of the wicked and for their death, and the same is ordained to be used by the worldly magistrates. . . . the Christians' weapons are spiritual against the fortification of the devil.⁹

A later Confession of Faith was written which was recognized by most of the Conservative Mennonite bodies as their official Articles of Faith:

. . . Written in first draft by Adrian Cornelisz, elder of the Flemish Mennonite congregation in the Dutch city of Dordrecht, this Confession of Faith containing 18 articles was adopted April 21, 1632

⁷Herbert Royce Saltzman, "A Historical Study of the Function of Music Among the Brethren in Christ" (unpublished dissertation, Ann Arbor, Mich.: University Microfilms Inc., 1964), p. 26.

⁸See Appendix C.

⁹Saltzman, pp. 297-98; see also Appendix C.

and signed by 51 Flemish and Friesian Mennonite preachers on the basis of union.¹⁰

"The language of the Dordrecht Confession was simple and direct, not literary or philosophical."¹¹ It may be noted that this later Confession had stronger and more specific language with regard to the doctrine of nonresistance.

Article 13. Christians shall follow only the law of love, manifesting to enemies the same spirit of love and forgiveness as did Jesus, being Biblical nonresistants in suffering and abuse. They shall pray for their enemies, comfort and feed "them," and seek their welfare and salvation: all this in obedience to the express teaching of Christ.¹²

The Dordrecht Confession also stated in strong, clear words that the basis for this position was for the salvation of men and according to the will of Christ. This same position was also consistently observed with regard to taking oaths, participating in civil government, and separation.

Confession of the Church of the Brethren (Dunkers)

Another European group whose confession directly influenced the doctrines of the Brethren in Christ was that of the Dunker Church. The group under Alexander Mack became influenced by the writings of Gottfried Arnold (1666-1714).

¹⁰ Mennonite Encyclopedia, Vol. II, D-H, p. 92.

¹¹ Mennonite Encyclopedia, Vol. II, D-H, p. 93.

¹² Mennonite Encyclopedia, Vol. II, D-H, p. 93.

See Appendix A for entire Confession.

He was described as a brilliant and somewhat original and erratic pietistic scholar. He was also called "the father of modern church history."¹³

Arnold's description of the early church impressed Mack and his friends. In Arnold's history they read that the early forms of baptism had been triune immersion and that agape or fellowship meals had been long cherished in the early church and were held in connection with the communion. Arnold also wrote of the practice of footwashing as a rite, the kiss of peace and the anointing of the sick with oil as rites of the early Christians. He portrayed nonresistance, nonswearing and nonworldliness as being emphasized by the early church. The likeness of these ideas to the principles and practices of the existing Anabaptist-Mennonite congregations was patent.¹⁴ The tenets of faith of the Dunker Church generally followed these ideas written by Arnold and used by other Anabaptist groups.¹⁵

The government of the Dunker Church was not highly structured. "Like the Mennonites, the Dunkers were strictly

¹³ Mennonite Encyclopedia, Vol. I, A-C, p. 422.

¹⁴ Mennonite Encyclopedia, Vol. I, A-C, p. 422.

¹⁵ Mennonite Encyclopedia, Vol. I, A-C, p. 164. Gottfried Arnold (1666-1714) in 1696 published his first major work, Die erste Liebe, das ist die Wahre Abbildung der ersten Christen nach ihrem lebendigen Glauben und Leben, an almost revolutionary book. This book gives a new picture of the primitive church as the ideal brotherhood to be emulated. Arnold was influenced by Jacob Spener. However, in a strict sense, he is not a follower of Spener.

congregational in their form of church government and with an uneducated ministry drawn from among the people."¹⁶

Because of this form of government their church polity was not formally structured. The historian Olmstead described the status of the church's confession in the type of government which they stressed:

Though the Dunkers state that they have no Confession of Faith other than the New Testament yet Christopher Hochmann's Confession of Faith prepared by him in 1702 and printed by Christopher Saur in 1743, undoubtedly greatly influenced Mack and the Pennsylvania Dunkers in their formative period.¹⁷

Alexander Mack then wrote what would be expected of a brother as a Christian. These were followed rather closely, but not as a specifically written doctrine.¹⁸ It has been observed by some historians that when the Brethren history was explored with regard to their doctrine that, "the mystic elements of the German mind stand out clear."¹⁹ The core Christian element for the Brethren (Dunkers) was a mystical one.²⁰

The following Article of Faith indicated their early

¹⁶Olmstead, p. 219.

¹⁷Olmstead, p. 219.

¹⁸Martin Grove Brumbaugh, A History of the German Baptist Brethren in Europe and America (Elgin, Ill.: Brethren Publishing House, 1899), p. 538; see also Homer A. Kent, 250 Years . . . Conquering Frontiers, A History of the Brethren Church (Winona Lake, Indiana: The Brethren Missionary Herald Co., 1958), p. 18.

¹⁹Albert T. Ronk, History of the Brethren Church (Ashland, Ohio: Brethren Publishing Co., 1968), p. 68.

²⁰Floyd E. Mallott, Studies in Brethren History (Elgin, Ill.: Brethren Publishing House, 1954), p. 37.

position with regard to nonresistance and some associated issues:

Item 5. Opposes on scriptural grounds: war and the taking of human life (Mt. 5:21-26, 43, 44; Rom. 12:19-21; Isa. 53:7-12); intemperance in all things (Titus 2:2; Gal. 5:19-26; Eph. 5:18); going to law especially against our Christian brethren (I Cor. 6:19); divorce and remarriage except for one scriptural reason (Mt. 19:9), every form of oath (Mt. 5:33-37; James 5:12); membership in secret, oath-bound societies (II Cor. 6:14-18); games of chance and sinful amusement (I Thess. 5:22; I Pet. 2:11); extravagant and immodest dress (I Tim. 2:8-10; I Pet. 3:1-6).²¹

Though their early doctrines were not formalized, they generally accepted them as a brotherhood and substantiated them with a formidable amount of scripture. The Dunker Church was specific on its position of nonresistance as it affected all of life. "Nonresistance is much more than a position regarding only military service. It is the overall stance of the Christian and the Church toward the world and all the evil met therein."²² Its position as a church continues to witness to this doctrine as strongly now as in its foundational years. Contemporary writers in the church indicated this fact by such a statement as:

Defenseless love points to a very different economy, one that is much more theological and thus vastly more radical than that of pacifism. In the first place, the essential motive now is discipleship, i.e. obedience to Christ and obedience of a most radical character . . . There may well be situations in which the Christian has some visible hope and confidence as to how his

²¹ Mennonite Encyclopedia, Vol. I, A-C, p. 423.

²² Donald F. Durnbaugh, The Church of the Brethren Past and Present (Elgin, Ill.: The Brethren Press, 1971), p. 48.

nonresisting love might operate to bring about the desirable outcome, but under the dynamic of discipleship he is committed to follow the way of nonresistance even when he cannot calculate the outcome and even when his calculations would project the undesirable outcome.²³

The Dunker Church continued to teach its basic position in doctrinal truth, literature and in aggressive programs of alternate Christian services. This full-scale program indicated a fortifying of its nonresistant position rather than debilitating. Durnbaugh has stated:

As sectarian groups mature, they tend to adopt the postures and practices of the Church establishments from which they sprang. They become more concerned with nurture than conversion, with trained ministry rather than charismatic lay ministers, with involvement in society rather than fleeing from it. Strict discipline brings economic prosperity and prosperity brings with it an advance in class standing and changed class standing calls into question previously held church views.²⁴

One difficulty which has been common to most of the historic peace churches with regard to the doctrine of nonresistance was stated by Brown with regard to the Dunker Church in the area of teaching:

The general lack of peace teaching and activity is typical of a Brethren quietism which seemingly lacks basic concern until Brethren boys are threatened with military service. These factors contribute to the state of unpreparedness as the Brethren entered the century which was to become the most brutal in history in man's humanity to his fellowman.²⁵

This situation has been remedied in these churches by new educational programs.

²³Durnbaugh, p. 48.

²⁴Durnbaugh, p. 24.

²⁵Brown, p. 37.

Confession of the United Brethren Church

(The United Brethren in Christ)

This church was one of the early American-born denominations. It was uniquely different from the Brethren in Christ Church. The difference may be emphasized by the fact that in the early formative years some of the church leaders approached Reverend Martin Boehm and stated that, "he was too far in advance for his services to be acceptable. This congregation, sometime afterward, about 1776, became the mother congregation for the denomination known as the River Brethren (Brethren in Christ)."²⁶

With regard to the United Brethren Church, in its early days, Stapleton, one of its historians, said,

It does not seem that separate church organization was at first contemplated, but the hostility of the old church against the movement drew the converted ministry and laity more closely together, which necessarily developed into a denominational organization.²⁷

As the denomination grew and a formal doctrine and government were established, the first Confession of Faith of the United Brethren Church adopted by Conference of 1789 indicated no reference being made to the doctrine of nonresistance. The central concern of the United Brethren

²⁶A. W. Drury, The Life of Rev. Philip William Otterbein (Dayton, Ohio: United Brethren Publishing House, 1884), pp. 139-41.

²⁷A. Stapleton, The Evangelical Association of North America (Harrisburg, Penna.: The Evangelical Press, 1942), pp. 17-23.

was the individual salvation attained with immediate assurance which allowed for individual judgment or ordinances.²⁸

Confession of the Evangelical Church

The establishment of this church as a denomination followed the other two American-born churches by a few years. In its first regular council meeting held in 1807 it was agreed to draw up a Discipline. In an earlier Council meeting of 1803 the brethren of the church said that the Old Testament and the New Testament were enough, but they later saw need for a Discipline.²⁹

The first Discipline was adopted in 1809. It was compiled by George Miller who used the German edition of the Methodist Discipline. The doctrine of nonresistance was not an issue in this Confession of Faith.

Confession of the Quakers

(Society of Friends)

Another religious group with which the brethren had association was the Society of Friends. It was through these people, and especially William Penn, that Pennsyl-

²⁸ Daniel Berger, History of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ (Dayton, Ohio: United Brethren Publishing House, 1897), pp. 35-7.

²⁹ W. W. Orwig, History of the Evangelical Association, Vol. I (Cleveland, Ohio: Published by Charles Hammer for the Evangelical Association, 1858), pp. 137-45.

vania became the land of freedom for all faiths.³⁰ Their beliefs included the doctrine of nonresistance; however, they took an active part in politics and governmental operations.

The State of Pennsylvania gives accounts of these people. It is recorded that they were conscientious and would not use the name of God in affirmation. They would not bear arms in time of war, but instead, they helped in other ways.³¹

Through the influence of the Quakers and other religious groups a number of influential laws were passed. Certainly their Christian profession and practical life had a great deal of bearing upon the spiritual life of the fledgling denomination in America.³²

Confession of the Moravian Brethren

(Unitas Fratrum)

The Moravian Brethren Church is one of the oldest of the Protestant churches; its formation predates Lutheranism. This group of quiet brethren was called the Unitas Fratrum (Unity of Brethren). They were a nonresistant group which practiced community fellowship and community of goods. They have been a very aggressive evangelistic group sending forth the largest number of missionaries per capita of any

³⁰Asa W. Climenhaga, History of the Brethren in Christ Church (Nappanee, Indiana: E. V. Publishing House, 1942), p. 38.

³¹Climenhaga, pp. 39-40.

³²Climenhaga, p. 40; see also The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge, Vol. 4 (New York: Funk and Wagnalls Co., 1912), pp. 393-96.

other denomination. They suffered a great deal through the years for their faith and testimony of nonresistance. Their testimony also brought to bear influence upon the church in their American Colonial center at Lititz, Pennsylvania.³³

CONFESSIOAL COMPARISONS

Though there are a number of similarities between the various groups which have been reviewed, the Brethren in Christ Life and Confession of faith are unique to them as a group. They project their own particular genius of faith.

The early brethren may be identified with the Quakers with regard to garb, refusal to bear arms, the holy kiss, debts, lawsuits, oaths and social concern. However, they differ radically in church polity and doctrine.³⁴

There are distinct similarities between the Mennonites and the Brethren in Christ. They do differ in baptism and methods for choosing ministers.³⁵

There are even closer similarities between the

³³The New Schaff-Herzog, pp. 91-94; see also Mennonite Encyclopedia, Vol. III, "A Comprehensive Reference Work on the Anabaptist Movement" (Scottsdale, Penna.: Mennonite Publishing House, 1969), pp. 750-751.

³⁴Climenhaga, p. 43.

³⁵Climenhaga, p. 44.

Church of the Brethren and the Brethren in Christ. The two bodies do differ on the purpose of baptism, the purpose of love feast and the methods of evangelism. There are definite contributions which have been made by each to the knowledge and wisdom of the brethren.³⁶

FORMS OF PACIFISM

Briefly then, in the position of Political Pacifism, this group proposed to make Christian ethics work for everyone. Its aim was to baptize the state, and also to exploit and promote the dramatic possibilities in nonresistance in both practical and political affairs.³⁷ In the ideal of Humanistic Pacifism, the baby which is born into the human family is considered to be perfect. There is contained within this life a bit of God. Therefore, the killing of a person would mean the killing of God. This group said that one should love his fellowman because he is naturally loveable.³⁸ Another philosophy is called Vocational Pacifism. Reinhold Niebuhr said that some are called to this vocation to be an incarnation of love, suffering love, to live as an example before others, such as the Mennonites, but not to force political pressure upon the state to force policy-makers to become pacifists. This was a vocational following of conscience, which when carried

³⁶Climenhaga, p. 44.

³⁷Brown, p. 25.

³⁸Brown, p. 26.

to a logical end, could lead men into a variety of sins.³⁹ Still a further category was termed Selective Pacifism in which these persons would fight in one war but not in another. This concept represented another version of Political Pacifism.⁴⁰ In another of the more recent groups, Nuclear Pacifists, the concept was that it was better to accept suffering than total or mutual annihilation. Modern total war resulted in a greater evil than the good that was intended. It was therefore better to seek to use other forms of resistance.⁴¹ The Anabaptist Pacifism was that which taught obedience by way of discipleship--the way of the cross. This meant that there was nonparticipation by brethren in functions and offices which involved sanctifying the use of the sword. There was a recognition of the necessity of government and the use of force by nonChristian society. There was an eschatological ethic (living as though the kingdom had come) in the life of this group. This was manifested in brotherhood, love for one another and love for an enemy.⁴² There have been certain modifications of this position.

There was a Neo-Anabaptist Pacifism which maintained a separatist theology of State. It did not ask the State to attain to its philosophy but did witness by nonconformity. This manifested itself in radical pacifism of nonresistant

³⁹Brown, p. 26.

⁴⁰Brown, p. 26.

⁴¹Brown, p. 27.

⁴²Brown, p. 27.

agape love. It also projected a testimony of transforming ministry of reconciliation. To govern it bore a prophetic political witness with no illusion that the ethic be applied to international affairs, yet declaring God's judgment to state-world institutions.⁴³ There was still one further position which had been closely identified with the Neo-Anabaptist Pacifism and that was Revolutionary Pacifism. The two groups were closely identified because there were some who identified with both groups. The tenor and mood were different because it was a faddism.⁴⁴ A pacifist stance in an era of revolution was not a negative position but positive of something new and good--something revolutionary. It should have been a Biblical non-resistance. It should have maintained a nonconformist testimony in a sick society. It should bring a prophetic political witness, not seeking to manipulate state or to leave state alone, but should have brought to it a loving, absolute evangelistic witness. There should have been a revolutionary change of new life applied to all of life. It maintained a servant ministry to the oppressed. It presented a theology of hope, along with living now in reality, and faith in a coming victory.⁴⁵ Of the various positions which have been briefly outlined, the Brethren in Christ Doctrine of Nonresistance most closely approximated the Anabaptist

⁴³Brown, p. 27.

⁴⁴Brown, p. 28.

⁴⁵Brown, p. 28.

Pacifist position.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE CONFESSION OF THE BRETHREN IN CHRIST CHURCH

Historians, referring to the River Brethren, stated that the church's position historically has been that no other guide was needed for the church other than the Old and New Testaments.⁴⁶ Mead said: "There is no allegiance to any written Confession in this Church, but there is a strong statement of belief. . . ."⁴⁷

However, historians within the church determined that, "The first known Confession of Faith of the Brethren in Christ dates from the late eighteenth century, near the time of the unofficial organization of the church in America."⁴⁸

⁴⁶Mennonite Encyclopedia, Vol. III, p. 424.

⁴⁷Frank S. Mead, Handbook of Denominations (New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1951), p. 46.

⁴⁸Saltzman, p. 29; see also Appendix B. "The exact date of this document is unknown. Climenhaga affixes the date as preceding 1799. Since the writing of the Climenhaga History (1942), the whereabouts of this document is unknown, thus making further study impossible. Dr. Carlton Wittlinger, Archivist of the Brethren in Christ Church, has recently discovered a resemblance between this Confession and the one recorded in Morris Engle's The Engle History and Family Records of Dauphin and Lancaster Counties (Mt. Joy, Pa.: Bulletin Press), pp. 104-106. Wittlinger writes in his Notes and Queries, Vol. II, No. 1, Jan. 1961: "Careful comparison of the Engle and Climenhaga manuscript translations proved beyond doubt that there was a very direct relationship between the original German script texts. Either one was copied from the other or, as seems more likely, both were copied from the same original

Those who became a part of the church found a Confession of Faith to affirm and make a part of their lives. Through this entire era it has been noted that, ". . . information in this area turns to a few occasional writings of River Brethren members who have survived."⁴⁹ Because of this, both the history of the origin and thought of the church must be approached indirectly. A Familiar Friend notes that some thirty years prior to his writing, thus about 1818, "A Compendium of Doctrine had been drawn up by some ministers and proposed for adoption; but it was rejected by a majority of the meeting at which it had been proposed. Copies of this Compendium were identified as being extant among the ministers."⁵⁰ There was other evidence of an early Confession of Faith among the Brethren. This early concern for a formalization of the tenets of faith indicated the deep concern for the church to become established in its Christian faith after receiving spiritual rebirth.

source. Wittlinger further states that the Engle manuscript is dated 1770 and is attributed to Hans Moyer. This . . . date . . . if authentic, antedated the organized beginnings of the River Brethren," (cited by Saltzman, pp. 29-30).

⁴⁹Owen H. Alderfer, "The Mind of the Brethren in Christ: A Synthesis of Revivalism and the Church Conceived as Total Community" (unpublished Doctoral dissertation, Ann Arbor, Mich.: University Microfilms, Inc., 1964), p. 50; see also Minutes of General Council, Art. 10, which refer to Constitution and By-Laws as being extant at time of meeting, Minutes 1871-1904, p. 13.

⁵⁰Alderfer, p. 53, citing a Familiar Friend.

