

ICS: Partner in the Task of Scholarship

J. Harry Fernhout

A mid-January evening, a world preoccupied with the threat of war, a Dutch social philosopher, and a semi-academic lecture. These ingredients would, I thought, attract an audience of 30 to 40 people from the greater Toronto area. Imagine my surprise and delight when the crowd that evening burst the seams of the fellowship hall at Rehoboth Fellowship Christian Reformed Church in Etobicoke.

Why did Sander Griffioen's lecture attract so many people? (See Bruce Clemenger's article on page 3.) Was it because, like "old times," the event was co-sponsored by three Christian action groups? Or was Griffioen's reputation and disarming personality the key to the evening's success? No doubt these factors played an important role. But the topic, "Can We Tolerate Pluralism?" was also a critical factor, I believe.

Pluralism is not simply a subject for interesting academic discussion. In our rapidly changing society we encounter the issue of pluralism daily, on the streets where we live, in the political issues of our day, and in public life in general.

In contemporary western culture people manifest profound differences in their religious commitments, their ethical values, their ethnic traditions and their cultural priorities. The presence of these differences can create worry about social disintegration. Can people with profound differences still live together, peacefully and constructively? To what extent can society "tolerate" the expression of profound differences, especially religious differences? That's what the issue of pluralism is all about.

continued on page 5



President Fernhout opening the lecture on Pluralism. The speaker, Dr. Sander Griffioen, is seated far left.

Photo: R.J. Klein

Perspective

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In this issue:

These are the special features:

- ★ the lead article by Dr. Fernhout on **pages 1 and 5**, submitted for his regular "From The President's Pen" column but given a place of enhanced prominence owing to its significant content; **must reading!**
- ★ coverage of last November's historic opening ceremony at 229 College, **pp 8-10**,
- ★ sneak preview of this year's ICS Family Conferences, complete with photos, **pp 6-7**.

Also note Bruce Cleminger's report on the public lecture of Dr. Sander Griffioen, **p. 3**, and Gayla Postma's tracking of several former and present ICS students, **p. 4**.

RJK



Development Notes

by John Meiboom

Old Year, New Year

War has broken out in the Persian Gulf, the USSR has attacked its own people in the Baltic states, and the environment is under attack everywhere. We see so much hurt in our own and others' lives, yet we say, "Our God reigns!" Sometimes the two don't seem to add up.

A new year has begun. Hope springs eternal! We have a God who not only watches us but has an active plan for us. God's plan will be worked out, whether through our activities or, as often is the case, in spite of them. So we still can say, "Our God reigns!"

At ICS God's grace has been abundant this past year, especially in very visual ways: newly renovated facilities, newly committed and dedicated students, new faculty members and, not least of all, new and renewed financial support received in 1990. In the first six months of our fiscal year, July to December 1990, ICS received \$466,000 in voluntary gifts from individuals, businesses and churches. This meant we ended 1990 with a small surplus and paid most of the cost of renovating the space we moved to in September. We praise God and thank all of you who have been part of these blessings.

A note about the new year is in order. While the above news is exciting, it could happen that some will now say: "ICS doesn't need me any more." Well, don't you believe it. We need all of you! A member I spoke with this week observed correctly that if we were able to raise all the money needed from just a few people instead of the thousands that contribute now, ICS would be worse off. It's true! ICS must continue to be a "grass roots" organization if it is to remain relevant. It is God's people that made, and continue to make, ICS what it is.

ICS needs \$436,000 in the next six months to break even. Pledges and postdated cheques already received

indicate that our goal is within reach. But we need the continued help from everybody. Gifts of \$50, \$100, and \$250 add up quickly and are indispensable to our fiscal health. Thank you for your support, both financially and through your prayers.

Phone-a-thon

One of the year's most successful fundraising events is our phone-a-thon because of the involvement of so many volunteers and especially because of your response to the call. Getting personally in touch with so many of our supporters provides a way for us to recognize your significant part in ICS's work as well as receiving helpful feedback. After a mailing in mid-March, this year's phone-a-thon will be held from April 8 to 11. We look forward to that week and I hope you do as well.