A study of this early period of the church revealed, as Dr. Climenhaga stated, that:

. . . a scripture was given as the basis for whatever became a practice, so in this sense the word of God was the Constitution of the Church. . . . The word has been the authority for polity, doctrine and practice.⁵¹

It was pointed out by Reverend Paul Snyder, Registrar at Messiah College, that:

A study of the early period of the church will be greatly limited due to the lack of official record for this period Silent Period 1770-1871 . The earliest structured council sessions did not keep official records until the end of the nineteenth century. . . . The records of the General Conference are older than the District Councils even though District Councils were earlier.⁵²

It is, however, apparent that meetings were held which were representative of group action. One of the first of these occurred in regard to the brethren's relation to Martin Boehm.⁵³ Another early group official action which directed the polity of the group was the decision in regard to baptism, and the final decision with regard to baptism.⁵⁴ These group decisions indicate that there existed even in the early days of the brethren prayer groups, a form of governing body in which the group found agreement, and awarded to them authority. It was soon after this that a

⁵¹Paul L. Snyder, "A History of the Polity of the Brethren in Christ Church" (unpublished Master's Thesis, Gettysburg, Penna.: Lutheran Theological Seminary, 1964), p. 9.

⁵²Snyder, p. 2.

⁵³Drury, pp. 139-141.

⁵⁴Climenhaga, p. 347.

formal Confession of Faith was structured. It may be said of this Confession, as it has been said of the Mennonite Dordrecht Confession, "The language of the . . . Confession is simple and direct, not literary or philosophical in character."⁵⁵ Indicative of this Confession is the item which addresses itself to the sword or nonresistance:

The Sword, revenge and self-defense are . . . entirely forbidden, verses 39 and 40 (Matt. 5). Out of the teachings of our Lord Jesus and His Apostles we also understand that no member or follower of Jesus Christ is allowed to serve in worldly government offices; therefore it ought to be forbidden to us. But we ought not withstand the worldly governments, but be subject to them in all that is good, and earnestly pray for them that God may give them light and wisdom, so that they may perform their duties truly.⁵⁶

The Spirit of Christ which is manifested in this Article of Faith has been the consistent testimony of the brethren from their inception. With regard to the character of the group that formulated this doctrine and lived it in practical life, Alderfer has said:

Various efforts have been made to characterize these people all the German sectarians in an attempt to indicate their motivation and attitudes in life. G. Paul Musselman sees religion as central to the lives of these people. "Their lives are the literature of their belief. The will of God is central in their lives. In fact, for them life has no purpose apart from the service of God." . . . He sees the plain people as a protestant attempt to implement the Franciscan philosophy of the ideal life.⁵⁷

⁵⁵Mennonite Encyclopedia, Vol. II, p. 93.

⁵⁶Saltzman, p. 299, citing "Brethren in Christ Confession of Faith, 1799."

⁵⁷Alderfer, p. 21.

In the . . . Abstract of the Most Important Decisions Made by General Council . . . a statement from the Council of 1874 indicates that a "manuscript of the Confessions of Faith of the fathers of the church was read."⁵⁸

In addition to this reference there are other references in the early recorded meetings, such as Article 10 in the Council of 1872, which clearly stated that there existed Constitution and By Laws.⁵⁹ The brethren conducted General Church Conferences before 1871; however, prior to this time there was no evidence of written records. In addition to the recorded Conference Minutes, there was added an Origin and Confession of Faith. This is found in the extant copies of the Abstract of the Most Important Decisions Made by General Council dated 1871-81 inclusive, and a later Abstract dated 1871-87 inclusive.⁶⁰ The importance of these early Confessions to this study is the Article of Confession which stated the church's early belief in nonresistance as a part of its lifestyle.

. . . and we believe that it teaches the doctrine of nonresistance in a qualified sense; that it is not the Christian's privilege to take up the sword or fight with carnal weapons, yet it is his duty to be strictly loyal to the government under which he lives, in all

⁵⁸Alderfer, p. 53; see also Origin, Confession of Faith and Church Government Together with an Abstract of the Most Important Decisions Made by General Council of the Brethren in Christ 1871-1901, Minutes of Council 1874, Art. 5, (Abilene, Kansas: The News Book and Job Print, 1901), p. 9.

⁵⁹Minutes of the General Conference of the Brethren in Christ 1872, p. 13.

⁶⁰See Appendix D-- copies of Confession of Faith from both abstracts.

things that do not conflict or are not forbidden by the Word of the Lord.⁶¹

There is an earlier Confession of Faith held by the Engle family and associated with Hans Moyer. This was dated 1770 which was prior to the formal founding of the River Brethren Church. While this early date caused some difficulty, it was not too early for experimentation with a Confession of Faith, granting 1767 as the time of the "grosze versammlung" in Isaac Long's barn in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania.⁶²

There is no evidence that the church fathers were "writing men." They left no documents which may be attributed to them.⁶³ Even though there was no evidence of original thought, there were clear indications of a unique work in laying a founding Confession. There was,

. . . no evidence found that the writer or writers of the River Brethren Confession directly copied from or were directly dependent upon any other Confession of Faith. The Confession does not give the impression of being the work of one mind writing a Confession at one time.⁶⁴

It was evident that the history of the church and

⁶¹See Appendix E --- Confession of Faith 1871-1881.

⁶²Alderfer, pp. 54-55; see also A. W. Drury, pp. 137-8.

⁶³Alderfer, p. 50.

⁶⁴Schrag, p. 53. The suggestion that the Confession quotes from the Mennonite Dordrecht Confession is not true, although at points the thought is very similar. Wilmer Eshelman, "The River Brethren Denomination" Papers read before the Lancaster County Historical Society LII, p. 180, cited by Schrag, p. 53; see also the Appendix F for

its Confession testified to its steadfast message of salvation along with the concept of the church as a community of brethren living in peaceful nonresistance before the world. To develop its creed:

. . . it appears evident that the early River Brethren thought represents an attempted synthesis of Anabaptist ideas by way of the Mennonite and the Dunkers with Pietistic-Revivalist ideas by way of the United Brethren in Christ. The River Brethren largely Mennonite in rootage, could not make the leap that Boehm made and reject the order and discipline of the past; on the other hand, they could not reject the personal, emotional religious experiences and assurance of salvation which had come to them through the United Brethren. Their answer was an effort to keep the best of each.⁶⁵

In synthesizing the Confession of Faith, the doctrine of nonresistance was considered an important enough article of faith to include as a part of the testimony of the love of Jesus Christ and his followers in the River Brethren Church.

Dordrecht Confession.

The German Baptists, because of their Pietistic Anti-creedalism, refused to proclaim or make a Confession of Faith. Morgan Edwards, writing in 1770, stated, "two Dunker individuals have put forth a creed privately (or each put forth a creed)." This would have been one of the sources of the River Brethren Creed. Morgan Edwards, Material Towards a History of the Baptists in Pennsylvania, Both British and German (Joseph Crukshank and Isaac Collins, 1770), cited by Schrag, p. 53; see also William Warren Sweet, Religion in Colonial America (New York: Charles Scribners Sons, 1953), p. 219.

⁶⁵ Alderfer, p. 83.

SUMMARY

This chapter briefly reviewed the various forms of Pacifism with particular attention given to the Anabaptist form which the Brethren in Christ doctrine of nonresistance most nearly approximated.

Attention was given to the Confession of the early primitive church and its testimony of nonresistance, with specific reference to the fact that reformations in the Christian Church often desired to return to the original beliefs of the church. A brief survey was made of the Confessions of Faith of some of these nonresistant denominations. Comparisons were made with regard to denominational differences in an effort to show the unique genius of the Brethren in Christ Confession. The Confession of the Brethren in Christ Church is identified as being eclectic. The form which it has taken is a synthesis of the Confessions of other peace churches. These areas were also examined to indicate the source of the doctrine of nonresistance.

Chapter 4

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE BRETHREN IN CHRIST CHURCH AND INVOLVEMENT OF THE DOCTRINE OF NONRESISTANCE IN THE WORLD - 1870-1971

This period in the history and philosophy of the doctrine of nonresistance in the Brethren in Christ Church is an easier period to follow because in 1871 the church began to keep official records of General Conference meetings. However, these writings were very sparse during the first few years.

As the progress of the church was viewed in this section, the first part dealt with the historical setting of the American scene in order that the church's doctrine could be compared and contrasted with the span of American Protestant evangelical church trends. It also surveyed the manner in which the River Brethren's concepts ran counter to the historical growth patterns of America. The study further revealed that the church's concepts changed and came closer to national church concepts. The span of time is so great in this period of rapid change that only general outlines were referred to, which accounts for the minimal historical framework.

The latter part of this section discussed the effect of the doctrine of nonresistance on the brethren

and on their interchurch relationships. This was followed by its relation to life outside the church, industrialization, politics and war during the three periods: 1870-1918, 1919-1946 and 1947-1971, and a summary of these periods.

THE AMERICAN SCENE

The brethren prior to this period and following until 1904, lived in a quiet agriculture setting. The United States census indicates that the Pennsylvania rural population trend in 1870 was nearly ten times higher than that reported in 1904. This trend was completely reversed in the 1940's with the urban population becoming greater.¹ This population change which took place had direct effect on the River Brethren doctrine. Another trend in America which solicited reaction from the brethren and contrasted them with American growth is expressed in the Annals of America:

Nations that experience the trauma of war often seek to heal their psychic wounds in a post-war entertainment binge and in this, America was no exception, in the aftermath of the Civil War. It is probably no accident that the New York Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Kentucky Derby were both founded in the 1870's.²

¹Leon E. Truesdell, Statistician, 16th Census of the U. S. Population, Vol. II, Part 6, Penna.-Texas (Wash., D.C., United States Gov. Printing Office, 1943).

²William Benton, Publisher, The Annals of America, Vol. 10 (Chicago, Ill.: Encyclopedia Britannica Incorp., 1968), p. 261.

The period of 1870-1880 has been commonly called the "Gilded Age" after the title of the book by Mark Twain.³ The period from 1880 to 1914 was one of extensive changes in America with the growth of cities and the development of industrialization. The scientific and technological advances played a greater role in the lives of American people. The American spirit was passing from the romanticism of its early history to a realism and naturalism which increasingly dominated the late nineteenth and the twentieth centuries. This had a considerable impact on American religious trends. The older established churches were trying to hold to proven ways, while recognizing a need for adjustment to contemporary needs. The way pointed toward radical shifts in thought and practice. At the same time, modernism and social gospel groups were seeking to help the Christian churches to come to terms with these revolutionary changes. A brief resumé by Bailey indicates the situation which faced the churches:

The downward curve took its start in the disgraceful handling of war equipment in which men without conscience traded human life for gold. . . . It is a sordid tale of greed and the will to power of "Robber Barons" . . . When these men began operations America was an agrarian-mercantile democracy; before they passed on, it was an industrial and financial fascism. . . . Politics became a scandal. . . . Industry created slums. A demand for cheap labor brought an influx of farm labor into the cities. . . . where real estate owners took advantage of them in old

³Benton, Annals of America, Vol. 2, p. XIX.

abandoned houses. They were packed entire families to one room.⁴

In such a world as has been described, the Brethren in Christ Church had to make decisions which governed the life of the church for nearly a century. They decided definitely that they could not conform to this new age. This decision was made even if it would result in restricting the size of the denomination. This was not a decision which was made as one purposeful step, but it was made through many singular decisions. An example of church decisions showing the stark contrast between the American scene and the Brethren in Christ Church may be observed in the Council of 1871, held at the home of John Mohler, Stark County, Ohio, April 20-21. The first Article of the Council read as follows:

Is it right for members to marry such as are not members of the church?

Decided: Only by consent of the church, as decided by Council of 1843 in Lancaster County.⁵

Another Article in the Agenda which faced the brethren was the matter of "photography." Article IV (4) in the same General Conference of 1871, stated the question:

⁴Albert Edward Bailey, The Gospel in Hymns (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1950), p. 556.

⁵Origin, Confession of Faith and Church Government, Together With An Abstract of the Most Important Decisions Made by General Council of the Brethren in Christ Commonly Called River Brethren, 1871-1901 Inclusive (Abilene, Kansas: The News Book and Job Print, 1901), Art. I, p. 5.

Is it consistent for members to have their likeness taken?

Decided: Not consistent.⁶

To the River Brethren Church these were serious matters in seeking to maintain a consistent Christian walk and a pure church concept which they followed. "The essential thing as they saw it was personal faithfulness to God and the order of the church."⁷ This driving desire to live lives of holiness meant that they would be separated or isolated in many areas of life that were very much in the foreground during this time.

1870 - 1918

Politics and Nonresistance 1870-1918

For some of the brethren this must have presented real areas of internal conflict and tension, for the political corruption must have confronted some with a challenge to have clean, Christian government. This question of participation in politics presented itself as early as the Conference of 1872. The Conference was held at the home of Brother Samuel Page, Dauphin County, Pennsylvania, April 18 and 19. This location is near the State Capitol at Harrisburg. Article 7 of the Minutes questions:

⁶Origin, Confession, 1871-1901, p. 5.

⁷Owen H. Alderfer, "The Mind of the Brethren in Christ: A Synthesis of Revivalism and the Church Conceived as Total Community" (unpublished Doctor's dissertation, Mich.: University Microfilms, Inc., 1964), p. 153.

Is it according to the gospel for a brother to electioneer for political purposes?

Answer: No.⁸

The Minutes do not indicate any discussion, but the emphatic "No" indicates the brethren's continued consistency in the doctrine of nonresistance which restrained them from becoming involved in politics. In the Confession of Faith which is dated 1799, the section entitled, "Sword" states:

. . . Out of the teachings of our Lord Jesus and His apostles we also understand that no member or follower of Jesus Christ is allowed to serve in worldly government offices; therefore it ought also be forbidden to us.⁹

The nonresistant concept behind this was the taking up of an instrument of punishment as an official of the state. The attitude which is outlined in the Confession of Faith led the brethren to oppose participation in political activities which included electioneering, holding office and voting. This also went so far as to restrict members from serving as jurors.¹⁰ There were two exceptions which were granted by General Conference. The first was voting in elementary school elections, "if not

⁸ Minutes of General Conference of the Brethren in Christ (River Brethren) from 1871-1904 in Condensed Form, With Index, Together With a Reproduction of Incorporation Proceedings, Constitution and By-Laws, Confession of Faith, Articles on Sanctification (Harrisburg, Penna.: n.p., 1904), Art. 7, p. 13.

⁹ Brethren in Christ Confession of Faith, 1799; see Appendix B.

¹⁰ Origin, Confession 1871-1904, Art. 9, p. 13.

political," and voting in reference to prohibition. This was brought before Conference in 1889 in the meeting house at Markham, Ontario:

Whereas the Pennsylvania Brethren petitioned General Conference for an expression of its attitude on the prohibition question. Resolved, That inasmuch as the Brethren in Christ do not believe it consistent with their faith as a nonresistant people to take part in political elections, but since the prohibition question is a moral and not a political one, General Conference submits the question to the conscientious consideration of each brother, but positively forbids any brother either in sentiment or vote to give any encouragement to the regular traffic.¹¹

Even though these exceptions were granted, the brethren were very wary about opening the door indiscriminately as a license to general political activity. However, there was some limited politics among some of the brethren, some serving on school boards; another became a water commissioner for the city of Abilene, Kansas.¹² Because of this, there were some members who were required to make public confession for having taken part in politics.¹³ Articles also began to appear in the Evangelical Visitor, the denominational church periodical. Mention was made of the incompatibility between nonre-

¹¹Origin, Confession 1871-1904, Art. 7, p. 55.

¹²Martin H. Schrag, "The Brethren in Christ Attitude Toward the World" (unpublished Doctor's dissertation, Ann Arbor, Mich.: University Microfilms, 1971), p. 177.

¹³References to Confessions in District Council Minutes, cited by Schrag, p. 176.

sistance and political activity.¹⁴ It became very difficult to continue to maintain this testimony of nonresistance in politics. Finally the Conference of 1894 recognized that the church:

. . . cannot point out the various offices which brethren might hold under the different forms of government where they are located, we would advise that brethren should not allow themselves to be used in public offices for fear of becoming involved in political strife, which is contrary to the faith of the Church on conscientious principles.¹⁵

It should be noted that although they continued to maintain stringent controls in the area of politics, the leaders of the church were vitally interested in the activities of the American government particularly as it dealt with moral issues. Their peace position did not hinder them in seeking to influence government for the benefit of the populace. Supporting this fact is a memorial which was presented to President Theodore Roosevelt. The content of the message represented the church's concurrence with the President's message to Congress, January 1905, regarding the laxity of various states relating to matters of divorce and marriage.¹⁶

¹⁴"Hindering," Evangelical Visitor, III, Sept. 15, 1890, 278-279; and H. N. Engle, "Christian Politics," Evangelical Visitor, IX, Nov. 1, 1896, 321, cited by Schrag, p. 176.

¹⁵Minutes, 1871-1904, held in Dickinson Co., Kansas, May 16-18, 1894, Art. 2, p. 73.

¹⁶Minutes of General Conference of the Brethren in Christ Church, 1905, Paradise Church, Smithville, Ohio, Art. 16, p. 12.

During this period of time there was one other issue regarding civil government and politics which was brought before the church's governing body for its official opinion in relation to the doctrine of nonresistance. In the Conference which convened at Thomas, Oklahoma in 1913, a "petition concerning the consistency of brethren joining the police force," was discussed on the floor of Conference. It was:

Resolved: That since the Brotherhood, both in doctrine and practice seeks to adhere to the principles of nonresistance, it is deemed inadvisable for any member of the body to engage in police or military service.¹⁷

It is a noteworthy fact that there were members of the church who were concerned about this area of their Christian testimony and obedience to the deliberations of the church government.

The brethren, faced with the issue of voting and efforts for the registration of voters in the various communities of which they were a part, found it necessary to assign a committee to give to General Conference an official expression relative to voting by members of the church. In the Conference of 1916 at Florin, Pennsylvania, the committee outlined for Conference what it felt

Note: Minutes of the Annual General Conference of the Brethren in Christ Church will hereinafter be referred to as "Minutes." After the first reference to the Minutes of any given year, only the year and necessary page information will be cited.

¹⁷Minutes, 1913, Thomas, Oklahoma, Art. 32, p. 55.

to be the church's scriptural position in relation to the world, rulers and government.

Nowhere in the word of God is it expressed or implied that the bride of Christ should participate in upholding the governments of the world by voting.¹⁸

There seems to be a shift in some of the scriptural basis and argumentation for nonvoting. The absence of any reference to nonresistance in the committee report is very conspicuous. This is even more obvious when one considers that the chronological order of such a decision falls within the period of war years. There is a definite change indicated in the philosophy of Conference with regard to this issue as one collates the decisions of Conference. This change is made even more evident in this period, comparing the previous decisions and statements of Conference with Article LX (60), The Principles of a Nonresistant,¹⁹ in which there is no reference to the relation of politics, office holding, and voting to the doctrine of nonresistance.

Industrialization--Nonresistance 1870-1918

The Brethren in Christ, during this period, had considered themselves a peculiar, separated people that

¹⁸Minutes, 1916, Florin, Pennsylvania, Art. 19, pp. 33-4.

¹⁹Minutes, 1917, Bethel Church, Detroit, Dickinson County, Kansas, Art. LX, pp. 114-8.

had come out of the world. Over the years, under the guidance of God, in a rural setting, they were able to maintain a tightly knit brotherhood. With the thrust of industrialization in America this relationship was affected. The brethren attempted to stay the tide of change by various conference actions. One example is here referred to in which Conference of 1895, convening at Nottawasaga, Ontario, Canada, decided, "that members are advised not to take part in street parades and other excitable gatherings."²⁰

In order to help in this period of change, Conference, in 1902, passed a resolution which called upon the church to give strict adherence to church government.²¹ This was a necessary step in order to maintain their convictions through this trying time.

Some brethren were beginning to supplement their farming with industrial work, and others moved into communities and began working directly in industry. These moves introduced labor problem questions to Conference. In 1904 the records showed that, "The question regarding members joining labor unions was tabled and postponed indefinitely with a proviso that members should be

²⁰Minutes, 1895, Nottawasaga, Ontario, Canada, Art. 7, p. 74.

²¹Minutes, 1902, Belle Springs Meeting House, Donegal, Kansas, Art. 44, p. 26.

discouraged from joining any labor unions."²² The following year the question of labor unions was again discussed by Conference in which they decided that it was inconsistent with the word of God to become affiliated with secret organizations or labor unions.²³

The brethren were aware of the fact that in order for the unions to function to advantage, coercive means must be practiced and they recognized these means as being contrary to their peace testimony.

Generally, the brethren tried to discourage member participation in business or industry.²⁴ However, this kind of authority was not accepted without question. The question of moral issues and their relation to business and corporations was referred to in the Conference of 1907²⁵ and again in 1912. In the latter Conference, the church considered the advisability of issuing a manual of what constitutes the doctrine of nonresistance, and also business relationships and corporations with which the brethren may be allied.²⁶

²²Minutes, 1903, Florin, Penna., Art. 29, p. 17.

²³Minutes, 1904, Six Line Church, Stayner, Ontario, Canada, Art. 7, p. 8.

²⁴Crigin, Confession 1871-1904, pp. 12-22.

²⁵Minutes, 1907, Messiah Home, Harrisburg, Penna., Art. 17, p. 11.

²⁶Minutes, 1912, Air Hill Church, Franklin Co., Penna., Art. 27, p. 108.

These problems became more acute with the growth of industry. It may be noted that the church's philosophy changed with regard to the problems of industrialization and its relationship to the doctrine of nonresistance, for the one grew in direct proportion to the other.

War--Nonresistance 1870-1918

The Brethren in Christ Church, seeking to live Godly lives in obedience to the scriptures, was convinced that war was contrary to the entire tenor of the scriptures, and therefore refused any part in its practice. This position has been confirmed in each publication of the Confession of Faith during this period. There were five official publications of the Confession during this span of time which consisted of 1881, 1887, 1901, 1904 and 1915. The following excerpt from the oldest of these will indicate the church's position:

. . . We believe that it (the scriptures) teaches the doctrine of nonresistance in a qualified sense; that it is not the Christian's privilege to take up the sword or fight with carnal weapons.²⁷

The major reason for the Brethren's opposition to war was based on the New Testament teachings of Jesus Christ and the apostles. The entire tenor of their teachings was the law of love and the principles of the "Sermon on the Mount."

²⁷Origin, Confession 1871-1881, p. 6. See Appendix G--other copies of Confession.

. . . If fighting, killing, destroying and overcoming enemies would have been the spirit that should characterize Christians, Christ could and would have made short work of His enemies and thus have given His followers the example how they should do.²⁸

Jesus and His followers also taught that the Kingdom of God was not of this world. Since the Brethren's entire devotion was to Jesus Christ and His Kingdom, they felt they had no responsibility for the defense of this world. These scripturally founded reasons, compounded with the sheer brutality of war, were the founding factors upon which the brethren have continued to build and maintain a doctrine of nonresistance.

There have been other official publications and opinions taught and shared throughout the brotherhood. The official tract of 1906 stated: "War, duelling, suicide and prenatal destruction is murder."²⁹ In the Canadian branch of the church, two of the districts declared their opposition to war, and they declared that it was wrong

²⁸T. A. Long, "Be Ready to Answer," Evangelical Visitor, June 1, 1888, pp. 148-9; W. G. Snyder, "What Has the Sword Secured for Men?" Visitor I, Nov. 1, 1887, 34; C. Stoner, "Retaliation," Visitor I, June 1, 1888, 158; J. H. B., "War a Great Evil," Visitor, July, 1891, 195; Geo. S. Grim, "War vs. Christianity," Visitor VII, June 1, 1894, 167; F. Elliott, "War," Visitor VIII, Jan. 15, 1895, 17-18; Geo. S. Grim, "War Incompatible with Christianity," Visitor, June 1, 1895, 164; W. O. Baker, "War," Visitor X, Jan. 15, 1897, 18-9, article continued in Feb. 1, 1897, 34-6; Geo. Grim, "The Support and Continuance of War," Visitor XII, April 15, 1899, 145.

²⁹"What We Believe and Why We Believe It" (a tract of the Brethren in Christ Church, n.p., 1906).

"to go to war."³⁰ During this time the brethren continued to maintain an attitude of opposition toward the various wars which took place around the world. This attitude was expressed periodically in the Evangelical Visitor, the denomination's paper.

The government required the historic peace churches, which held to the doctrine of nonresistance, to file facts concerning their status. The General Conference of 1908 which convened in Ontario, Canada, was asked by the Census Bureau to furnish, ". . . an expression of faith and a creed pertaining to the doctrine of nonresistance as well as a historic sketch of the first families emigrating to this country composing the brotherhood. . . ." ³¹ The church informed the government that it had not accepted any historical creed or confession, but that it adhered to certain generally recognized doctrines of which the doctrine of nonresistance was a part. The Conference of 1909 confirmed this position which was formulated by the committee assigned to this work. They stated:

The recognition of Christ not only as Saviour but as Lord and Master and Coming King, . . . inasmuch as He is Prince of Peace, His Kingdom is of peace and that as His subjects, they should abstain from the

³⁰District Council Minutes, Nottawa District 1900; see also Markham District Council Minutes, Jan. 26, 1900, cited by E. Morris Sider, "History of the Brethren in Christ (Tunker) in Canada" (unpublished Master's Thesis, 1969).

³¹Minutes, 1908, Heise Hill Church, Gormley, Ontario, Canada, Art. 37, p. 24.

employment of carnal forces which involve the taking of human life. For this reason the doctrine of nonresistance is a prominent feature of their belief.³²

This statement of faith was accepted by General Conference and forwarded to the census bureau.

War--Membership--Nonresistance

The brethren were not quick to receive someone into the faith. After conversion, one had to prove himself by the kind of life which he lived. A very important factor in this proof was an exemplary life of nonresistance. During the Conference held in 1913 at Thomas, Oklahoma, the Conference was petitioned by the church at Upland, California, concerning the advisability of baptizing a young man who was in the National Guard Army stationed at San Francisco. The man had been converted in the San Francisco Mission, which was under the supervision of the Upland Brethren in Christ Church. He was not able to terminate his present Guard status. The Conference decided that since the man enjoyed a good Christian reputation, as evidenced by the testimony of many, he should be baptized. This resolution was not to stand as a precedent for other decisions. A person in military service could be baptized only after the church reviewed the individual case. The person was to seek discharge on the basis of his conviction as a conscientious objector. If this could not be granted,

³²Minutes, 1913, Abilene, Kansas, Art. 8, Sec. 1, p. 13.

then he was to promise that he would not reënlist at the end of his term of service. The brethren substantiated their decision with scripture. They agreed also to grant permission for all districts to act according to the procedure of this General Conference in the event of any other emergencies.³³

Another petition which was brought before Conference was the resolution, "deeming it unadvisable for any members of the body to engage in police or military service."³⁴

War--Missions--Nonresistance

The doctrine became a part of the living testimony of the missionaries of the church on the foreign field. It became a very apparent testimony in times of tension and trouble. A report from H. L. Smith and co-workers of the India mission field to General Conference of 1915 indicated the following interesting testimony to nonresistance:

On January 12th we sadly bade farewell to our many new friends and patients at Sour Village, and turned our faces northwards. The most cheering words upon departing were by a Brahmin who said, that while we were there in the village, there had been very little fighting and quarreling. . . ."³⁵

³³Minutes, 1913, Thomas, Oklahoma, Art. 9, Sec. 3, p. 14-17.

³⁴See footnote 17.

³⁵Minutes, 1915, home of B. F. Hershey, Pavonia, Ohio, Art. XI, Sec. 13, p. 50.

War--World War I--Nonresistance

Though the brethren were vitally interested in the moral status of our nation and other nations, there was very little recorded about World War I in the entire period between 1914 and 1917. In a general report given by Brother and Sister Lehman from the African mission field, there is a mere mention of the "European War" and this was done only as an illustration in the message.³⁶ The editor of the Evangelical Visitor made mention of the beginning of the war in Europe as a brief editorial comment.³⁷

War came to America when on April 2, 1917, President Wilson asked Congress for a Declaration of War. He also made the historical comment, "The world must be made safe for democracy."³⁸ Conference convened shortly after the declaration of war. The doctrine of nonresistance was very much in the forefront during the Conference sessions. The church of Elkhart, Indiana, petitioned Conference that since an earlier Conference of 1912 had formulated a doctrinal statement with regard to nonresistance, the said doctrine should be produced by Conference and copies sent to Washington, D.C. as evidence of the church's official position in this time of war.

³⁶Minutes, 1916, Art. XXII, Sec. 7, p. 53.

³⁷Evangelical Visitor XXVIII, No. 16, Aug. 10, 1914, p. 4.

³⁸Annals of America, Vol. 14, "1916-1928 World War and Prosperity," p. XVI-XXI.

Conference accepted the article and also voted to have it printed in the Evangelical Visitor as an article of information for the church.³⁹ In addition to this action, the church also approved an article on "The Principles of a Nonresistant." This article presented the doctrine as it related to the individual, the home, the church, business, state, and military service.⁴⁰

The work of Conference in the United States seemed like a situation of "too little too late." This period was spoken of by a committee formed in the 1930's as a period in which the church was not prepared to help their young men as they faced the draft.

The Conference of 1918 expressed heartfelt sympathy toward all of those who were suffering because of the loss of loved ones in World War I. With regard to the church's draft-age young men, they stated:

Since the enactment of the Selective Service law, various steps have been taken and efforts put forth to produce exemption from military service, and to render spiritual help and encouragement to the young brethren who are detained in the various camps because of their Christian faith and character.⁴¹

To a large degree, these efforts proved to be futile. Yet the board which was working on this problem did not give up hope. In the summer of 1917 Bishop C. N.

³⁹Minutes, 1917, Art. 25, pp. 66-7.

⁴⁰Minutes, 1917, Art. LX, p. 114-7.

⁴¹Minutes, 1918, Union Grove Church, New Paris, Elkhart Co., Indiana, Gen. Sec. 1, Art. XII, pp. 16-7.

Hostetter, the General Conference Secretary, with delegates of the Church of the Brethren and of the Mennonite Church, interviewed the officials at Washington, D.C., defining to them the faith and attitude of the nonresistant bodies toward war.⁴² The brethren found themselves in a very difficult position when they were asked to produce the exact date when they as a church went on record as a nonresistant body. They had no evidence in their own files due to the fact of little or no record keeping before 1871. When they attempted to research this date in the government files they were informed that such a research would be impractical and impossible because of congested conditions.⁴³

The church was concerned about the general attitude of the brotherhood during this time of testing. In an article by Reverend George Detweiler the following exhortation was expressed to the brethren:

Christians should sacrifice no less because they do not share the hardships of army life, but they should keep their eyes open for opportunities to serve their fellowmen.⁴⁴

The leaders educated the church to the facts of other implications of the doctrine during the time of war.

⁴²Minutes, 1918, p. 17.

⁴³Minutes, 1918, p. 17.

⁴⁴George Detweiler, "As to the Nonresistant Attitude," Visitor XXXI, April 30, 1917, 2, cited by Harry Bert, "Notes on Nonresistance in the Brethren in Christ Church to the End of World War I," Notes and Queries, VI, Jan. 1965, pp. 6-7.

An article in the June 18, 1917 issue of the Visitor expressed another of these concerns--high produce prices and large profits:

If at the end of a year his gains are two or three-fold that of normal years, can a consistent nonresistant Christian retain such surplus in increased luxuries and accumulations?⁴⁵

Though the brethren in the United States, and their children, suffered through misunderstanding and hatred, they maintained a commendable testimony. Though they were subjected to these experiences, they continued to obey and pray for their nation in its time of need. Conference of 1918 called upon the church to observe the Presidential Proclamation which entreated the nation to observe May 30, 1918 as a day of public humiliation, prayer and fasting.⁴⁶

War--Nonresistance--Canadian Church

The Canadian Brethren in Christ Churches were going through somewhat the same throes as the brethren in the U.S. Leaders with foresight began to make preparation for military draft. In 1912 they wrote to the Canadian Parliament for copies of the present laws regarding their position. They were reassured of possible exemption in the event of war.⁴⁷ By 1916 the war had advanced to such

⁴⁵Harry Bert, Notes and Queries, citing Enos H. Hess, "The War and Our Attitude," Visitor, June 18, 1917, p. 6.

⁴⁶Minutes, 1918, pp. 62-3.

⁴⁷E. Morris Sider, "The Peace Testimony of the Early Brethren in Christ in Canada," Notes and Queries, VII, No.2, April 1970, p. 20.

a stage that compulsory draft was inevitable. The Canadian Joint Council of the church appointed a committee to draw up a petition which was to review the church's historic position as a Peace Church. It was also to assure the government of the continued loyalty of the church. They repeated the past petition of payment as substitution for military service, which had been given to the government in earlier history. They stated: ". . . Our opposition to war is not founded upon disloyalty to our government, but upon the conviction that the Gospel of Christ is the Gospel of peace."⁴⁸

Practically all of these efforts were to no avail. The government had provided an exemption program, but they stated that it was only for members of well-established churches. The problem for the brethren in Canada was that the church's name had been changed from "Tunker" to Brethren in Christ. The result was that a number of young men went to prison awaiting court martial, and others endured threats of military personnel.⁴⁹ Bishop E. J. Swalm related their court martial experience in Toronto, Ontario, Canada, as one in which they received God's sustaining grace. This came during a time of humiliation. They were called liars, cowards, weaklings, selfish and

⁴⁸Petition of the "Tunker" Church in Canada to the Exemption Boards, Sept. 1917, cited by Sider, p. 20.

⁴⁹Sider, p. 20.

mentally deranged. They were finally imprisoned at St. Catherines, Ontario. Bishop Swalm said, "Cell 23 proved to be a real Ebenezer in our lives."⁵⁰ It was in this Cell 23 where the young men which were interned led the Catholic Turnkey to a saving knowledge in the Lord Jesus Christ.

The problem was finally solved when the Mennonites interceded and convinced the government that exemption should be granted to the Brethren in Christ.⁵¹

Nonresistance Teaching 1870-1918

Schrag delineates six innovations which brought new life to the brotherhood during this period. These six innovations also became some of the new teaching agents for the doctrine of nonresistance. In the Sabbath School, which first began as early as 1863,⁵² the doctrine was taught as a normal part of catechetical doctrinal teachings of the church. Bishop E. J. Swalm recollects that the doctrine was taught in the Sixth Line Church (now Stayner Church), Ontario, Canada, as early as 1901. He stated: "The Sunday School teachers were not able to teach it /doctrine of nonresistance/ as well as the leaders, but I

⁵⁰E. J. Swalm, Nonresistance Under Test (Nappanee, Indiana: Evangel Publishing House, 1949), pp. 41-52.

⁵¹Swalm, pp. 47-57; see also Sider, p. 23.

⁵²Schrag, p. 197.

always knew what they believed."⁵³ From the Pennsylvania churches, Rev. John H. Martin said that he did not recall the teaching or preaching of nonresistance in his church or in the Donegal District when he was a boy. Later in the period following 1922, he recalls this teaching.⁵⁴ Another elderly minister, Rev. Graybill Wolgemuth, reflecting on the teaching of the doctrine in Sunday School and Church, stated: ". . . This was one of the strong points of emphasis in Rapho District in 1914."⁵⁵ They were also taught not to purchase "Liberty Bonds."

In the church periodical, The Evangelical Visitor, which started in 1887, the brethren were able to bring before the entire constituency the doctrines of the church. A number of these articles which appeared in the Visitor have been referred to in this paper. The church-affiliated schools and colleges became a good place to orient the young people of the church to the doctrines. Conference of 1915 stated that Bible doctrine was then being taught at Messiah College in accordance with the wishes of the 1914 Conference.⁵⁶ The other innovations

⁵³Based on personal correspondence between E. J. Swalm, former Bishop of the Brethren in Christ Church, and the writer.

⁵⁴Based on personal correspondence between Rev. John H. Martin, retired minister of the Brethren in Christ Church, and the writer.

⁵⁵Based on personal correspondence between Rev. Graybill Wolgemuth, retired minister of the Brethren in Christ Church, and the writer.

⁵⁶Minutes, 1915, p. 31.

which also became new teaching instruments of the church were: revivalism, missions, and Wesleyan holiness.

1919 - 1946

Clean Up--Nonresistance 1919-1946

The "gay ninety" period, which typified much of the era studied in the preceding section, was replaced after the war by the roaring twenties, depression years of the thirties, and then World War II of the forties. For the Brethren in Christ Church it meant once again living contrary to the general trend of society. It was also a time when they built upon earlier organization and expanded both numerically and geographically. This period immediately following the war meant for many to get away from the thoughts of war and all its horrible memories; but, for the brethren, contrary to the normal trend, it meant a continued ministry. They did not want to take part in it, but they were willing to help clean up the mess which war and hatred caused. Numerous inquiries came from different parts of the brotherhood for an avenue through which the church could perform effectual work of relief. "Our Brotherhood is not in sympathy with contributing for the promotion of the war, but in accord with the principle of contributing to the need of war sufferers."⁵⁷

⁵⁷ Minutes, 1919, Antrim Church, Greencastle, Franklin County, Penna., Art. IX, Sec. 1, p. 13. .

With limited membership, approximately 4500 communing members at this time, the leaders were aware that they needed full cooperation. It was agreed to help to finance and assist in relief and reconstruction work in France and the Armenian, Syrian relief. These efforts received the "approval and endorsement of the President of the United States, Woodrow Wilson. . . . Conference expressed itself heartily encouraging the continuation of the support of the reconstruction and relief work."⁵⁸

The principles and practices of the doctrine of nonresistance blended to present to the world help and love when it was suffering from the ravages of war and the epidemic of Spanish Influenza.

Politics--Nonresistance 1919-1946

This period is nearly void of any reference to political affiliation of the brethren. There is no official record until the General Conference of 1924, at which time the Canadian Joint Council petitioned Conference to give a more definite ruling on a by-law relative to a member holding the office of "Member of Parliament," or any other political office.⁵⁹ Conference declared itself opposed to church members becoming members of legislative

⁵⁸ Minutes, 1919, Art. IX Gen. Report, pp. 13-4.