Niagara Conference

Other events that provide valuable opportunities to interact with our supporters are the annual ICS-sponsored family conferences. In Ontario and Alberta, the conference takes place on the August long weekend, while the British Columbia one is usually held on the Labour Day weekend in September.

Rita VanderVeen retired from organizing the Niagara conference this year after three years of dedicated service. We are very grateful for her efforts and are especially happy to report that she has agreed to serve on the support committee for this year's conference.

EDUCOM Consulting, the firm through which Mr. Reinder Klein seeks to serve Christian organizations, will run this year's Niagara conference. Reinder has been our Western Representative since 1989, adding the editorship of *Perspective* and the co-ordination of student recruiting in 1990.

Finally, I want to wish each one of you God's peace for 1991. My prayer is, as I am sure yours is as well, "Come, Lord Jesus!"

P

Griffioen Lectures Capacity Crowd

Bruce Cleminger

Over 120 people gathered to hear Dr. Sander Griffioen of the Free University of Amsterdam in a lecture co-sponsored by the ICS, Citizens for Public Justice and the Christian Labour Association of Canada last January 15 in Etobicoke's Rehoboth Fellowship CRC.

"Can We Tolerate Pluralism?" was a timely topic in light of renewed interest in recent years in the nature of public life in liberal democracies. In his lecture Griffioen explored various understandings of the notion of "public" and asked whether there is room for religious pluralism.

Griffioen said that most contemporary theorists view public life as rooted in some form of consensus, finding unity in a common denominator which serves as a basis for agreement. Yet if public life is restricted to that upon which we all agree, does that not exclude discussion and leave no room for participation by religious groups? Can public life encompass a plurality of faith commitments?

Griffioen said that this question is one that Henk Hart raised in response to an article written by Bernard Zylstra. Zylstra, says Griffioen, insisted that such a combination is possible in a plural form democracy and that the task of the state is to lay down the rules for such an order.

Differences provide unity

Griffioen says that while there is a private side to Christianity, there is also a public side: the Gospel is to be proclaimed to all of life. We are witnesses to the modern metropolis, but is there room in the public realm for various religions, and Christianity in particular? Doesn't the presence of so many religions in our society require all of them to give up their claim to absolute truth, asks Griffioen?

Public, by definition, is understood to be accessible to all. It has been assumed that religious belief must be confined to the private realm while reason should govern the public realm, suggesting that reason is somehow neutral and not itself a form of religions. It is this assertion which Griffioen says has been the target of Reformed critique and has recently come under attack from others as well.

How then do we develop a public philosophy? Griffioen asserts that the notion of consensus prevails because without it, it is feared that public life will wither away and that a war of convictions will ensue. Can we not have both conviction and solidarity, Griffioen asks?



Photo: R.J. Klein

Junior Member Bruce Cleminger

Griffioen says it is in public that we meet others with different convictions than our own and it is when we become conscious of our differences that we have a basis for unity. In our disagreement, we seek to persuade the other of our perspective and by so doing, says Griffioen, we are recognizing that the other is worth persuading. If we had nothing in common, there would be no conflict. That we have conflict implies that there is a basis of commonality and that we have recognized the worth of the other.

Griffioen says we must also recognize that our convictions are formulated outside the public space and, likewise, that the basis for solidarity is also found outside, rooted in the fact that we are all created in the image of God.

Griffioen says we are called to be peacemakers, to discover the deeper unity among us and others. When asked whether there are norms which guide this process, Griffioen said that there are but that understanding them requires further reflection, a task which he will continue to undertake and one in which we all must share.

In the face of the increasing size and public participation of a variety of faith communities, religious pluralism is a fact in Canada and we as Christians are not only called to give public voice, but also to give public expression to the Gospel in our calling as peacemakers. We must continue to learn what it means to be publicly present as Christians. [P]



Dr. Sander Griffioen pondering answer to question.

Photo: Rita VanderVeen

Alumni Action

Gayla Postma

Tim DeJager, former student of Henk Hart, successfully defended his PhD thesis at the University of Toronto on January 14. Congratulations, Tim!

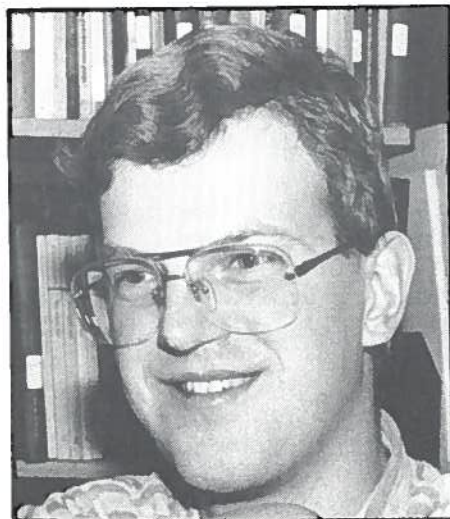
ICS alumnus **Dr. Richard Lawson** is currently the district councillor from Congresbury, a village on the western coast of Britain. He recently ran for Parliament as a member of the Green Party.

According to an article in the *GLOBE*'s "BUSINESS REPORT", in which Lawson was interviewed, the Green Party currently holds seats in nine of Europe's 15 parliaments, holding the balance of power in the European parliament and making up coalition governments in West Berlin and Frankfurt.

After studying at ICS, Lawson returned to Britain and began publishing environmental tracts, before eventually joining the Green Party.

Lawson, 43, lives with his family in a 116-year-old converted schoolhouse in Britain where he also maintains his medical practice.

Fred Heerema, ex'72, having worked for the Christian Labour Association of Canada for ten years, received his LLB degree from the Faculty of Law at the University of Western Ontario and is now a third year associate in the labour relations and employment law department at Toronto's Miller Thomson.



Hans Groen

Photo: ICS files

Hans Groen has successfully defended his PhD dissertation in Amsterdam. Dr. Paul Marshall was



Thom Corbett

Photo: ICS files

his co-promoter and one of the examiners.

Interserve, an international Christian organization, has announced the appointment of ICS graduate **Thom Corbett** to Director of Development.

Corbett spent ten years as a journalist before attending Ontario Theological Seminary. Following his graduation, he and his wife Susan travelled to Manila where he used his skills as Communications Supervisor for Open Doors with Brother Andrew. It was in Asia, travelling through Cambodia, that Thom saw how Christian professionals worked and witnessed in countries closed to traditional missions.

In 1985, Thom returned to Canada and enrolled in the M.Phil.F. program at ICS. He joined the staff of Interserve in 1990.

Interserve, the oldest inter-denominational Christian mission in Canada, began in 1852 as the Bible and Medical Missionary Fellowship. It was an exclusively women's ministry during its first 100 years.

Interserve is engaged in tentmaking, recruiting Christian professionals to work in restricted access countries in Asia and the Middle East, using their profession as a springboard to Christian witness. Executive Director Robert Morris says Interserve looks to schools like ICS for its workers because that is where they find people who have learned to integrate their faith and their profession.

Thom joins a staff of 30 in Interserve's Toronto office. He will handle donor relations, publications, fundraising and will represent Interserve at churches and missions conferences. P

Meet an ICS student

Gayla Postma

Iskandar Kisman Saher

ICS student Iskandar Kisman Saher recently returned from Stony Point Center, New York, where he spent several days serving as chaplain at a conference for faculty members of Christian universities in Asia. The participants all lecture at Asian universities and are currently studying in North America. The conference theme was "Being Asian in Today's North America."