⁵⁹ Minutes, 1924, Navarre, Kansas, June 5, Art. XXIV, pp. 36-7.

bodies. It stated that any member,

. . . who accepts or continues in parliamentary nominations or a seat in any legislative assembly directly under political influences which involves the principle of nonresistance as believed by the Brethren in Christ, thereby automatically disenfranchises himself . . . suspends himself from full fellowship and communion⁶⁰

Though there was no evidence of teaching with regard to political affiliation as it related to nonresistance, there were strong feelings expressed by the action of Conference in this motion.

In the Conference of 1925 the action of the 1924 Conference, with regard to the motion that had been expressed, was modified. Here it stated that if the member accepted a seat in a legislative body,

. . . directly connected with political influence and contrary to the doctrine of nonresistance as accepted by this body of believers, and continues therein, thereby automatically disenfranchises himself . . . until he retires and confesses the impropriety of said action.⁶¹

Both actions of Conference conformed to the general direction given by the Constitution and By-Laws printed in the years 1922 and 1924. This conviction stated in the Manual was one which opposed political affiliation and voting:

Nowhere in the word of God is it expressed or implied that the bride of Christ should participate in upholding the governments of the world by voting.

⁶⁰Minutes, 1924, pp. 36-37.

⁶¹Minutes, 1925, Highland Church near West Milton, Ohio, p. 73.

This is highly significant when considered in view of the fact that the scriptures clearly define the duty of citizens,⁶²

This same attitude continued and was expressed in the Conference of 1930 when Conference reaffirmed the constitution of 1924,⁶³ in agreement with the committee on Manual revision.

The statements of faith which were made in the Constitutional revisions of 1922, 1924 and 1930, did not appear in the earlier 1914 Constitution, although the conviction was practiced. The statement does not appear in the revision of 1941. Though the relation of politics to the doctrine of nonresistance does not appear as being regularly taught, it has moved through this period in the growth of the church as an underlying current which surfaces on occasion with strong conviction.

Industrialization--Nonresistance 1919-1946

Between the years 1904 and 1938 there was very little said officially with regard to the labor union problem as it related to nonresistance. By this time labor relations in the United States had gone through many trying times. Great changes had taken place between Labor and

⁶² Constitution and By-Laws of the Brethren in Christ Church, Rev. 1922, pp. 88-9 and Rev. 1924, pp. 93-4.

⁶³ Minutes, 1930, Air Hill Church near Chambersburg, Penna., Art. V, p. 19.

Management.⁶⁴ The nonresistant churches were not opposed to the objectives of labor unions, but to the methods which were used to obtain these objectives. The Committee on Labor Union Affiliations in the 1938 Conference stated:

We nevertheless recognize that the real power of labor and the success of its program must ultimately depend upon the use of coercive measures, such as strikes, lock-outs, picketing, closed-shops, . . . Here is a definite violation of the scriptural principle of nonresistance.⁶⁵

Since new aggressiveness was taking place in organized labor, the brethren felt there must be a statement defining the position of the church. The brethren further decided to produce a tract to explain the church's position, which could be used by members who faced labor problems. The statement which the church made pertaining to unions was not a biased one, as may be seen by the following quotation made by an outstanding labor leader of a past day: ". . . 'When Labor ceases to be militant it dies.' The Christian might easily support the program of labor in seeking fair and right objectives through peaceful methods."⁶⁶ However, the church realistically

⁶⁴Avery Musser, "Labor Unions and Nonresistance" (unpublished paper, Messiah College, Grantham, Penna., 1958), p. 2, citing Guy F. Hershberger, War, Peace and Nonresistance (Scottsdale, Penna.: Herald Press, 1946), p. 272.

⁶⁵Minutes, 1938, Wainfleet, Ontario, Art. XV, p. 37.

⁶⁶Musser, p. 3, citing "The Christian's Attitude Toward Organized Labor" (pamphlet authorized by the 1938 General Conference of the Brethren in Christ Church), p. 4.

recognized the adamant position of both sides and to this they spoke:

In this struggle there is no thought on the part of either capital or labor of taking a Christian non-resistant position. Rather, capital is trying to achieve its ends even to the detriment of labor, and labor is trying to gain its objectives regardless of its effect on capital.⁶⁷

The brethren recognized the endless task to negotiate agreements with each union on the local level. Therefore, between the years 1937 and 1939 the Mennonites and Brethren in Christ began efforts to secure agreements on the national level. They sent representatives to the President of the Teamster's Union in Indianapolis, Indiana, and also to Washington, D.C.⁶⁸ They were received and treated cordially. In Washington they sought an exemption clause for nonresistant laborers to be attached to the Wagner Act.⁶⁹ In Indianapolis they attempted to help a member of the church who had labor problems. The Tract Committee reported many commendations for the work which was done on the tract entitled, "The Christian's Attitude Toward Organized Labor," and the help which individuals

⁶⁷ John C. Wenger, Separated Unto God (Scottdale, Penna.: Herald Press, 1951), p. 269, cited by Musser, p. 3.

⁶⁸ Minutes, 1939, Grantham, Penna., Art. XII, p. 22.

⁶⁹ Musser, p. 6, citing the Wagner Act (a basic Federal Labor Relations Act which governed the national labor scene from 1935 until the enactment of the Taft-Hartley Act in 1947); see also "Should Membership in a Labor Union be Required of all Workers?" Debate Handbook, (Normal, Illinois: Mid-West Debate Bureau, 1957), p. 90.

and organizations received.⁷⁰

The Committee on Labor Affiliations continued its work and established favorable relationships with the Secretary General of the American Federation of Labor. They also met with officials in Harrisburg, Washington and New York. This committee encouraged members who were having labor relation problems to bring them before the committee. Those who did this found help in maintaining their nonresistant testimony.⁷¹

In the 1941 General Conference the Committee gave a lengthy report on their action as it sought jointly with the Mennonites, the following labor agreements: "Support and recognition by labor leaders, and privilege for the brethren to work without belonging to a Union."⁷²

In the meetings with both Congress of Industrial Organizations and A. F. of L. officials, an article was used entitled, "Basis of Understanding." This article outlined signed agreements and membership cards which were to be signed by church officials and Union leaders in the event of a strike. They received favorable comment by the Union officials, and they pledged their assistance in securing satisfactory understanding.

⁷⁰Minutes, 1939, p. 32.

⁷¹Minutes, 1940, Jabbok Bible School, Thomas, Oklahoma, Art. XIII, pp. 25-6.

⁷²Minutes, 1941, Camp Alexander Mack, Milford, Indiana, Art. XVII, p. 21.

It is evident from the 1941 report that there was much activity by this committee on behalf of the members. There was continued activity by the church in this area of industrial relations. The results were important for the church received support from the top union organizations. Church officials attended the Indiana State Convention meeting of the C. I. O. They also met A. F. of L. officials. All of these meetings resulted in considerate attitudes by the officials except in one case. Basic considerations were reached with the A. F. of L., the C. I. O. and the International Union, the Federation of Hosiery Workers.⁷³

In the ensuing years from 1943 to 1946 there was not much activity recorded by the Industrial Relations Committee. So much of industry had been diverted to war production that some people moved into other pursuits where union problems did not exist. There was only one case brought before the Committee in 1945⁷⁴ Then in 1946 a letter was read before the Conference body from A. F. of L. President, William H. Green, in which he stated:

. . . We have endeavored to deal with the problems which have been presented . . . by the members . . . of the Brethren in Christ Churches. . . . In each

⁷³ Minutes, 1942, Bertis Church, Steenville, Ontario, Canada, Art. 15, pp. 33-6.

⁷⁴ Minutes, 1945, Messiah Bible College, Grantham, Penna., Art. XIII, p. 41.

instance I have advised our workers to respect conscientious objection. . . . We do that in the interest of harmony and cooperation.⁷⁵

During this period active committees gave testimony to a practical outworking of the doctrine of nonresistance among the laboring class seeking to maintain a peace witness in a highly industrialized nation.

War--Nonresistance 1919-1946

The experience of World War I sharpened the realization that there was a great need to do more about teaching church doctrine throughout the brotherhood. Therefore, in the early part of this period, running parallel to an enthusiastic relief program, was also a program of teaching. This was begun among the ministering brethren. The Conference of 1919 indicated that preceding this time there had not been any questions pertaining to the doctrine of nonresistance on the questionnaire which was presented to all new ministers, and periodically to all bishops, ministers, evangelists and missionaries. They, therefore, approved a resolution to include an examination question relative to the doctrine.⁷⁶

At the close of the war some efforts were made to gather further information concerning military exemption

⁷⁵Minutes, 1946, Mt. Pleasant Church, Mt. Joy, Penna., Art. XVI, p. 36.

⁷⁶Minutes, 1919, Art. XII, Sec. 3, p. 20.

and to retain contact with the government.⁷⁷ This, however, did not continue beyond 1920. In fact, the minutes of 1920 are void of any mention of war or associated efforts. There was, however, continued relief effort through affiliation with Mennonite Central Committee.

New interest in the status of the church with regard to war was generated in the Conference of 1934 when the Ohio-Kentucky joint council petitioned Conference to check the records in Washington to see if the church's record as a nonresistant church remained on file. They did this because of the frequent requests from the Bureau of Census for an official statement from the denomination. Conference, therefore, conferred with a Mennonite lawyer in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, and assigned to him the task of locating the records. The lawyer did a preliminary brief confirming the record, but few actual facts were recorded on time for the General Conference report.⁷⁸

The interest in this issue was kept alive by the joint council of Ohio-Kentucky, when in 1935 they requested that a statement regarding the church's position of nonresistance should also be placed in the Year Book of the Churches. Conference, however, delayed any action pending

⁷⁷Sider, p. 21. .

⁷⁸Minutes, 1934, Mennonite Camp Grounds, Ludlow Falls, Ohio, Art. XII, Sec. 5, pp. 21-3.

a completed investigation in Washington⁷⁹ There was no evidence produced before the body up to Conference of 1938. Conference was again petitioned to take action and file a declaration in Washington, D.C. outlining once again its position as a nonresistant church. This came as a time when other peace churches were sending formal declarations to the President.⁸⁰ The General Executive Board informed Conference that there was a Bulletin No. 16/037-039 available in the U. S. Printing Office, Washington, D.C. which adequately described the church's official position as a nonresistant church. It was recommended, however, that in light of the fact that, ". . . the war clouds are hanging low . . ." official committees should appear before the proper authorities in both Washington, D.C. and Ottawa, Canada, and bring before their minds the faith and official doctrines of the church which have been taught since its origin.⁸¹

After a considerable amount of research and work the responsible committees presented to the General Conference of 1939 some historical documents. One was a revision of the Confession of Faith in which it stated, regarding nonresistance and other ordinances, that they were

⁷⁹Minutes, 1935, Markham Church, Gormely, Ontario, Canada, Art. XIX, Sec. 5, p. 35.

⁸⁰Minutes, 1938, Wainfleet, Ontario, Canada, Art. XLIX, pp. 86-7.

⁸¹Minutes, 1938, Art. L, p. 87.

ordinances "to be literally observed and practiced."⁸²

Coupled with this action was a decision to send a memorial and redeclaration of nonresistance to the office of the President of the United States, Franklin D. Roosevelt, and a similar document to the Prime Minister of the Dominion of Canada, W. L. McKenzie King. There was also action on the part of Conference to send committees to the authorities of both governments.⁸³ The committee to the Canadian government received a courteous reply but the Prime Minister could not see them because of a royal visit at the time.⁸⁴

The 1939 Conference took other positive actions in preparedness for war days ahead. It appointed a permanent Committee on Nonresistance.⁸⁵ It also advised all churches to hold special services teaching the doctrine. With this increased positive action, the church was in a better position to help its young men. With the increase of hostilities in Europe and other areas of the world, there was also an increase in the activities among peace churches. The Mennonite Central Committee, an affiliation of seven Mennonite bodies, with a number of others who considered affiliation, joined with the Brethren in Christ, the Church

⁸²Minutes, 1939, Art. VIII, p. 15.

⁸³Minutes, 1939, Art. X, pp. 16-21, which includes copies of the Memorials. The Canadian Memorial is included in the 1940 Minutes. See Appendix H.

⁸⁴Minutes, 1939, p. 21.

⁸⁵Minutes, 1939, p. 21.

of the Brethren and the Friends to form the organized "Conference of Historic Peace Churches." It was decided that a committee from this body would contact the President's office and also seek an interview with the Secretary of War. In order to finance such an operation it was agreed to assess each member one dollar.⁸⁶ The churches were advised to have at least one service a year dedicated to the doctrine. However, they were also warned to be careful with expression from the pulpit so that they would not create feelings of animosity. The church sought to foster a spirit of concern and teaching to protect children and families in meeting conditions which it felt all must soon face.⁸⁷ This became fulfilled prophecy for the brethren, for on September 16, 1940, Congress passed the Selective Service and Training Act. The law included a provision allowing those who could not conscientiously accept military to serve in a Civilian Corps to perform "work of national importance."

The President of the United States and numbers of the Administration were opposed to the government financing such a program. They maintained that if the Peace Churches were sincere, they should finance the operation of their own Civilian Public Service (C.P.S.) Camps according to

⁸⁶ Minutes, 1940, Art. XVII, pp. 29-30.

⁸⁷ Minutes, 1940, Art. XXX, pp. 47-8.

government specifications.⁸⁸

The Peace Churches met at Chicago and formally structured the Service Committee for C. O. with a permanent office at Washington, D.C. This later became the National Service Board. They grappled with the knotty problems that faced the churches. The gravest of these was the financing and operating of C.P.S. Camps for an initial period of six months. The churches responded to the challenge with a self-imposed 50-cent per person assessment.⁸⁹

In Canada the brethren faced virtually the same problems, except that in their case the government paid the bill.⁹⁰

The Peace Committee began to get camps ready; this meant increased budget. In addition, the Peace Churches continued to offer relief and personnel in Europe. The churches then affixed an assessment of \$1.00 per member for camp operation and \$1.00 per member for relief. This budget was not only for support of the camp but also for furnishing wholesome reading for the men.⁹¹ The churches'

⁸⁸C. N. Hostetter, Jr., "Claim for Christian Liberty in the Second World War," Nonresistance Under Test, ed. E. J. Swalm (Nappanee, Ind.: E. V. Publishing House, 1949), pp. 62-3; see also Jonathan Kuttub, "Peace Committees in the Brethren in Christ Church" (unpublished paper, Archives, Messiah College, Grantham, Penna., Dec. 15, 1970).

⁸⁹Minutes, 1941, Art. XIV, pp. 17-8.

⁹⁰Minutes, 1941, p. 19.

⁹¹Minutes, 1941, p. 20.

youth groups also sent sacrificial offerings for books.

With each ensuing year of the war came new tests for the brethren to face in order to maintain their testimony. In 1942 the Relief and Service Committee reported that all bills were met and they had received gifts beyond the quota. However, it also had to report an increased budget for the following year and, instead of finance for only an initial period, it was suggested that now support be on a continuum basis. The committee had met with General Lewis B. Hershey, Director of Selective Service, and his staff. General Hershey urged the churches to continue to support their own program. He also suggested a no-pay plan for C. O.'s, a donation of their time and service to the nation, and to this he also added that there should be very strict entrance requirements. To this, he said he felt that the people of the United States would be well satisfied. The church gladly and willingly accepted this responsibility to their young men and as a testimony against war.⁹² These agreements were reached with the government in three separate meetings. There was a concern that the attack on Pearl Harbor would alter the government's view, but it did not. By the time of the third meeting 32 camps were in operation with 3000 men in camp.⁹³

Camps and the draft were not the only problems

⁹²Minutes, 1942, Art. XII, p. 18.

⁹³Minutes, 1942, p. 20-24.

facing the brethren at this time, for added to these were the problems of: (1) seeking alternate civilian government bonds in place of defense bonds, (2) alternate plans for the Office of Civilian Defense, (3) alternate work in place of war industry work, and (4) the many facets of alternate service for the C.O. Then there was a very deep need to have someone visit the camps and encourage the C.O. men. This service was carried out by Bishop C. N. Hostetter, Jr., Rev. C. R. Heisey, and others.⁹⁴ Bishop Swalm stated that, "During the history of the program 11,997 men were classified as conscientious objectors"⁹⁵ Of this number 139 men were members of, or expressed a preference for, the Brethren in Christ Church. The total number from all the churches contributed 8,237,866 man days. The churches contributed \$7,439,698 in addition to their voluntary staff and volunteer work. The Brethren in Christ contributed to this amount \$143,483 plus an additional \$18,932 to be used as allowance for dependents of the C.O.'s.⁹⁶

The men did work of national importance under various governmental departments--state and federal

⁹⁴ Minutes, 1942, pp. 20-24.

⁹⁵ Swalm, p. 72. .

⁹⁶ Swalm, p. 73; see also Clarence H. Sakimura, "The Nonresistance Witness of the Brethren in Christ Church in the United States During World War II," Notes and Queries, Vol. II, No. 4, Oct. 1961, p. 23.

agencies, and private enterprises. They worked for the Forest Service, the Soils Conservation Service, Dairy and Herd Testing, National Parks, the Bureau of Reclamation, the Bureau of Fish and Wildlife, Weather Bureau, Coast and Geodetic Survey, United States Veterans Administration, and the Office of Scientific Research and Development.⁹⁷

It was not until late 1942 that this expansive program was begun. Prior to this time men were confined to "Base Camps." The men now had to remain at the "Base Camp" two months to prove themselves; then they would be introduced into the program of their choosing, and transferred out of camp. Mention may be made here that there were also other voluntary service programs to which girls could contribute their services.⁹⁸ The men wanted to contribute their services in many humanitarian projects, both in the states and abroad, but were prevented many times by government restrictions.⁹⁹

Though the tests for the church and their young men were very difficult, they were no more difficult than many others were going through that sacrificed their young men in war. However, there was an essential difference. Prior to this period of time the church assumed a negative

⁹⁷Swalm, p. 72.

⁹⁸Evangelical Visitor, July 3, 1944, p. 178; see also Sakimura, p. 24.

⁹⁹Swalm, pp. 113-27.

attitude. Now, because of foresight, planning, and the generous attitude of the government, the church had a positive program to offer in lieu of military service.¹⁰⁰

The cost for this program was gladly carried by the members. The budget continued to rise with the increase of each draft call until they were paying \$10 per member. Along with this was another increase which was for the care of families when the draft began to take married men. In addition, rationing and food shortages became a real problem in the camps. Detached service projects, however, did help to curtail some of these costs.¹⁰¹ In the Conference of 1944 the Committee reported as the preceding years: "Paid in full for the C.P.S. operation."¹⁰² Conference of 1945 stated with regard to finances: "Again the Brethren in Christ Church has demonstrated to her boys that she means her doctrine of nonresistance to the extent that she is willing to pay liberally."¹⁰³

With the end of hostilities, the church began a program of rehabilitation and help for each C.P.S. man. It helped them to become active in the life of the church and provided tuition and money for those who desired to go

¹⁰⁰Minutes, 1942, p. 25.

¹⁰¹Minutes, 1943, Messiah College Bible College, Grantham, Penna., Art. XIII, pp. 19-20.

¹⁰²Minutes, 1944, Messiah College, Grantham, Penna., Art. XII, p. 19.

¹⁰³Minutes, 1945, Art. XII, p. 31.

to school or college.¹⁰⁴

The church published a Memorial Volume in honor of the Conscientious Objectors who served. It was entitled, "They Also Serve," and tells much of the story in picture and in text of the many services of the C.P.S.¹⁰⁵

Teaching--Nonresistance 1919-1946

The teaching of the doctrine of nonresistance was continued in the six innovations of the church and it was supplemented by other teaching methods. There were intensified efforts to increase the knowledge, first of all, among the ministering brethren; then this was increased to include the youth. Messiah College began to teach Christian doctrine in correspondence courses. It had already been teaching doctrine in the classroom.¹⁰⁶ The church was becoming ever increasingly aware of the importance of planned teaching of its doctrines. Progressing still further, the California Council petitioned Conference in 1929 to prepare question and answer material

¹⁰⁴Minutes, 1946, Art. XVII, p. 38; see also Art. XXIV, p. 56.

¹⁰⁵Wendell E. Martin, ed., They Also Serve (published by the Brethren in Christ Church).

¹⁰⁶Minutes, 1922, Grantham, Penna., Art. XLI, p. 47.

to teach children doctrinal truth.¹⁰⁷ Conjointly with this program, Conference ever increasingly urged the churches to stress the doctrine of nonresistance. It also established a council to draw up resolutions to give to young men specific courses to pursue with regard to the draft, war industry and other war-associated pursuits. To this was added recommended books which could be read for their benefit.¹⁰⁸ Youth group interest was enlisted in the book and library projects. That way the youth program of the denomination became identified personally with the C. O. program.¹⁰⁹

The program involving youth did not just reach out to those in the C.P.S. Camps, but also to those in the public schools. The Peace Churches were shaken by the government program of the Victory Corps (the training of high school students for civil defense) which was established by the U. S. Office of Education and the Office of Civilian Defense. In a counter action the churches suggested the extension of their own school system and greater amounts of doctrinal literature. They stated that

¹⁰⁷, Minutes, 1929, Bethel Church near Merrill, Michigan, Art. XXX, p. 45; see also Christian Life Bible Studies for Young People's Meeting, "Nonresistance," (Topic for October 30, 1938, published by the Brethren in Christ Church).

¹⁰⁸ Minutes, 1940, Art. XVII, pp. 29-30.

¹⁰⁹ Minutes, 1940, p. 87; see also Minutes, 1942, pp. 74-75, 89.

they wanted, ". . . cooperation in every legitimate activity that may be launched to offset the devastating effect of the Victory Corps."¹¹⁰

The program of continued education for the denomination went beyond the theoretical classroom and church teaching situations. It continued on beyond the Armistice which was signed. It moved right into the everyday life of each believer who was asked to continue to support C.P.S. work for the relief of needy people around the world. Church members were asked to continue to give their sons their money and even their food. Conference of 1946, therefore, recommended:

That all Brethren in Christ people voluntarily deny themselves of foods needed for shipment, and make real sacrifices for the feeding of the hungry, in the name of Christ.¹¹¹

The brethren also recommended the seeking out of personnel to serve in cooperative relief efforts in the Philippine Islands.¹¹² Some of the men who served in these projects had already served during the war in C.P.S. Camps.¹¹³ Almost paradoxical to voluntarily continuing the

¹¹⁰Minutes, 1943, Art. XIII, pp. 20-1; see also Christian Life Bible Studies for Young People's Meeting, "The Source of True Peace," (Topic for Nov. 11, 1945, published by the Brethren in Christ Church).

¹¹¹Minutes, 1946, Art. XVIII, Sec. 1-2, pp. 42-3.

¹¹²Minutes, 1946, Art. XVIII, Sec. 1-2, pp. 42-3.

¹¹³Swalm, pp. 184-7, 193-4; also based on personal conversation with Rev. J. Wilmer Heisey, Executive Secretary of the Brethren in Christ Church.

C.P.S. program and extending a mammoth relief effort, the brethren also prayed that, ". . . our beloved land might be spared the great burden of continued military conscription."¹¹⁴

1947 - 1971

Politics--Nonresistance 1947-1971

This period reflects a decisive change in the history and philosophy of the doctrine of nonresistance as it relates to politics and its ramifications. The changes, however, are those which were made by individual members.

In General Conference of 1958 a petition was presented by the Canadian Conference relative to a tract giving the church's position regarding voting and politics.¹¹⁵ The Canadian delegation desired to have the denomination publish a tract specifically outlining its official position. The petition was adopted. The Administrative Board began researching the entire question during the ensuing year. The Board sent a questionnaire to pastors, which resulted in a report that 34% of the church's membership exercised their privilege to vote. The Administration reported this figure to the Conference of 1959. It also declared that there were very strong positions

¹¹⁴Minutes, 1946, p. 43.

¹¹⁵Minutes, 1959, Niagara Christian College, Fort Erie, Ontario, Canada, Art. XXXI, p. 130,

expressed on both sides of the issue. Therefore, the Board of Administration recommended:

. . . that we do not prepare a tract on the question but that we maintain the present emphasis of teaching the Christian responsibility as basically that of reaching the unreached and of praying for those in authority, and that the exercise of franchise continue to be a question of individual conscience. ¹¹⁶

It is evident that the church desired to continue the practices of the past, although there is no reference recorded in the deliberation of either body with regard to nonresistance. There is no other reference during this period to any other action brought before the Conference regarding this matter.

Industrialization--Nonresistance 1947-1971

There were many demands placed upon the Industrial Relations Committee during this period by individuals with labor problems. The committee continued to seek proper labor relations for the Conscientious Objector. In 1947 the United Christian Church joined forces with the Brethren in Christ. Elder I. K. Curry became a member of the committee.¹¹⁷ During 1947 Congress was negotiating a revision of national labor laws. The committee felt that, while this was happening, they should file a petition in Congress and the Senate Labor Committees stating what

¹¹⁶ Minutes, 1951, Art. XXIV, Sec. 4, Item 1, p. 76.

¹¹⁷ Minutes, 1947, Beulah College, Upland, Cal., Art. XV, p. 37.

it held to be the scriptural requisites for harmonious labor relations. The principles of nonresistance were also interpreted as they related to union membership.¹¹⁸

In the Conference of 1948 the United Zion Church, a sister denomination, sought help with regard to a labor problem of one of their members.¹¹⁹ The committee encouraged all who needed help in labor disputes to come to it. The committee, in turn, became the mediator for the affiliated denominations.

The Industrial Relations Committee sought renewed acquaintances with A. F. of L. and C. I. O. leaders following the Conference of 1949. However, these contacts were not completed as of 1950.¹²⁰

One effect that the committee had involving individual labor problems was that it helped the person to come to a firm commitment of standing for his Christian principles at all costs.

The Conference of 1951 was encouraged by the work of the Industrial Committee. Significant victories were gained in negotiation carried out with the United Auto Workers. Reverend Harry Hock, committee member in the Detroit area, won the respect and recognition of labor

¹¹⁸Minutes, 1947, Art. XV, p. 37.

¹¹⁹Minutes, 1948, Memorial Holiness Camp Grounds, West Milton, Ohio, Art. XVI, pp. 35-6.

¹²⁰Minutes, 1950, Roxbury Camp Grounds, Roxbury, Penna., Art. XIX, pp. 42-3.

leaders there in working out labor agreements for church members.¹²¹ The agreement with the U.A.W. followed closely the "Basis of Understanding," giving automatic exemption to all workers involved where the U.A.W. was the bargaining agent.

Through the years 1951-1952, the committee was able to arrive at an expression of cooperation of both the C.I.O. and the A. F. of L. officers.¹²²

In 1953 General Conference agreed to cooperate with the Mennonite Church in changing its name to "Committee on Economic and Social Relations." This pointed toward expanded efforts. The committee also reaped a reward in 1953 by having officials of the unions write to it with reference to its agreements, and an honoring of these agreements in an individual case.¹²³

Another major gain was made in 1955 as reported to Conference. Under the direction of Dr. Guy Hershberger two international unions recognized in a general way the agreements set forth by the churches.¹²⁴ Reverend Harry Hock commented: "It seems to me that it is easier to deal

¹²¹Minutes, 1951, Free Methodist Camp Grounds, Manhattan, Kansas, Art. XXIV, pp. 48-9.

¹²²Minutes, 1952, Memorial Holiness Camp Grounds, West Milton, Ohio, Art. XXIV, pp. 45-46.

¹²³Minutes, 1953, Niagara Christian College, Fort Erie, Ontario, Canada, Art. XXIV, pp. 42-3.

¹²⁴Minutes, 1955, Upland College, Upland, Cal., Art. XXIV, pp. 43-4.

with unions here in Detroit in the past year than ever before."¹²⁵

The work of the church in this area of service became nearly silent for the next decade. There were only a few cases in which the church took an active part. The church had been very successful in its efforts in working out very practical agreements for the Christian workers who had a conviction of nonresistance.

Dr. Hershberger suggested, however, that an even more ideal situation would be Mennonite communities with small factories where all members of the nonresistant churches could secure employment. This would remove the necessity of seeking employment where labor unions were in control.¹²⁶

The committee did not renew any of its work until 1967, at which time a new group of men were elected to the task. Their job became an entirely different one. For the next three years they alerted pastors and congregations to the need of educating the denominations in effective involvement in society, the hazards of affluence, race relations, poverty, population pressures and drug abuse.¹²⁷

In 1970 the task of the committee changed once

¹²⁵Minutes, 1955, Art. XXIV, pp. 43-4.

¹²⁶Musser, p. 12.

¹²⁷Minutes, 1967, Memorial Holiness Camp Grounds, West Milton, Ohio, Art. XV, pp. 26-8; see also Minutes, 1968, Niagara Christian College, Fort Erie, Ontario, Can., Art. XIV, pp. 30-31.

again to that of peace and social concerns. Its overall task was to ". . . promote and guide the church in an effective understanding and practice of the doctrine of nonresistance."¹²⁸

The function of this committee was to explore pertinent social issues and stimulate the church to a proper response. It was also to act as a counseling and service agency. It provided seminars in the black Ghetto area of Philadelphia. Membership was established with the Social Concern Commission of the National Association of Evangelicals. Members took part in seminars in Washington, D.C., and studied various areas of social concern.¹²⁹

The relation of industrialization and nonresistance leveled off to a point where the church became virtually silent on the union relationship of its members. This was caused by the discontinuance of church members in seeking help with regard to labor problems. However, the church's witness did not end here, for the church continued to bring a testimony of nonresistance to a highly industrialized society, being in the world, but not becoming a part of the world. The church now is seeking to reach the industrialized society in a greater measure with new methods. The Brethren in Christ Church has changed its

¹²⁸Minutes, 1970, Upland, Cal., Art. IX, pp. 22-3.

¹²⁹Minutes, 1971, Roxbury Holiness Camp Grounds, Roxbury, Penna., Art. XVIII, Part III, Sec. 1, pp. 82-3.

testimony of nonresistance to meet a changing world with changing needs.

War--Nonresistance 1947-1971

Second mile witness. For many, the year 1947 was a joyful time, with the cessation of the Conscription Act of World War II. The war for the C.P.S. men had been a time of construction and helpfulness when there had been so much destruction; now they looked for peace.

In sequence to the action following World War I, the church once again searched for ways to help the thousands of innocent suffering children and adults. Two cars loaded with baby food were sent along with additional war sufferers relief allotments.¹³⁰ Six people went as volunteers to the Philippine Islands to be of help there, and various relief projects were instigated.

Since there was a general attitude among some people in the United States that "conscientious objectors" were trying to get out of something,¹³¹ and since the church's program was that of positive service with limitations of conscientious convictions, the church recommended that voluntary service projects should continue. This was to be an expression of a second-mile concern for

¹³⁰Minutes, 1947, Beulah College, Upland, Cal., Art. XVI, pp. 37-8.

¹³¹Swalm, p. 211.

the needs of the world.¹³² This program resulted in help going to tornado victims in the western United States, as well as refugee migrations in Europe.¹³³

The church was very grateful to the government for the permission to carry out its religious scruples and to accommodate the military requirements to the conscience of the individual. General Conference of 1947, therefore, recommended that Conference should prepare an appropriate letter to be sent to President Truman and General Hershey expressing appreciation for their courtesies.¹³⁴

Representatives of the committee stated before Conference that:

During the international crisis just past the government of the United States and Canada granted a greater degree of consideration to Conscientious Objectors than in any previous war. . . . We feel a deep sense of gratitude for the leniency of the attitudes in general and what appears to us to be a sincere disposition to give our young brethren fair treatment.¹³⁵

Another act of appreciation was expressed by this body of Conference when it dedicated a Memoir Book, They Also Serve, to the C.P.S. men, to tell of their work during the war.¹³⁶

¹³³ Minutes, 1947, p. 42.

¹³⁴ Minutes, 1947, pp. 42-3, copies of letters to U. S. and Canada, pp. 46-8.

¹³⁵ Minutes, 1947, pp. 42-43.

¹³⁶ Minutes, 1947, p. 44; see also Wendell E. Harmon, ed., They Also Serve (published by men of the Brethren in Christ Church, 1947).

One of the interesting results of C.P.S. Camps was the Brethren in Christ and Mennonite involvement in mental health ministries. This service has been a continuing ministry carried out by the churches until this present time. The C.P.S. workers doing their alternate service in mental hospitals found a lack of compassion among the staff members for interned patients. They, in turn, showed Christian love and compassion. Expressions of appreciation from different hospitals bespeak the work which they did, that although they were few in number, yet they provided sufficient help to avoid catastrophe.¹³⁷

Peace, relief and service. The nonresistant testimony with regard to war during this period of time resulted in being expressed as a peace, relief and service testimony and program. The actuality of war did not presently have to be faced, but the result of war had to be cared for. People, both young and old, had to have instruction in nonresistance and examples of lives lived according to the doctrine.

The relief and service phases of the program expanded new personnel going to the Philippines, France, Germany, India and Puerto Rico. Rev. Jesse Hoover, acting as Commissioner to the Far East for M.C.C., was working in China, Java and Japan. The committee assisted in getting

¹³⁷Swalm, p. 123.

three boatloads of refugees to South America.¹³⁸

All was not quiet with regard to the draft. Legislation was introduced to Congress for its revival. In March, 1948, a committee, with Dr. C. N. Hostetter, Jr. appeared before the Senate Armed Services Committee and in April appeared before the House Committee in opposition to the draft laws. Despite their testimony, the draft laws were again restored.¹³⁹

The Church, in 1948, made a determined effort to solidify its position once again with regard to the doctrine. The Conference body declared its position against war work and militarism. It resolved that any member participating or continuing participation in either area was in direct violation of the beliefs of the church and his membership should be terminated. This was to include all officers, officials, ministers and teachers. They would not be allowed to continue to serve if they were not in harmony with this doctrine. The doctrine of nonresistance was to be made an unavoidable requirement for membership.¹⁴⁰

The Church continued its witness to the world in relief effort through the Relief and Service Committee as

¹³⁸Minutes, 1948, Memorial Holiness Camp Grounds, West Milton, Ohio, Art. XVII, pp. 36-7.

¹³⁹Minutes, 1948, p. 37.

¹⁴⁰Minutes, 1948, pp. 41-42, 56-57.

its agent. The Relief and Service Committee also acted as counselors to young men facing new draft laws, and as mediator with regard to the federal draft requirements.

In February, 1952, the new draft laws went into effect. The law read as follows:

This bill states that the conscientious objector 'shall be ordered by his local board, subject to such regulations as the president shall prescribe, to perform for a period equal to the period prescribed in Section 4(b), such civilian work contributing to the national health, safety or interest as the local board may deem appropriate.'¹⁴¹

The great concern of the church once again was the lives of their young men serving in public projects. They were greatly concerned with the spiritual lives of these young men. Many young men found satisfactory service. Some had to face the rigors of law and prison sentence as in the case of three young men referred to in the Conference Minutes of 1953.¹⁴² Seventy-six young people were reported as serving needy areas and persons around the world.¹⁴³ A census of draft-age men was made during the Conference year of 1955. It was found that there were 430 draft-age young men between the ages of 17 to 27. Of this figure 61.16% stated they would not accept military service, 12.78% said they would accept military service, and 26.04%

¹⁴¹Minutes, 1951, Art. XXV, p. 50; see also Minutes, 1952, p. 46.

¹⁴²Minutes, 1953, p. 38.

¹⁴³Minutes, 1954, p. 46.

were uncertain of either position. The church was of the opinion that they must continue to teach the doctrine of nonresistance.¹⁴⁴ Therefore, peace conferences continued to be held, school and seminars for young men were taught at M.C.C. headquarters, literature and speakers were used throughout the church in order to promote more thoroughly the doctrine. At the same time, the church continued to suggest assessment for each member to share financially in various relief programs around the world. An example of this was the relief teams which helped in Austria, Japan and Indonesia.¹⁴⁵

The Conference body of 1958 reviewed the statistics of the draft-age young men for the period of seven years preceding Conference. These statistics included young men who both served in the military and alternate service (CPS). These figures were compared with the number of military men, both combatant and noncombatant, who were again residing in the congregations of the church. It was found that the disciplinary action of the counsel of 1948 had been used so few times that the committee (PR&S) recommended that all actions of 1948 which terminated membership because of "war work or militarism," be repealed.¹⁴⁶ Conference did recommend that the church

¹⁴⁴Minutes, 1955, p. 40. ¹⁴⁵Minutes, 1957, p. 43.

¹⁴⁶Minutes, 1958, p. 42.

continue to preach and teach the doctrine.

In 1963 the Bill was passed in legislature for the extension of the draft laws, which meant that military conscription in "peacetime" was becoming an accepted way of life for the American public. The Peace, Relief and Service Committee again visited the Committee on Public Relations and Welfare in Washington, D.C. It spoke on its historic position and also presented its official position with regard to the noncombatant service.¹⁴⁷

The church continued to provide funds and personnel to help in relief programs and alternate service around the world. One of the outstanding programs continued to be psychiatric hospital work. Another program which was very important through these years was the Material Aid and Disaster work under the leadership of a layman contractor, Raymond Hess. Under this program men from the church volunteered to help with disaster anywhere in the world at their own expense.¹⁴⁸ Voluntary Service units were serving in many of the hot spots of the world. Dr. Henry Kreider served in Jordan and Algeria. In the latter, he was one of the few doctors in this war-torn country.¹⁴⁹ The church began a program of voluntary

¹⁴⁷Minutes, 1964, pp. 41-2.