Saher says his work was well received but was no easy task as not all participants were Christian. "Along with Christians there were Moslems, Buddhists and Hindu followers," says Saher. "At the Christian universities in Asia, not all the lecturers are necessarily Christian either."

Saher is no stranger to ICS as he received the master's degree in Worldview Studies just last November. Saher came to ICS from Indonesia where he was chaplain at the Satya Wacana University. He first heard of ICS through the writings of Al Wolters and Cal Seerveld, and later through Paul Marshall when Marshall visited Saher's university.

Saher, 34, is recently married and lives with his wife Glory in Scarborough. He is now working on his M.Phil.F. degree under the guidance of his mentor, Dr. Seerveld. P



Saher being warmly congratulated by Dr. Brian Walsh following graduation.

Photo: R.J. Klein



Photo: R. J. Klein

"Le Chef" in action, serving soup.

"Partner" *continued from page 1*

For me, Sander Griffioen's lecture helped bring the Institute's efforts to carve out its place in the realm of higher education in Ontario into focus. For five years we have been waiting for the Ministry of Colleges and Universities to review and revise its policy with regard to the degree-granting powers of independent institutions like ICS. Now it appears that this matter is at a critical stage. The Ministry has promised that its policy proposals will be ready by "mid-winter." By the time you read this, we may finally know what the Ministry plans to do.

The question of whether institutions such as ICS should have access to regular degree-granting powers is fundamentally a question of educational pluralism. As Sander Griffioen showed in his lecture, in our western societies we prefer to keep deep-seated differences (including religious differences) out of the public domain. Public life is supposed to be guided by principles and values about which reasonable people can come to a kind of consensus. Since there can be no consensus about religious commit-

ments, the latter are consigned to the private sphere.

This consensus-ideal shows its face very clearly in the area of education. "Public education" is supposed to reflect that knowledge which we hold "in common" and, at the same time, is supposed to develop a common mind among citizens. Religious pluralism in education is thus ruled out in principle.

This perspective leads to a one-track approach to higher education, as is evident in a discussion paper on the degree-granting question released by the Ontario Council on University Affairs (OCUA) in 1989. While acknowledging that government is responsible for providing adequate access to university education, this paper insisted that government carries out this responsibility by funding the "public" universities. Beyond this, government has no responsibilities. However, the principle of tolerance leads government to allow citizens to opt out in order to operate "private" schools.

On this view, schools such as ICS are, by definition, second-track institutions. They are tolerated or permitted, but they are regarded as falling outside the educational mainstream. In a certain sense such institutions appear as intruders on the public domain.

Consequently, ICS and other institutions find it extremely difficult to secure access to "regular" degree-granting powers. Why should

"private interest" schools be given this "public privilege"? Let them grant "religious" degrees which reflect their "private" beliefs!

The Institute has always strongly resisted this type of benevolent intolerance. In one of the briefs we have submitted to the government we state:

"At ICS we study the same subject matter as the publicly-funded universities and we do so from a Christian philosophical perspective. We believe Christian philosophy and Christian approaches to the arts and sciences offer useful contributions to the realm of scholarship, contributions which are different from, yet complementary to, Christian theology."

As a Christian institution of higher learning, we don't want to be relegated to an educational side-track; we want to be regarded as a *partner* in the task of scholarship. We seek an educational pluralism which makes such partnership possible.

Our deepest motivation in our work is to bear witness to the name of Jesus Christ, the Lord of life. And we seek to testify to that Name in the educational mainstream, in the public scholarly domain.

In the next few months, the degree-granting issue will reveal whether a more genuine educational pluralism can develop in Ontario. Will you join us in regularly bringing this matter before God in prayer? P



Nel Van Geest, Gerald Vandezande at Griffioen lecture.

Photo: R.J. Klein

ICS FAMILY CONFERENCES 1991

Reinder J. Klein



Is the winter weather getting you down? Are the slush blahs getting the better of you? Let me cheer you up with thoughts of summer fun and laughter. Let me help you plan ahead for the good times, the rich times, those heady times of sun-drenched Deep Woods days chased by majestic, thunder clapping clouds. Plan now to attend the ICS family conference in (or near) your province or state. Here are some of last year's scenes to whet your appetite.





BRITISH COLUMBIA

Our West Coast friends and supporters will once again gather at scenic Columbia Bible Camp, this time to be led by Calvin professor **John Worst** in a conference tentatively titled **DANCING IN THE DARK; TODAY'S CHRISTIAN AND POPULAR CULTURE**.

Labour Day weekend in early September. *Register early!*



ALBERTA

ICS enthusiasts and others interested in celebrating and upholding the good creation will want to join Calvin professor **Uko Zylstra** in a conference centered on the environment. Deer Valley Meadows Camp near Lacombe is the site.

Early August holiday weekend. *Don't miss it!*

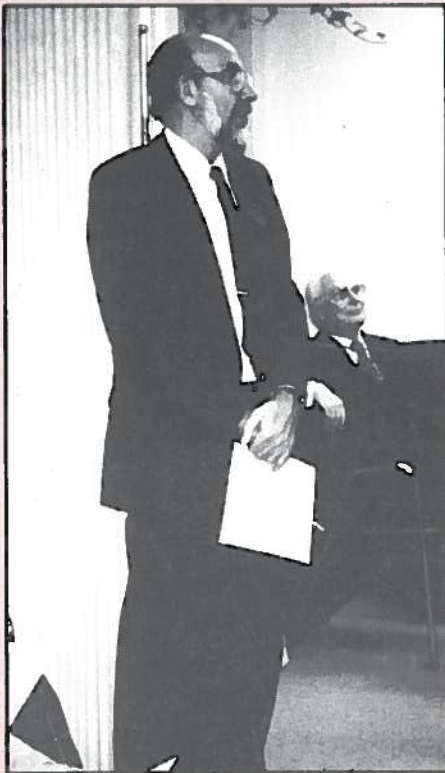


Photos: R. J. Klein

ONTARIO

Pluralism has been more than a just a buzz word at 229 College this year. And judging by the surprisingly large crowd at Dr. Griffioen's recent speech on the subject (see elsewhere in this issue), the topic will prove a good drawing card for what has become known as the Niagara Conference. Keynote speaker will be **Dr. Paul Marshall**, Senior Member in Political Theory at the ICS. The conference is tentatively titled **LIVING WITH OUR DIFFERENCES**.

Ontario Civic Holiday weekend in August. *Join us!*



ICS Board Chairman Mr. Fred Reinders, whose construction firm is restoring the building

HISTORIC NOVEMBER 9, 1990

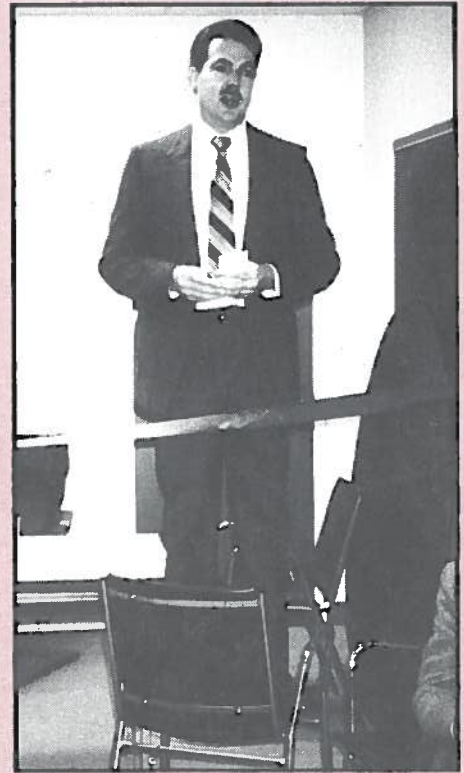
Reinder J. Klein

Friday, November 9, 1990, was a special day at the Institute, a historic day. It was the day on which the official opening of our new second floor facilities at 229 College Street, Toronto, took place.