¹⁴⁸Minutes, 1964, p. 43. (Disaster Service reports are included in Conference Minutes from 1960 forward.)

¹⁴⁹Minutes, 1962, p. 36; see also Minutes, 1963, p. 43.

service among its teenage youth. This outlet of service which has continued each year since its initiation in 1966 has helped to bring a ministry to others, and to teach the church's youth the value of nonresistant service.¹⁵⁰

The Peace, Relief and Service Committee was reorganized to become a part of the Mission Board of the Church as Christian Service Ministries. Reporting in Conference of 1969, it noted 75 voluntary service personnel were serving in points of service, such as, in tumultuous situations anywhere from Chicago, where Frank and Diane Landis served, to Viet Nam, with Kenneth Keefer. They were supporting the total thrust of missions with hard work, laying their lives on the line in a testimony of nonresistance.¹⁵¹

It may be observed that throughout this period of history, from 1947 to 1971, there was a direct relation between the draft quota and the number of volunteers for alternate Christian service. This has not affected the Summer Voluntary Service teams. However, in the Canadian Church where the draft has been repealed, and in the United States in the early 1950's when there was no draft, there were fewer volunteers for Voluntary Christian Service.¹⁵²

¹⁵⁰ Minutes, 1966, p. 67 (reports on this program are included in the Commission on Youth Reports of each Conference year.)

¹⁵¹ Minutes, 1969, p. 67.

¹⁵² Minutes, 1947-1971 (note Secretary's Statistical Reports).

There were other areas of voluntary service in which entire congregations could express their nonresistant witness which resulted in local churches taking part in meat canning for overseas use. A mobile cannery or permanent canneries located at M.C.C. headquarters were used. The churches donated cattle and then processed and canned the beef. They also processed dried fruit such as apples, apricots and peaches to be shipped to needy areas. Christmas bundles (new clothing enclosed in a towel) were contributed to be distributed to children and teenagers in needy countries. Each of these areas of service have been practical expressions of their nonresistant testimony.

The secretary of the Christian Service Committee of the Mission Board reported in the 1970 General Conference as follows:

With the passing of time, more and more people are seeking to give expression to their concerns. Often there is a sense of guilt that the church is more deaf to the world's groanings than is secular society.

Clearly, the most direct and searching questions being asked this office come from our young people. They are troubled, for instance, by the fact that business usually determines the life-style of our people.¹⁵³

It may be observed that the general climate has changed with regard to the social needs of the world. At the same time there is a greater desire among people to help. The one note which is prominent in the offices

¹⁵³ Minutes, 1970, Upland, California, p. 66.

concerned with a nonresistant testimony is that of leadership. There are many who desire to volunteer service, especially young people, but there is a need for leaders.¹⁵⁴

It may be said that in a world that is generally seeking greater affluence and is torn by war and rumors of war, the Brethren in Christ's dominant desire, as a part of Christ's Church, is to bring to a needy world a vibrant living testimony of nonresistant life and love, both in theory and practice. By carrying out this kind of witness on an ever-increasing scale, the church is becoming more involved with the world. In the early years of its history, the Brethren in Christ Church planned and worked to remain separate from mainline Christendom and the American way of life. Presently, it is becoming more a part of the American Protestant evangelical church life. This positional gap is also being closed by other churches and the American public who are becoming more conscious of the doctrine of nonresistance, the brutality of war, and the great need of masses of people.

SUMMARY

In the early recorded history of the Brethren in Christ Church, between the years 1870 and 1918, the

¹⁵⁴Minutes, 1971, p. 72.

church made decisions which governed the life of the denomination for many years into its future. These decisions led the denomination on a course counter to trends of the American Protestant evangelical churches. It felt that in living a life of purity and holiness it must be nonresistant in its approach to life.

The nonresistant testimony would not permit it to take part in politics or voting during the period from 1870 to 1918. This opposition was based on the use of an instrument of punishment as an official of the state. A few exceptions were introduced in later years, but these were limited. Though the church held adamantly to its convictions, it continued to show a vital interest in contemporary political issues. The latter part of the period was indicative of a shift in policy, especially with regard to voting.

Another area of life in which the church found itself in contrast to the world of which it was a part was in the fast-moving industrialization of the nation between the years 1870 to 1918. Historically, the church has been a rural church. Its people lived in tightly-knit farming communities. The brethren generally discouraged participation in business. It was particularly opposed to members becoming involved in labor unions, for it felt that this was in direct opposition to the Word of God.

The opposition of the church with regard to war has been evidenced by records both in its Confession of Faith and in its steadfast decisions in Conference. These decisions maintained that regardless of cost it was determined to live a life which would manifest love rather than hatred and brutality. These decisions brought it in question before the government many times. Such convictions of faith meant that the denomination would restrict its growth.

World War I found the brethren ill prepared to help its youth face conscription, even though it had taught and lived the doctrine of nonresistance throughout its history. It went to the proper officials in Washington, D.C. and arranged for acceptable alternate Christian service which would be acceptable to the government and to the people. The experiences through this time of war were teachers to awaken the church to the need of teaching doctrine throughout the brotherhood, with particular emphasis on nonresistance.

Schrag outlined six new innovations in the Brethren in Christ Church during the period 1870 to 1918. These innovations also became the teaching agents for the doctrine of nonresistance.

The period following World War I through which the church passed introduced new factors which strengthened the faith of many. First, it was a period in which the church helped to clean up and give relief to many helpless.

Second, during this period the issue of politics and voting became a very serious issue. The brethren placed even more stringent demands upon the brotherhood with regard to politics. It stated that political involvement automatically disenfranchised a member from church fellowship.

The church continued its opposition to labor unions during this time (1919 to 1946). It was in agreement with the ideals of labor, but was opposed to the coercive militant methods which it used. Joint efforts of Mennonite and Brethren in Christ working with union officials resulted in acceptable agreements for Christian workmen with nonresistant convictions.

The study in the period between World War I and II with regard to war and nonresistance indicates a new interest in the church's official status with the government with regard to nonresistance. There is a definite aggressive program carried out during this time. The work was so effective that when World War II came upon our nation the church's program was already well advanced. The Brethren in Christ Church, however, had a greater test of its faith than ever before. The government again very graciously gave concessions with regard to conscientious objectors, but this time it asked that the church pay for its own program and, at the same time, obey government requirements. The church complied with and paid for the program in full while the men served in the C.P.S. Camps without pay.

From 1947 to 1971 the relationship of politics to the doctrine became a matter of individual conscience. The church recommended that members should have the prime interests of Christ in mind. Its only deliberation during this time was in relation to a political tract which was never printed.

There was little action with regard to industrialization during this time. The Church was becoming more organized and the unions more cooperative with regard to nonresistant workers. The concerns of the church turned from labor to other social problems.

The witness with regard to war became first of all a work of going the "second mile." The church continued to maintain C.P.S. workers and to assess itself financially and materially to help a needy world. It also used these opportunities to show the world that conscientious objectors were not, "trying to get out of something," but were seeking to give a nonresistant witness of Christian love. The church expressed grateful thanks to the government for its courtesies.

The Brethren in Christ Church continued its witness in many areas of service, both at home and abroad. Overseas, it helped in refugee and relief work. In the United States, one of the greatest witnesses was in the area of psychiatric treatment and mental hospital work.

New educational programs were carried out in church and Sunday School efforts to teach the doctrine of

nonresistance. The church provided free education for all of those who served in alternate Christian service programs. It discovered a new desire among its members, especially the youth, to serve humanity in love rather than brutality. These expressions continued to be developed through Peace, Relief and Service Programs. The increased interest in Christian Service Ministries brought the church in closer contact with the world and in closer alignment with mainline Christianity. These efforts, coupled with a greater interest in the termination of all war expressed by people around the world, indicate that the Brethren in Christ Church is not now bucking the tide of the general public, but is in closer harmony than ever before.

Chapter 5

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

SUMMARY

The rich Pietistic and Anabaptist heritage which the Brethren in Christ Church received from their European background was a stark contrast to the world of which they were a part. Because of war and persecution a large number of members of the Mennonite and Dunker Churches in Germany and Switzerland decided that, in order to maintain their conscientious beliefs, they would move to America. In Pennsylvania they had been promised by William Penn religious freedom, freedom from military conscription, and cheap land.

The transfer of these people to America was a test to their faith. The circumstances which surrounded their migration became a prophetic announcement to them of the kind of life it would be necessary for them to live in America. They moved from a civilized Europe to the frontier of America. This meant that their testimony of nonresistance was confronted by new trials, which thrust them into situations where they were diametrically opposite to society in general, and to mainline Christianity. Despite all that they faced they brought to the world a message of peace and nonresistance in the midst of adversity and war.

The formation of the Brethren in Christ Church in America began with the German revivals which swept the Pennsylvania communities. Its origin was in the homes of the newly converted brethren. The groups alternated their meetings from house to house for supplementary Bible study and worship in addition to the regular meetings. The church grew very slowly because of its concepts of church membership, which involved the acceptance of the doctrine of nonresistance. Members were not accepted until they proved themselves and accepted the doctrines.

Once again war became the instrument by which the differences between the church's doctrine and the world's concepts were magnified. During the Civil War the brethren desired exemption from military service and an opportunity to serve humanity in some alternate service. Exemption was granted, but intolerant and misunderstanding neighbors brought some members to the place where they decided to move. A group migrated to Canada.

The doctrine of nonresistance continued to be taught in the homes of the brethren but no special efforts were made to promote the doctrine through the program of the church.

The development of the doctrine of nonresistance has its origin and growth in the early primitive Christian church. Some of the Anabaptist churches returned to the doctrine of nonresistance as a part of their tenets of faith. A number of these denominational Confessions became the source of the Brethren in Christ Confession. The doctrine of nonre-

sistance was one of the major convictions which became a part of the Manual of Doctrine and Government of the Brethren in Christ Church.

There were references made to various forms of Pacifism, but when these were evaluated and weighed with regard to the doctrine of nonresistance one could see the value and genius of the doctrine.

The period of years between 1870 and 1971 were also years of testing for the brethren and their nonresistant doctrine. They reacted to this testing in a new way. It is evident that they became more involved with the world during this period. First, as a peaceful rural people they were suddenly faced with the problems of industrialization and early labor unions. The democratic form of government was another challenge to their testimony. For conscience sake, they felt as guests in a nation and, for this reason, they could not take part in politics.

World War I and its consequences also became a difficult period of testing to their faith. The brethren were not very well prepared to help their young men face the problems of military conscription. They did, however, obtain exemption from the draft and alternate Christian service in lieu of military service. For some young men, however, it meant prison rather than giving up their beliefs.

After the war the Brethren in Christ Church continued to contribute much toward relief for war victims and helped

to clean up the terrible destruction.

The doctrine of nonresistance was confronted by three basic problems: politics, industrialization and war. During each period which was studied there were noticeable changes in relation to the doctrine. In the field of politics the church moved from a dominant role to that of individual conscience. In industrialization the church revealed a strong trend in moving out of a quiet rural setting to that of aggressively becoming involved in successful labor relation agreements for the laboring brethren. The attitude of the church toward war did not change appreciably in the years studied. There was, however, a very practical program of civilian public service as alternate service for the welfare of humanity in lieu of military service.

The church's second-mile witness was a service performed after the war to help the world see that nonresistant people were not seeking to escape from something, but were trying to give a positive witness of Christian love.

The brethren maintained the Civilian Public Service program during and after the war at their own expense, and under the requirements outlined by the federal government. The young men who were permitted to take part in this program were carefully selected.

Following the crisis of the war a rehabilitation and education program was provided by the church for all who

desired to participate. This included free college education in a college of the brotherhood.

Through the crisis of World War II the church learned that an extensive education program was necessary on a denominational level to keep its members informed on the matters of nonresistance.

New programs of Peace, Relief and Service were begun, which involved the entire church membership. The results of these efforts were felt around the world as the brethren sent both men and relief to disaster areas.

The nation continued to require military service of each young man becoming of age and who was physically able to serve. The church was granted the opportunity to continue its alternate service program, by which it provided young men for Christian service in all parts of the world. These young men have served in various capacities. The most outstanding contribution which the church made was in the work done in mental hospitals.

There has been an increased interest among the general public in the Christian Service Ministries of the church. The government began social programs structured similarly to that of the peace churches to utilize the abilities of young people in efforts other than war. This increased interest brought the church in closer contact with the world and in closer alignment with mainline Christianity. These efforts, coupled with greater interest in the termination of all war expressed by people around the world,

indicated that the Brethren in Christ Church was not as much in contradistinction to the world of which they were a part, but were now in closer harmony with their society than ever before.

CONCLUSIONS

The Brethren in Christ Church has consistently taken the doctrinal position of nonresistance throughout its history. It is a position that has been based upon the New Testament teachings concerning war. Therefore, it can be concluded that the nonresistant standard of the Church is valid. It is a standard that must be reckoned with, it must be listened to, and now it must be heeded more than ever before in the light of the nuclear age.

The doctrine of nonresistance in the early history of the Brethren in Christ Church was contrary to American society and mainline evangelical Christianity. For example, when the doctrine was applied to politics and voting it was a very live issue and went so far as to affect membership in the Church. Voting and politics have now become a matter of individual conscience, with only suggestions from the Church that the members should keep Christ-centered interests first. Therefore, it can be concluded that the church with its doctrine of nonresistance is now closer to other evangelical churches, and on a sounder Christian base than before.

The Labor Union was another area of daily life which was influenced by the doctrine. The church was not opposed to the Union, but the tactics which were used by the union. Therefore, the Brethren in Christ Church as a member of the organization of Peace Churches influenced the Labor Unions to change their strong-arm methods. It has also helped to bring to the Labor Unions negotiable, workable methods of a nonviolent nature that have been of great benefit to the American society.

This research has indicated that the nonresistance programs have a tendency to gravitate toward solely humanitarian and social entities, to the neglect of the original Biblical concept and spiritual goal. In order for the church to continue to bring this unique testimony to the world it must maintain its original Anabaptist position.

This study has also shown that the Brethren in Christ Church with the organization of historic Peace Churches has influenced the societies of the world to come into closer harmony with the Church.

Positive aggressive programs need to be continued and developed in order to more effectively witness to the doctrine of nonresistance.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

Further study could be made to investigate the effect of the nonresistant testimony on evangelism

A study could also be made to determine whether the church's nonresistant orientation to the world is changing from basic Mennonite-Dunker concepts to that of a more Quaker oriented position.

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Church in the United States and Canada:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Location of Meeting</u>
1899	Mastersonville, Lancaster County, Penna.
1902	Donegal, Kansas.
1903	Florin, Lancaster County, Penna.
1904	Six Line Church, Stayner, Ontario, Canada.
1905	Paradise Church, Smithville, Ohio.
1906	Des Moines, Iowa.
1907	Messiah Home, Harrisburg, Penna.
1908	Gormley, Ontario, Canada.
1909	Abilene, Kansas.
1912	Air Hill, Franklin County, Penna.
1913	Thomas, Oklahoma.
1914	Fairland, Lebanon County, Penna.
1915	The home of B. F. Hershey, Pavonia, Ohio.
1916	Florin, Pennsylvania.
1917	Bethel Church, Detroit, N. Dickinson Co., Kansas.
1918	Union Grove Church, New Paris, Elkhart Co., Indiana
1919	Antrim Church, Greencastle, Franklin Co., Penna.
1922	Grantham, Penna.
1924	Navarre, Kansas.
1925	Highland Church, Near West Milton, Ohio.
1929	Bethel Church, Near Merrill, Mich.
1930	Air Hill Church, Near Chambersburg, Penna.
1934	Mennonite Camp Grounds, Ludlow Falls, Ohio.
1932	Beulah College, Upland, California.

Minutes (Cont.)

<u>Year</u>	<u>Location of Meeting</u>
1935	Markham Church, Gormley, Ontario, Canada.
1938	Wainfleet, Ontario, Canada.
1939	Grantham, Penna.
1940	Jabbok Bible School, Thomas, Oklahoma.
1941	Camp Alexander Mack, Milford, Indiana.
1942	Bertie Church, Stevensville, Ontario, Canada.
1943	Messiah Bible College, Grantham, Penna.
1944	Messiah Bible College, Grantham, Penna.
1945	Messiah Bible College, Grantham, Penna.
1946	Mt. Pleasant Church, Mt. Joy, Penna.
1947	Beulah College, Upland, Calif.
1948	Memorial Holiness Camp Grounds, West Milton, Ohio.
1949	Stayner Camp Grounds, Stayner, Ontario, Canada.
1950	Roxbury Camp Grounds, Roxbury, Penna.
1951	Free Methodist Camp Grounds, Manhattan, Kansas.
1952	Memorial Holiness Camp Grounds, West Milton, Ohio.
1953	Niagara Christian College, Fort Erie, Ontario.
1954	Messiah College, Grantham, Penna.
1955	Upland College, Upland, California.
1956	Roxbury Camp Grounds, Roxbury, Penna.
1957	Memorial Holiness Camp Grounds, West Milton, Ohio.
1958	Niagara Christian College, Fort Erie, Ontario.
1959	Messiah College, Grantham, Penna.
1960	Upland College, Upland, California.

Minutes (Cont.)

<u>Year</u>	<u>Location of Meeting</u>
1961	Roxbury Holiness Camp Grounds, Roxbury, Penna.
1962	Memorial Holiness Camp Grounds, West Milton, Ohio.
1963	Niagara Christian College, Fort Erie, Ontario.
1964	Messiah College, Grantham, Penna.
1965	Upland College, Upland, California.
1966	Roxbury Holiness Camp Grounds, Roxbury, Penna.
1967	Memorial Holiness Camp Grounds, W. Milton, Ohio.
1968	Niagara Christian College, Fort Erie, Ontario.
1969	Messiah College, Grantham, Penna.
1970	Upland, California.
1971	Roxbury Holiness Camp Grounds, Roxbury, Penna.

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Incorporated in Penna. 1904, Rev. 1914 and 1915.

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writer, January 20, 1972.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

LETTER OF JACOB S. ENGLE TO THADDEUS STEVENS

The letter of Jacob S. Engle reads as follows:

January 4, 1864

Honorable T. Stevens

Dear Sir:

I wish to embrace this present opportunity to inform you that we have been informed that the commutation law is about being repealed, which concerns us as a nonresisting body. If such be the case, would place us in a very difficult position, as we cannot conscientiously furnish service. And we wish you as the representative of our County to present and advocate our case and if necessary give us an advice if you please how to proceed in behalf of our church. Please drop a few lines soon.

Truly yours

Jacob S. Engle

Marietta P. O.

PLATE V

A COLLECTION
OF
PSALMS, HYMNS,
AND
SPIRITUAL SONGS;

SUITED TO THE
VARIOUS KINDS OF CHRISTIAN WORSHIP;
AND ESPECIALLY DESIGNED FOR, AND ADAPTED TO,

The Fraternity of the Brethren.

COMPILED BY DIRECTION OF THE ANNUAL
MEETING, UPON THE BASIS OF THE
HYMN BOOKS FORMERLY USED
BY THE BROTHERHOOD.