The ceremony was carried out in the evening, following the convocation and graduation covered in the November, 1990, issue of Perspective.

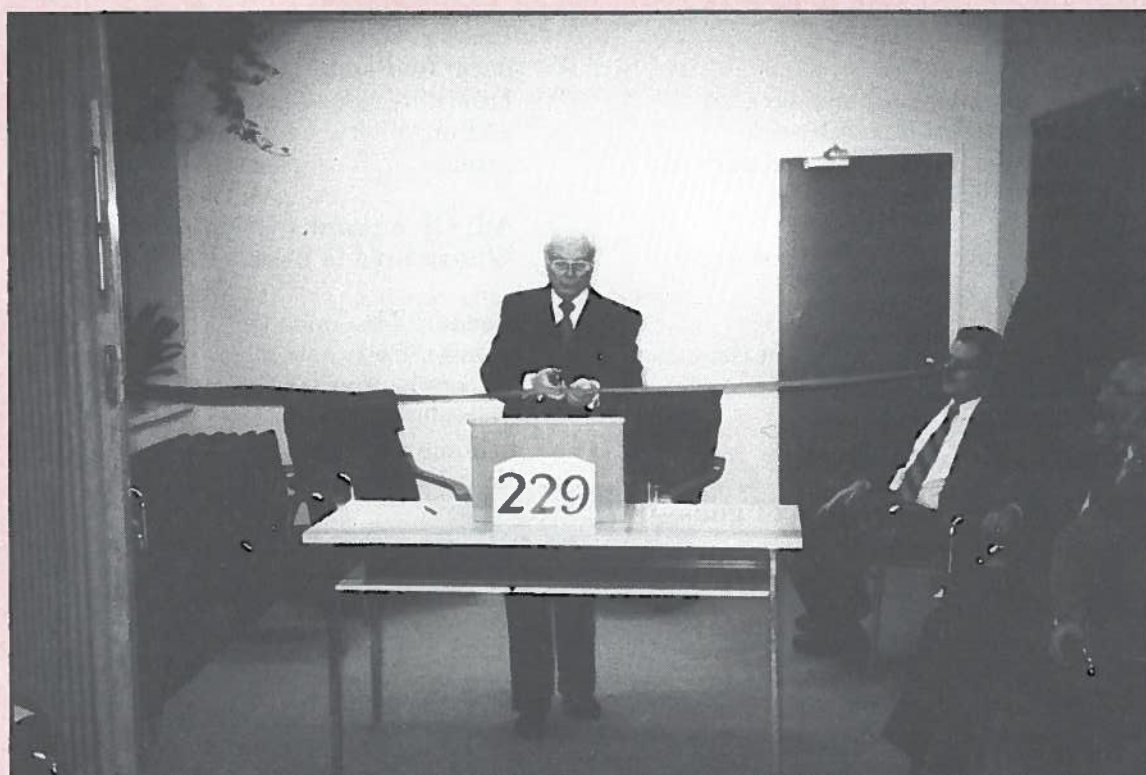
Since this was indeed an event of historic significance, it has been given a place of some prominence in this issue. Included is the Litany of Thanksgiving (p.10), prepared especially for the event. It was read responsively by the many invited guests.

We invite you, too, in your own place and circumstance, to read this litany and to render thanks to God with us, for his love is everlasting!



President Harry Fernhout, addressing invited guests from rarified heights.

GIVE THANKS TO THE GOD OF GODS WHOSE LOVE IS EVERLASTING!



ICS Past President Dr. Clifford Pitt cutting ceremonial ribbon during historic opening ceremony for new ICS facilities on second floor at 229 College Street, Toronto.

Opening Ceremony, New Facilities November 9, 1990

LITANY OF THANKSGIVING

**All: Give thanks to the God of gods
Give thanks to the Lord of lords
Give thanks to the God of heaven
Whose love is everlasting.**

Reader: In wisdom You have created
the earth and made humankind in
Your own image, to develop and care for
the work of Your hands.

**All: Give thanks to the God of gods
Whose love is everlasting.**

Reader: Now the Light shines in the
darkness, for You sent Jesus to conquer
sin and death, and to reconcile
all things to You.

**All: Give thanks to the God of gods
Whose love is everlasting.**

Reader: We thank You for the life of ICS.
For all who have contributed to its work
and vision. And for all the ways Your Spirit
has been among us.

**All: Give thanks to the God of gods
Whose love is everlasting.**

Reader: You have been with us in times of
struggle and in times of blessing.
We praise You that Your love has
embraced ICS as a place of learning
dedicated to Your Name.

**All: Give thanks to the God of gods
Whose love is everlasting.**

Reader: We received this building as a gift
from Your hand.

From this refuge near the heart of the city
and university, You have called us to bear
witness to Your great Good News.

**All: Give thanks to the God of gods
Whose love is everlasting.**

Reader: This once tired building now
wears a fresh new face.

We praise You for the renewal of your
marvellous gift

A home well-suited to our calling in
Your Kingdom.

**All: Give thanks to the God of gods
Whose love is everlasting.**

Reader: We dedicate these new facilities to
Your praise and honour!

May You empower all who work here to
pursue what is right and true
And to remain faithful to You, always.

**All: Give thanks to the God of gods
Give thanks to the Lord of lords
Give thanks to the God of heaven
Your love is everlasting.**

Getting It Right

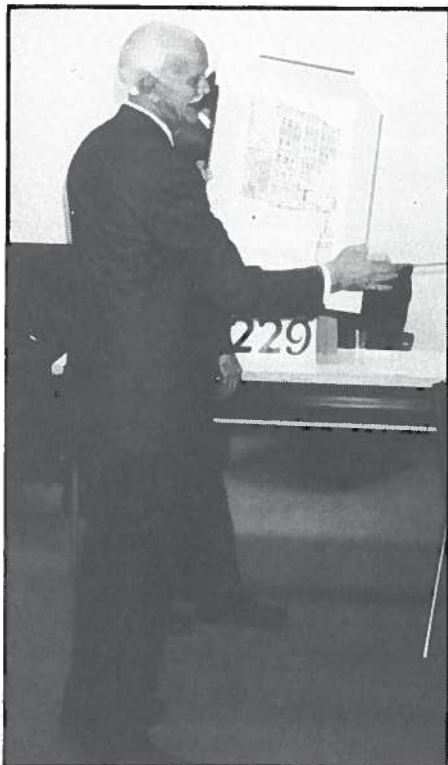
Reinder J. Klein

Thank you Virginia C. of Pompton Plains, N.J., for pointing out that Francis Schaeffer's L'Abri is in Switzerland, and that his *ESCAPE FROM REASON* is indeed more than "a little treatise," as I described it in my "New Kid On The Block" article (November, 1990 issue). Thank you especially for your graciousness, and for easing my discomfort by enclosing a donation with your comments. Would that we had more critics like you! (I'd be tempted to make deliberate mistakes.)

Another alert reader took Pres. Fernhout to task for saying something he did not say (in my "Plenary Session" article, December 1990 issue). In his address, Fernhout identified these three areas as characteristic of *inadequate* Christian scholarship:

- 1 - a 'single issue' approach (e.g. creation-evolution),
- 2 - a 'theology' of a discipline approach, or
- 3 - an 'ethical' issues approach.

He *contrasted* these with the 'unique contribution' of foundational and interdisciplinary studies. P



Ross Mortimer, VP Administration, accepting gift offered in appreciation for tireless service.



Serving through Public Education

by Robert E. VanderVennen

Valuable overseas books offered by ICS

We have obtained a limited number of copies of two valuable books not otherwise available in North America. They are described below and you can order them by using the book order form on the back page of this issue.