"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all
wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in
psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing with
grace in your hearts to the Lord."—Col. iii, 16.

COVINGTON, MIAMI CO., O.:
PUBLISHED BY JAMES QUINTER.
1874.

TITLE PAGE OF
BRETHREN'S HYMN BOOK

A COLLECTION
OF
SPIRITUAL HYMNS,

ADAPTED TO THE
VARIOUS KINDS OF CHRISTIAN WORSHIP,

AND ESPECIALLY DESIGNED
FOR THE USE OF THE BRETHREN IN
CHRIST, KNOWN AS

"RIVER BRETHREN."

COMPILED ACCORDING TO DIRECTIONS OF
THE GENERAL CONFERENCE.

"Sing unto the Lord a new song, and His praise in the
assembly of saints."—Psalm cxlii.

LANCASTER, PA.
1874.

TITLE PAGE OF
SPIRITUAL HYMNS 1874

B. C. pub. 1874

TABLE 2

A COMPARISON OF THE TABLE OF CONTENTS OF THE BRETHREN'S
HYMN BOOK AND A COLLECTION OF SPIRITUAL HYMNS, 1874

<u>The Brethren's Hymn Book</u>		<u>A Collection of Spiritual Hymns</u>	
	Number of Hymns		Number of Hymns
GOD		God-	
Being and Attributes	1- 19	Existence and Attributes	1- 8
Names and Relations	20- 25	His names and relations	9- 13
In Creation	26- 29	In Creation	14- 15
In Providence	30- 36	In Providence	16- 19
WORSHIP AND PRAISE		Worship and Praise	
Public Worship	37- 90	Public Worship	20- 40
Opening	91-103	Opening Hymns	41- 48
Closing	104-115	Closing Hymns	49- 58
Social Worship	116-122	Social Worship	59- 66
Private Devotion	123-129	The Lord's Day	67- 77
The Lord's Day	130-141	The Holy Scriptures	78- 83
THE HOLY SCRIPTURES	142-155	John's Ministry and Baptism	84- 85
CHRIST		Christ-	
The Incarnation	156-164	The Incarnation	86- 91
Life and Mission	165-178	His Life and Mission	92-100
Names and Characters	179-190	His Names and Characters	101-113
Suffering and Death	191-198	His Suffering and Death	114-127
Resurrection and Glory	199-206	His Resurrection and Glory	128-134
Second Advent and Reign	207-224	His Second Advent and Reign	135-137
The Judgment	225-228	The Fall	138-142
THE CHURCH		Invitation and Warning	143-176
Character and Privileges	229-256	Repentance and Faith	177-195
Ministry	257-281	Justification and Adoption	196-221

TABLE 2--Continued

<u>The Brethren's Hymn Book</u>		<u>A Collection of Spiritual Hymns</u>	
	Number of Hymns		Number of Hymns
Council & Conference Meetings . . .	282-283	The Promises	222-226
Baptism	284-294	The Holy Spirit	227-230
Feet Washing	295-300	The Character and Privileges of the Church	231-241
Lovefeast	301-302	The Ministry	242-252
Salutation	303-304	Council and Conference Meetings . .	253-254
Communion	305-315	Baptism	255-265
Fellowship and Unity	316-322	Feet Washing	266-269
Anointing	323-324	Love Feast	270-271
Church Dedication	325-326	Salutation	272
THE GOSPEL		The Communion	273-279
Invitation and Warning	327-352	Fellowship and Unity	280-285
Repentance	353-372	The Anointing	286-287
The Fall	373-377	Church Dedication	288-289
Redemption	378-387	Afflictions and Trials	290-305
The Promises	388-394	Aspiration	306-318
The Holy Spirit	395-399	Assurance	319-321
CHRISTIAN LIFE & EXPERIENCE		Backsliding	322-326
Adoption	400-401	Communion with God	327-330
Afflictions and Trials	402-420	Consistency	331-334
Aspirations	421-437	Consecration-Contentment	335-337
Assurance	438-441	The Cross	338-343
Backsliding	442-445	Faith-Hope-Love	344-356
Communion with God	446-451	Joy	357-360
Confidence	452-457	Duties	361-364
Consistency	458-460	Obedience-Perfection	365-370
Consecration-Contentment	461-462	Christian Pilgrimage	371-375
Conversion	463-464		

TABLE 2--Continued

The Brethren's Hymn BookA Collection of Spiritual Hymns

	Number of Hymns		Number of Hymns
Courage	465-466	Prayer	376-387
The Cross	467-471	The Race--Reproof	388-393
Discipline	472-475	Self-Examination--Watchfulness	394-396
Faith	476-480	The Warfare	397-408
Hope	481-483	Death	409-449
Humility	484-485	The Resurrection	450-453
Joy	486-494	Time and Eternity	454-467
Justification	495	Judgment	468-475
Justice, Labor and Sympathy	496-505	Hell	476-479
Love	506-513	heaven	480-501
Obedience	514-516	Meeting and Parting	502-515
Patience and Peace	517-519	Family Worship--Morning	516-529
Perfection	520-522	Evening	530-541
The Christian Pilgrimage	523-524	Table Hymns	542-553
Prayer	525-544	Parental Hymns	554-558
The Race--Reproof	545-548	Youth	559-572
Safety	549	Marriage	573-575
Self Examination	550	Special Occasions	576-585
Sincerity and Submission	551-555	Miscellaneous	586-616
Watchfulness	556-557	Doxologies	385-386
The Warfare	558-563		
Wisdom and Zeal	564-566		
DEATH	567-619		
THE RESURRECTION	620-626		

TABLE 2--Continued

The Brethren's Hymn BookA Collection of Spiritual HymnsNumber
of HymnsNumber
of Hymns

CONTENTS OF APPENDIX

ME AND ETERNITY	627-642
AVEN	643-677
ETING AND PARTING	678-692
E FAMILY	
Morning	693-700
Evening	701-713
Table	714-719
Parental	720-729
Youth	730-743
Marriage	744-745
ECIAL OCCASIONS	746-766
CELLANEOUS	767-818

Youth	617-638
The Gospel Call	639-662
Repentance	663-675
Justification	676-693
Christian Life and Experience	694-757
Public Worship	758-770
Social Worship	771-778
Prayer Meeting	779-806
Missionary	807-811
Frailty--Sickness and Death	842-861
Heaven	862-883
Miscellaneous	884-915
Spiritual Declension	812-817
Special Occasions	818-834
Parental Hymns	835-841

PLATE VII

174

Eine Sammlung

von

Geistlichen Liedern,

angepaßt den verschiedenen Arten

des

Christlichen Gottesdienstes,

und besonders bestimmt

für den Gebrauch der Brüder in Christo, bekannt als

„Niber-Brüder.“

Zusammengestellt nach den Bestimmungen der
General-Conferenz.„Singet dem Herrn ein neues Lied, und Sein Lob in der
Versammlung der Heiligen.“—Psaln 149.Lancaster, Pa.,
1874.

TITLE PAGE OF

GEISTLICHEN LIEDERN, 1874

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TABLE 4

CLASSIFICATION OF HYMNS FOUND IN
GEISTLICHEN LIEDERN, 1872

Title of Division	Number of Hymns
Von der Schöpfung - of the Creation	3
Christfest-Lieder - Christmas Songs	12
Neujahrs Lieder - New Year Songs	6
Christi Kreuzigung - Christ's Crucifixion	9
Christi Auferstehung - Christ's Resurrection	3
Pfingstfest-Lieder - Pentecost Songs	3
Vor und nach der Predigt - Before and after the sermon	6
Erweckungs-Lieder - Revival Songs	19
Buss-und Bitt-Lieder - Repentance and Request Songs	13
Vom Glauben - for Faith	22
Von der Taufe - for Baptism	3
Vom Fusswaschen - for Feetwashing	4
Vom Abendmahl - for Communion (Lord's Supper)	6
Nachfolge - Invitation	36
Klage-Lieder - Songs of Lamentation and Mourning	4
Wachen und Beten - Watch and Pray	2
Brüderliche Liebe - of the dear Brethren	4
Trost in Kreuz und Trübsal - Comfort in Pain and Affliction	17
Aufmunterungs-Lieder - Songs of Encouragement	4
Sterbe-und Begräbniss-Lieder - Death and Funeral Songs	66
Ankunft Christi und Gericht - Christ's Coming and Judgment	12
Morgen-Lieder - Morning Songs	17
Abend-Lieder - Evening Songs	6
Lob und Dank-Lieder - Songs of Thanks and Praise	15
Saat und Ernte-Lieder - Sowing and Reaping Songs	7
Abschieds-Lieder - Songs of Farewell	5
Vom Ehestand - for Marriage	2
Miscellen - Miscellaneous	108

The Christian's armor is depicted in "Ihr Zionshelden, auf zum Streit!" (No. 138.) Yoder refers to an early version of this hymn³⁵ which appeared in the important camp-meeting hymnal, Geistliche Viole,³⁶ in 1835. The third stanza reads:

Paulus, ein alter Officier,
Lehrt, wie man sich recht exercir',
Nemmt auch die Waffen deutlich,
Und wie zu streiten ritterlich.

To the Brethren in Christ, with their sturdy views of pacifism, this no doubt sounded too much like the "profane 'Battalion Days,' or musterings of the Pennsylvania Militia, with their marching exercises . . ."³⁷ Thus, this stanza was altered in the Geistliche Liedern to remove all reference to the military:

Paulus, ein wohlgeübter Held,
Lehrt, wie man sich in Ordnung stellt,
Zeigt auch die wassen deutlich an
Womit ein Jeder siegen kann.

Dreisbach and Walter, as well as other German hymnwriters, seemed to take pleasure in the theme of the "Christian Pilgrimage" for their writings. These "nomadic" hymns were among the most popular of the bush-meeting songs.³⁸ Among the better known "pilgrimage" hymns appearing in the Geistlichen Liedern are:

³⁵Yoder, op. cit., p. 394.

³⁶Geistliche Viole . . . Zusammengetragen von Johannes Dreisbach und Heinrich Niebel (New Berlin, Pennsylvania, 1818). Yoder, op. cit., pp. 393-96.

³⁷Yoder, op. cit., p. 394.

³⁸Ibid., p. 452.

APPENDIX C

APPENDIX A

SCHLEITHEIM CONFESSION OF FAITH

The articles which we discussed and on which we were of one mind are these: 1. Baptism; 2. The Ban (Excommunication); 3. Breaking of Bread; 4. Separation from the Abomination; 5. Pastors in the Church; 6. The Sword; and 7. The Oath.

First. Observe concerning baptism: Baptism shall be given to all those who have learned repentance and amendment of life, and who believe truly that their sins are taken away by Christ, and to those who walk in the resurrection of Jesus Christ, and wish to be buried with Him in death, so that they may be resurrected with Him, and to all those who with this significance request it [baptism] of us and demand it for themselves. This excludes all infant baptism, the highest and chief abomination of the pope. In this you have the foundation and testimony of the apostles. Matthew 28, Mark 16, Acts 2, 8, 16, 19. This we wish to hold simply, yet firmly and with assurance.

Second. We agreed as follows on the ban: The ban shall be employed with those who have given themselves to the Lord, to walk in His commandments, and with all those who are baptized into the one body of Christ and who are called brethren or sisters, and yet who slip sometimes and fall into error and in sin, being inadvertently overtaken. The same shall be admonished twice in secret and the third time openly disciplined or banned according to the command of Christ. Matthew 18. But this shall be done according to the regulation of the Spirit (Matthew 5) before the breaking of bread, so that we may break and eat one bread, with one mind and in one love, and may drink in one cup.

Third. In the breaking of bread we are of one mind and are agreed [as follows]: All those who wish to break one bread in remembrance of the broken body of Christ, and all who wish to drink of one drink as a remembrance of the shed blood of Christ, shall be united beforehand by baptism in one body of Christ which is the church of God and whose Head is Christ. For as Paul points out we cannot at the same time be partakers of the Lord's table and the table of devils . . . Therefore it is and must be: Whoever has not been called by one God to one faith, to one baptism, to one Spirit, to one body, with all the children of God's church, cannot be made one bread with them, as indeed must be done if one is truly to break bread according to the command of Christ.

APPENDIX A--Continued

Fourth. We are agreed on separation: A separation shall be made from the wickedness which the devil planted in the world; in this manner, simply that we shall not have fellowship with them [the wicked] and not run with them in the multitude of their abominations. This is the way it is: Since all who do not walk in the obedience of faith, and have not united themselves with God so that they wish to do His will, are a great abomination before God, it is not possible for anything to grow or issue from them except abominable things. For truly all creatures are in but two classes, good and bad, believing and unbelieving, darkness and light, the world and those who [have come] out of the world . . . and none can have part with the other.

To us the command of the Lord is clear when He calls upon us to be separate from the evil and thus He will be our God and we shall be His sons and daughters . . . There will also unquestionably fall from us the unchristian, devilish weapons of force--such as sword, armor and the like, and all their use for friends or against one's enemies--by virtue of the word of Christ, Resist not evil.

Fifth. We are agreed as follows on pastors in the church of God: The pastor in the church of God shall, as Paul has prescribed, be one who out-and-out has a good report of those who are outside the faith. This office shall be to read, to admonish and teach, to warn, to discipline, to ban in the church, to lead out in prayer . . . to lift up the bread when it is broken, and in all things to see to the care of the body of Christ . . . This one moreover shall be supported of the church which has chosen him, wherein he may be in need, so that he who serves the Gospel may live of the Gospel as the Lord has ordained . . .

Sixth. We are agreed as follows concerning the sword: The sword is ordained of God outside the perfection of Christ. It punishes and puts to death the wicked, and guards and protects the good. In the Law the sword has ordained for the punishment of the wicked and for their death, and the same is ordained to be used by the worldly magistrates.

In the perfection of Christ, however, only the ban is used for a warning and for the excommunication of the one who has sinned, without putting the flesh to death,--simply the warning and the command to sin no more.

APPENDIX ---Continued

Now it will be asked by many who do not recognize the will of Christ for us, whether a Christian may or should employ the sword against the wicked for the defence and protection of the good, or for the sake of love.

Our reply is unanimously as follows: Christ teaches and commands us to learn of Him, for He is meek and lowly in heart and so shall we find rest to our souls . . . it will be asked concerning the sword, Shall one be a magistrate if one should be chosen as such? The answer is as follows: They wished to make Christ king, but He fled and did not view it as the arrangement of His Father. Thus shall we do as He did, and follow Him, and so shall we not walk in darkness . . .

Finally, it will be observed that it is not appropriate for a Christian to serve as a magistrate because of these points: The government magistracy is according to the flesh, but the Christians' is according to the Spirit; their houses and dwellings remain in this world, but the Christians' are in heaven; their citizenship is in this world but the Christians' citizenship is in heaven; the weapons of their conflict and war are carnal and against the flesh only, but the Christians' weapons are spiritual, against the fortification of the devil . . .

Seventh. We are agreed as follows concerning the oath: The oath is a confirmation among those that are quarreling or making promises. In the Law it is commanded to be performed in God's name, but only in truth, not falsely. Christ, who teaches the perfection of the Law, prohibits all swearing to His [followers], whether true or false,--neither by heaven, nor by earth, nor by Jerusalem, nor by our head,--and that for the reason which He shortly thereafter gives, For you are not able to make one hair white or black. So you see it is for this reason that all swearing is forbidden: we cannot fulfill that which we promise when we swear, for we cannot change the very least thing on us . . .¹

¹J. C. Wenger, "The Schleithem Confession of Faith," Mennonite Quarterly Review, H. S. Bender, ed. (Scottsdale, Pennsylvania: Mennonite Publishing House, October, 1945), pp. 247-53. For a survey of known manuscript copies and printed editions of the Confession, see MOR, Vol. XVI, 2 April, 1942, pp. 82-7.

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— A N D —

Church Government,

—TOGETHER WITH—

—MADE BY—

—OF THE—

COMMONLY CALLED RIVER BRETHREN.

1871-87. INCLUSIVE.

COMPILED AND REVISED FOR THE CHURCH.

ABILENE, KAS.:
DAILY GAZETTE BOOK AND JOB PRINT.
1887.

which we may become and remain Christians. We believe in a Holy Christian Church, the Communion of Saints, the Resurrection of the body and life everlasting. We believe that the ordinances, namely: Baptism by trine immersion, washing the saints' feet, and the communion or partaking of the emblems of the broken body and the shed blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, are enjoined and should be practiced by all Christian societies. ~~We believe that the Scriptures teach that Christians should not be conformed to this world, but that they are a separate people, and that we believe that it teaches the doctrine of non-resistance in a qualified sense; that it is not the Christian's privilege to take up the sword or fight with carnal weapons, yet it is his duty to be strictly loyal to the Government under which he lives, in all things that do not conflict with, or are not forbidden by the Word.~~

CHURCH GOVERNMENT.

The officers of the Church consist: First, of overseers, elders or bishops. Second, of ministers or preachers. Third, deacons. It is the duty of the bishop to take the oversight of the Church or congregation in his district or charge, to preside at all council meetings, to take a general oversight of the work under his supervision, in celebrating the Lord's Supper, in the administration of the ordinance of Baptism, in receiving and in excommunicating or expelling members, etc.

It is the duty of the ministers or preachers to preach the Word, and in the absence of, or by advice of the bishop or consent of the Church to perform all the duties of the elder for the time being.

The deacons or visiting brethren are required to visit the Church at least once a year; to provide for the poor and infirm in the church, to attend to all

the local duties of their charge. The deliberations or councils of the Church are congregational in form; all have a voice or vote in all acts passed on in council, but due respect is given to elders, who are esteemed worthy of double honor.

The Church is divided into districts, in each of which there is annually a district or local council, preparatory and for the purpose of electing delegates to general conference and to ascertain the condition and wants of the Church in the district.

There is a general conference each year, at which matters of general character and points of doctrine, church government, etc., are acted upon.

There is also a board of missions appointed to take a general charge of the spread of the gospel.

The officers of the Church are elective, and hold their office during life or during good behavior.

APPENDIX D



ORIGIN, CONFESSION OF FAITH

CHURCH GOVERNMENT

TOGETHER WITH

AN ABSTRACT OF THE MOST IMPORTANT DECISIONS,

MADE BY

GENERAL COUNCIL

OF THE

Brethren in Christ

COMMONLY CALLED RICE BRETHREN

1871-81 INCLUSIVE

Compiled and Revised

DEKORATH PRINT, MO ST. O. 7

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APPENDIX E

sustains, governs, protects and supports the same. We believe that the Holy Bible, the Old and New Testament, is the Word of God, and that the fall of man in Adam, and that Redemption through Christ, are plainly taught therein, and that by faith in our Savior, and true repentance, forgiveness of sin, and obedience to Christ and His commands, is the only true way that we may become and remain Christians. We believe in a Holy Christian Church, the Communion of Saints, the Resurrection of the body and life everlasting. We believe that the ordinances, namely: Baptism by trine immersion, washing the saints' feet, and the communion or partaking of the emblems of the broken body and shed blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, are enjoined and should be practiced by all Christian societies. We believe that the Scriptures teach that Christians should not be conformed to this world, but that they are a separate people, and we believe that it teaches the doctrine of non-resistance in a qualified sense; that it is not the Christian's privilege to take up the sword or fight with carnal weapons, yet it is his duty to be strictly loyal to the Government under which he lives, in all things that do not conflict or are not forbidden by the Word of the Lord.