Christian Schooling: Education for Freedom

This book presents a vision of Christian schooling for people living in the freedom that is given in the Gospel. It arises from a course jointly taught in South Africa by the three authors. Stuart Fowler, a leader in Australia's Christian schools, wrote nine of the twelve chapters. Other contributors are Harro W. Van Brummelen of Trinity Western University in Langley, B.C., and John Van Dyk of Dordt College in Iowa.

Fowler identifies the basic nature of Christian schooling. He critiques the idols that rule in many classrooms today, calling for Christian schooling that is a prophetic witness in the service of love. He then deals with implications for practice of the fact that schools are social structures in a social context. Van Brummelen and Van Dyk write about the nature

of learning, the school curriculum, and the practice of teaching Christianly, ideas their North American followers have been hearing from them.

This 198-page paperback book is published in South Africa by the Institute for Reformational Studies. You can buy it from the ICS for \$14.95 plus \$2.00 for mailing.

Born to Shop

This popularly-written book from England calls for a Christian counter-culture to replace the consumerist culture and materialist spirit of our age. The various chapters deal with advertising, debt traps, the phenomenon of the shopping mall, consumerism in the Third World, sports as a consumer industry, Sunday shopping, and selling people in the same ways as selling products.

The West has become a massive shopping arcade, says author Mike Starkey, a news reporter for radio and print media. He issues a radical call for conversion from a consumer worldview to a Christian worldview with a relationship to the Creator and to other people. The book is a 250-page paperback published by Monarch publications. P

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RECYCLED PAPER

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Faculty Update

Dr. Hendrik Hart participated in two recent seminars at McMaster University, one on "reason and religion in school," and the other on implications of the biblical concept of "neighbour" for a Christian stance in relation to homosexuality. These seminars form part of a series dealing with the contemporary relevance of the Christian roots of the university.

On February 4 and March 11, Hart gave two presentations on *Setting Our Sights by the Morning Star* at Queen's University in Kingston, adding six lectures on the same topic at First Christian Reformed Church in Toronto.

Hart is on sabbatical this semester, completing work on a book on the theory of knowledge.

Dr. Paul Marshall was recently in Amsterdam for a PhD dissertation defence by Hans Groen, a former ICS student. A tour of Western Canada early in January included a speaking engagement at Regent College on "A Reformed View of Society." Marshall also presented a slide show in New Westminster and Smithers, British Columbia, and in Edmonton, Alberta. Another slide show planned for Calgary had to be cancelled when Marshall was snowbound in Vancouver. Later he gave a paper on "Two Types of Rights" at the Department of Political Science, University of Calgary.

Marshall published two articles in *Christian Week*, one on Reproductive Technologies and another on South Africa. He also spoke on "Pluralism" at an Inter-Varsity leadership training camp. P

NEW AND CURRENT BOOKS FROM ICS

New Books

Search for Community in a Withering Tradition, by Kai Nielsen and Hendrik Hart	\$22.95	_____
Norm and Context in the Social Sciences, by Sander Griffioen and Jan Verhoogt (eds.)	\$25.95	_____
Born to Shop by Mike Starkey	\$17.95	_____
Christian Schooling: Education for Freedom, by Stuart Fowler, Harro Van Brummelen and John Van Dyk	\$14.95	_____

Current and Excellent

Setting Our Sights by the Morning Star, by Hendrik Hart	\$13.95	_____
Christianity and the Classics, by Wendy Helleman (ed.)	\$16.95	_____
The Holy Spirit, by George Vandervelde (ed.)	\$13.95	_____
On Being Human, by Calvin Seerveld	\$7.95	_____
Stained Glass, by Paul Marshall et al. (eds.)	\$15.50	_____
Social Science in Christian Perspective, by Paul Marshall and Robert VanderVennen (eds.)	\$20.95	_____
Curriculum Unmasked, by Mark Roques	\$12.50	_____
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