CHURCH GOVERNMENT.

The officers of the Church consist: First, of Overseers, Elders or Bishops; Second, of Ministers or Preachers; Third, Deacons. It is the duty of the Bishop to take the oversight of the

to preside at all council meetings, to take a general oversight of the work under his supervision, in celebrating the Lord's Supper, in the administration of the ordinance of Baptism, in receiving in and excommunicating or expelling members, etc.

It is the duty of the Ministers or Preachers to preach the Word, and in the absence of or by advice of the Bishop or consent of the Church to perform all the duties of the Elder for the time being.

The Deacons or visiting Brethren are required to visit the Church at least once in the year, to provide for the poor and infirm in the Church, to attend to all the local duties of their charge. The deliberations or councils of the Church are congregational in form; all have a voice or vote in all acts passed on in council, but due respect is given to Elders, who are esteemed worthy of double honor.

The Church is divided into districts, in each of which there is annually a district or local council preparatory and for the purpose of electing delegates to General Conference and to ascertain the condition and wants of the Church in the district.

There is a General Conference once each year, at which matters of a general character and points of doctrine, church government, etc., are acted upon.

There is also a Board of Missions appointed to take a general charge of the spread of the Gospel.

The officers of the Church are elective, and hold

the Rotterdam Church was involved in litigation to secure these funds, but lost. The lower chamber passed a resolution acknowledging that the government director was in error in giving Karsdorp the funds, but could not make it retroactive.

When the membership had again increased to 60 in 1895, the congregation was reorganized (Dec. 13, 1895). A church council was chosen. Johannes Dyserinck (*q.v.*), a minister in Rotterdam, was *consulens* and gave religious instruction. On Jan. 12, 1896, the first sermon was delivered to the new congregation. In 1897 they built a church on Lenghenstraat, and dedicated it on Jan. 9, 1897, with a sermon by Dyserinck. On Oct. 15, 1899, they called a preacher of their own and the government, to atone for the error made earlier, gave them an annual subsidy of 200 florins. For preaching services they were united with Breda (*q.v.*) from 1899 to 1945. The ministers were A. J. van Loghum Slaterus, 1899-1908; W. Koekebakker, 1908-45; Abraham Mulder since 1946. The membership in 1898 was 74; in 1926, 180; in 1953, 148. The congregation has a Sunday school, Bible courses, women's circle, and many youth activities.

K.V., vDZ.

Inv. Arch. Amst. I, Nos. 569, 583-85, 588, 591, 1180, 1185, 1284; II, Nos. 1694-1712; IIa, Nos. 39-42; *DB* 1862, 88-114; 1867, 156 f.; 1868, 145 f.; 1869, 125-28; 1896, 207-8; 1897, 256; 1898, 242; *Mellink, Wederdopers*, 228-31; *ML* I, 467-68.

Dordrecht Confession of Faith. Written in the first draft by Adriaan Cornelisz, elder of the Flemish Mennonite congregation in the Dutch city of Dordrecht, this confession of faith, containing 18 articles, was adopted April 21, 1632, and signed by 51 Flemish and Frisian Mennonite preachers as a basis of union. The official (Dutch) title reads: *Voorsteltinghe van de principale articulen onses algemeynen Christelijcken Geloofs, ghelijck de selve in onse Gemeynthe doorgaens geleert ende beleeft worden*. On Feb. 4, 1660, six preachers and seven deacons from Alsace, in a meeting held at Ohnenheim in Rappoltsstein, adopted the Dordrecht Confession "as our own." Later it was adopted by the Mennonites in the Palatinate and North Germany; the Swiss Mennonites never accepted it, perhaps because it teaches shunning (Article 17) which only the Swiss Amish practiced, not the Swiss Mennonites. Probably through the influence of the Dutch Mennonites of Germantown, Pa., the Mennonites of southeastern Pennsylvania, of the Franconia and Lancaster conferences (MC) adopted the Dordrecht Confession in 1725. The more conservative Mennonite bodies in America, including the Mennonite Church (MC), now recognize it as their official articles of faith, but its personal acceptance is not required either for baptism or ordination. Historically this symbol has been much used as an instrument of catechetical instruction in preparation for baptism.

The Eighteen Articles of Dordrecht teach the basic doctrines of the Christian faith: God is viewed as "eternal, almighty, and incomprehensible" and as existing in three Persons, "Father, Son, and the Holy Ghost." God created the first man Adam in His own image, gave him Eve as a companion, and

from these two spring all the people of earth (Art. I). The original pair fell into sin by transgressing the divine command and became so estranged from God as to be utterly lost had not God "interposed in their behalf and made provision for their restoration" (Art. II). Even while Adam and Eve were still in the Garden of Eden God promised to give His Son as their Saviour, a divine promise in which they hoped, as did all the pious patriarchs, "expecting that He . . . would at His coming again redeem and deliver the fallen race from their sins . . ." (Art. III). In the fullness of time Jesus was born, the long-awaited Saviour: the Word became flesh, having been conceived by the Holy Spirit in the Virgin Mary. "But how or in what manner this worthy body was prepared . . . we content ourselves with the declaration which the worthy evangelists have given." Jesus died for all men, purchasing redemption for the entire race, for He "tasted death for every man" (Art. IV). Before His ascension Jesus established His New Testament with His followers, which Testament contains all that men need for the Christian life if they accept and obey it (Art. V). The first step in beginning the Christian life is "repentance and amendment of life" (Art. VI). Those who in penitence become Christian believers, those who "through faith, the new birth and renewal of the Holy Ghost have become united with God," are to be baptized with water in the name of the Holy Trinity to the burying of their sins, for their incorporation into the communion of the saints, and as a pledge of faithful discipleship, "to observe all things whatsoever the Son of God taught . . . His followers to do" (Art. VII). Those who have repented, become true believers and been baptized, constitute the church of Christ, the body which He redeemed by His blood and which He will preserve and protect until the end of the world. The true church is known by her evangelical faith, Christian love, godly manner of life, and observance of the "true ordinances of Christ" (Art. VIII). The Lord has appointed that the congregations of His church should be provided with elders, pastors, deacons and deaconesses, so that the Lord's ordinances, baptism and supper, might be administered, "the body of Christ may be edified, and the Lord's vineyard and church be preserved in its growth and structure" (Art. IX). The Lord's Supper is to be observed as a memorial of our redemption in Christ's blood and as a reminder of our duty to love one another and to maintain the unity of the church (Art. X). Believers shall also wash the feet of their fellow Christians as a token of humble service, "but yet more particularly as a sign to remind us of the true washing—the washing and purification of the soul in the blood of Christ" (Art. XI). Marriage is instituted of God and shall be entered into only with those who are members of the same Christian fellowship who have received "the same baptism" and who belong to "the same church" (Art. XII). God has established the civil government for the punishment of the wicked and the protection of the good and Christians shall recognize rulers as ministers of God, rendering honor to them, paying taxes as

praying for them (Art. XIII). Christians shall follow only the law of love, manifesting to enemies the same spirit of love and forgiveness as did Jesus, being Biblical nonresistants in suffering and abuse. They shall pray for their enemies, "comfort and feed them," and seek their welfare and salvation: all this in obedience to the express teaching of Christ (Art. XIV). Christians shall make only a solemn affirmation of the truth; they shall not swear any oaths whatever: this also in obedience to the explicit instruction of Christ (Art. XV). When a member of the church reverts to a life of sin and loses out as a Christian, it is necessary for the church to excommunicate such an apostate, for his amendment and "not for (his) destruction": the purpose being to purge the church of such "leaven," to preserve the good name of the church, and "that he may again be convinced of the error of his ways, and brought to repentance" (Art. XVI). Excommunicated apostates are to be "avoided" or shunned; all social fellowship with them must be broken, even in eating and drinking. Nevertheless "such moderation . . . (shall) be used that such shunning and reproof may not be conducive to his ruin but serviceable to his amendment. . . . We must not treat such offenders as enemies, but exhort them as brethren . . . to bring them to a knowledge of their sins and to repentance" (Art. XVII). On the Day of Judgment all men will be resurrected from the dead and appear before Christ where the saved will be severed from the lost, the righteous to enter into the unspeakable joys of eternal life, and the wicked to be damned to "eternal, hellish torments" (Art. XVIII).

The language of the Dordrecht Confession is simple and direct, not literary or philosophical in character; it abounds in Scriptural quotations, and follows the general emphases of evangelical Protestant thought except that it teaches the baptism of believers only, the washing of the saints' feet, earnest church discipline, the shunning of the excommunicated, the nonswearing of oaths, marriage within the same church, strict nonresistance, and in general places more emphasis on true Christianity involving being Christian and obeying Christ rather than merely holding to a correct system of doctrine.

A number of documents pertaining to the origin and adoption of the Dordrecht Confession of Faith are found in the Amsterdam Mennonite Archives (*Inv. Arch. Amst.* I, Nos. 569, 583-92). The confession was printed as early as 1633 (*Confessie ende Vredehandelinge tot Dordrecht anno 1632*, Haarlem, 1633), and was reprinted in Dutch at least three times, but only one copy of the 1633 edition is extant. A reprint is found in the introduction to the first part of T. J. van Braght's *Martyrs' Mirror* (Amsterdam, 1660; also Dutch *Martyrs' Mirror* of 1685 and the German and English translations). Shortly after this it was printed together with other confessions, in *Algemeene Belydenissen* (Amsterdam, 1665, reprints 1700, 1739). The oldest German translation, by Tieleman Tielen van Sittert, appeared at Amsterdam in 1664, entitled *Christliches Glaubensbekenntnis* (reprints in Europe at Amsterdam, 1686, 1717, 1742, Basel, 1753, 1780, 1781, 1782, 1783, 1784, 1785, 1786, 1787, 1788, 1789, 1790, 1791, 1792, 1793, 1794, 1795, 1796, 1797, 1798, 1799, 1800, 1801, 1802, 1803, 1804, 1805, 1806, 1807, 1808, 1809, 1810, 1811, 1812, 1813, 1814, 1815, 1816, 1817, 1818, 1819, 1820, 1821, 1822, 1823, 1824, 1825, 1826, 1827, 1828, 1829, 1830, 1831, 1832, 1833, 1834, 1835, 1836, 1837, 1838, 1839, 1840, 1841, 1842, 1843, 1844, 1845, 1846, 1847, 1848, 1849, 1850, 1851, 1852, 1853, 1854, 1855, 1856, 1857, 1858, 1859, 1860, 1861, 1862, 1863, 1864, 1865, 1866, 1867, 1868, 1869, 1870, 1871, 1872, 1873, 1874, 1875, 1876, 1877, 1878, 1879, 1880, 1881, 1882, 1883, 1884, 1885, 1886, 1887, 1888, 1889, 1890, 1891, 1892, 1893, 1894, 1895, 1896, 1897, 1898, 1899, 1900, 1901, 1902, 1903, 1904, 1905, 1906, 1907, 1908, 1909, 1910, 1911, 1912, 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APPENDIX B

BRETHREN IN CHRIST CONFESSION OF FAITH,
DATED 1799

[Baptism] . . . so also we believe and acknowledge from the example given in the written Word . . . that the Lord Jesus Christ gave for an outward bond-token, for such new-born children the outward water baptism, having observed it Himself and His disciples, and that likewise the early churches observed the same, after denying the devil, the world and all sinful life, and were baptized by a threefold baptism under water . . . as a token of the burial.

[Regarding] . . . the baptism of infants and the unconverted, we leave it with them that are satisfied therewith. Where the teachings of our Lord Jesus and that of the Apostles are silent, there will we be silent also.

[The Ban] . . . we acknowledge an order in separation of disorderly members, yet with difference, as . . . stated from Matthew 18 . . . If the offender shows a submissive spirit and accepts the brotherly admonitions in childlike love, does not offend or justify himself, neither is strong or domineering, it is all right, but if he will not acknowledge his fault, nor mend his ways, then take thee one or two more, and at last tell it to the church. If the offender, however, is not submissive to the church, then let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican . . .

[Breaking of Bread] We also believe that the Lord Jesus instituted the Lord's Supper and observed it with His disciples, with bread and wine . . . that they, after His departure, when partaking of the same, should remember His broken body and shed blood for them, wherein also His disciples and followers were stedfast in the apostle's doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread and in prayer, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart . . . Here we stand by God in grace, separated from the children of the world, yea, branches of the true vine, and members of the body of Christ . . .

[Separation] Notice the expression of Paul: "Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly . . . and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed " (II The. 3:6, 14). I Cor. 5:11, "But now I have written unto you not to keep company" or to eat with such who are so ungodly . . .

APPENDIX B--Continued

[Church Organization] We acknowledge a growth in grace according to the Holy Scriptures To accomplish this, it is necessary to have public gatherings where the Word is preached and the people are exhorted to repent. To this end there are also private gatherings necessary and helpful, where penitent souls can confess and relate their experience one to another

[The Sword] The sword, revenge, and self-defence are entirely forbidden, verses 39 and 40 (Matt. 5). Out of the teachings of our Lord Jesus and His apostles we also understand that no member or follower of Jesus Christ is allowed to serve in worldly government offices; therefore it ought also be forbidden to us. But we ought not withstand the worldly governments, but be subject to them in all that is good, and earnestly pray for them that God may give them light and wisdom, so that they may be able to perform their duties truly. We are also exhorted to pay tribute, or protection money unto the governments, because Paul calls them God's ministers, Romans 13. And since God rules the whole universe, so God has ordained that man should rule natural men, or the world, and that is also for the good of God's children, otherwise it would still be worse to live in this world Paul commands us to pray for them, as above stated, so that they may be able to perform their duties truly, so that the children of God under them may be able to live a quiet and God-fearing life, and that they do not use the children of God as a power or force in order to quell disturbances or to oppress or bring others into subjection to the governments under whose protection we live.

[Oaths] And inasmuch as oaths are altogether forbidden in the teachings of our Lord Jesus, they are therefore also forbidden to be used by us, Matthew 5:34.

Brackets and headings are inserted.



In reply refer to
Eu 711.00/1243

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
WASHINGTON

February 9, 1939

My dear Bishop:

The receipt is acknowledged, by reference from the White House, of your letter of January 28, 1939, to the President, with which you were good enough to enclose a memorial prepared in accordance with the action and instruction of the General Conference of the Brethren in Christ Church, held near Welland, Ontario, on June 9, 1938.

Sincerely yours,

For the Secretary of State:

Pierrepoint Moffat

Pierrepoint Moffat
Chief, Division of European Affairs.

The Very Reverend
Orville B. Ulery,
General Conference Secretary of the
Brethren in Christ Church,
1325 Maiden Lane,
Springfield, Ohio.

MEMORIAL AND REDECLARATION OF
NON-RESISTANCE PREPARED AS PER ARTICLE L,
PAGE 87, CONFERENCE MINUTES 1938
AND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

O. B. Ulery

GENERAL CONFERENCE SECRETARY

of the Brethren in Christ Church

A religious Association, founded on the Word of the Triune Godhead, Father, Son and Holy Spirit—the plan of redemption thru faith in the atoning Blood of Jesus Christ—His ministry, suffering, death, burial, resurrection, ascension and His coming again.

1115 Maiden Lane,

Springfield, Ohio.

January 28, 1939

The Honorable Franklin D. Roosevelt
President of the United States
Washington, D. C.

My dear Mr. President:

The attached memorial has been prepared according to the action and instruction of the General Conference of the Brethren in Christ Church, held near Welland, Ontario, Canada, June 9th, 1938.

We desire that it be presented to President Roosevelt and filed in the archives of his office.

An acknowledgement to this effect will be awaited.

Very respectfully yours,

Orville B. Ulery

General Conference Secretary

APPENDIX H

C. B. Ullery

GENERAL CONFERENCE SECRETARY

of the Brethren in Christ Church

A religious Association, founded on the Word of the Triune Godhead, Father,
Son and Holy Spirit—the plan of redemption thru faith in the
atoning blood of Jesus Christ—His ministry, suffering,
death, burial, resurrection, ascension and
His coming again.

1111 Austin Lane

Springfield, Ohio

The Honorable Franklin D. Roosevelt,

President of the United States and

Commander in Chief of its Military and Naval Forces.

In view of the disturbed diplomatic relations of the various World Powers which seemingly threaten the tranquillity and peace of our own beloved nation, we, the Brethren in Christ Church assembled in General Conference, adopted a resolution that a memorial declaring our non-resistant attitude on war activities be presented to your honorable office.

From our earliest history our people have accepted and taught the principles of non-resistance, as evidenced by our published Church literature and stated in Bulletin # ¹⁶ 037-039, Census of Religious Bodies, Census 1926, believing it to be a clear and definite teaching of God's Holy Word and exemplified on the earth by the self-sacrificing service, life, voluntary suffering, and vicarious death of the Son of God, Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour.

As His professed followers, we hold the spirit and activities of war to be directly opposite to the teachings of His Word, as evidenced by the following scriptures:

It is a direct violation of the command, "Thou shalt not kill" (Matt. 5:21), and contrary to such scriptures as: "Resist not evil" (Matt. 5:39), "Avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath"

(Romans 12:19). The spirit of warfare is entirely opposite to definite teachings of God's Word, such as "Blessed are the merciful" (Matt. 5:7). War is cruel, barbarous, and destructive "Blessed are the peacemakers" (Matt. 5:9). War is based upon anger, strife, and hatred. "Love your enemies" (Matt. 5:44). War lives in the spirit of hatred and vengeance.

In view of the definite teaching of these and many other like scriptures, we, the Brethren in Christ Church, wish to reaffirm our sincere acceptance of and obedience to the principles and doctrine of non-resistance as taught in God's Word, and again declare that we cannot violate our God-given convictions against participation in carnal warfare or warlike activities.

Having listened to the radio broadcast and, later, read with deep interest your address to Congress in which you emphasized the need of preserving religious freedom and reviewed the war activities and diplomatic exchanges of the various world powers, which have disturbed the security of almost the entire world and threaten the peace of our own beloved nation, we, on behalf of the Brethren in Christ Church, desire to present this memorial for your thoughtful consideration.

We avow our loyalty to our great nation, and pledge our respect, acceptance, and support of all that pertains to her highest good, and we pray God's blessing of wisdom upon your office as President and upon all those who have the responsibility of administering the affairs of State, that peace may reward your labors. We also pray that the authority of your office may be exercised to preserve the constitutional liberty and freedom of conscience hitherto granted us, to worship God according to the dictates of our enlightened conscience.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the Brethren in Christ Church, by
Act of our General Conference of 1938.

B. H. Smith
Moderator
Orville B. Ullery
Secretary