

Perspective

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INSTITUTE FOR CHRISTIAN STUDIES

TORONTO, CANADA

Pastors discuss church's social responsibility at ICS seminar

by Rosanne Lopers Sweetman



*Pastors assess liberation
theology*

In an attempt to share what it has learned about the very important movement of liberation theology, the Institute sponsored a three-day seminar May 28-30, led by Dr. George Vandervelde, Senior Member in theology. The seminar had been especially planned for pastors, and of the approximately 30 people registered for the seminar, most were pastors of the Christian Reformed Church. There were also students of the Institute and the University of Toronto, members of the Christian Labour Association of Canada, and a political activist from Ottawa. Most of the registrants came from Ontario, but some came from as far as Iowa and Arizona.

The basic elements of the liberation theology movement are an identification with the poor and a search for freedom from economic and political oppression. It arose as a response to the concrete situation of poverty and misery Latin Americans find themselves in.

The church today has a crucial responsibility in speaking to the social oppression of millions of people. It needs to guard itself against the "social gospel" approach which says that social action is what saves us. At the same time, the urgent cries of the oppressed and the hungry, and the tender love that Jesus showed toward anyone who needed help, demand that we care, that we help, that we confess our sins of greed and overconsumption and that we change our lifestyles.

The ICS seminar was set up to examine, from a Reformed Christian perspective, the theology of liberation which speaks with great urgency to this need for social justice. The participants tried to define the responsibility of the church toward social problems. Since liberation theology is especially strong in Latin America, where poverty and political oppression persist, participants reflected on the works of Gustavo Gutierrez and Jose Miguez-Bonino, two of

the more prominent liberation theologians in Latin America today. (Most liberation theologians are Catholic; this is a natural result of the fact that 90% of Latin Americans are Catholic. Miguez-Bonino, however, is Protestant.) The seminar also focussed very specifically on the church's role in preaching: should actual political situations ever be dealt with in a sermon and, if so, how?

In addition to two lectures by Dr. Vandervelde, in which he first introduced and later critiqued liberation theology, Dr. Sidney Rooy from Argentina and Father Ray O'Toole, formerly from Brazil, also spoke at the seminar. Their presence helped to make the discussions concrete and practical.

In his outline of the history of liberation theology, Dr. Vandervelde showed that the theme of liberation in Latin American theology is not a recent development. Papal encyclicals as far back as 1891 spoke to the appalling conditions of the working force, decrying the profit motives of capitalism, and defending the right of workers to a share of benefits. It is often to these papal encyclicals that laymen and theologians alike appeal in their attempts to free the poor from oppression. In the first half of the 20th century, lay movements sponsored by the church became very strong, and at times resorted to such radical action that the church could no longer support them. Many forms of lay movements still exist today.

One of the most significant events in the development of liberation theology was the Medellin conference of 1968. This conference of Latin American bishops, who were there as representatives of the poor nations, was intended as a practical application of Vatican II, and was called "The Church in Present Day Transformation of Latin America in Light of the Council." At the time of the council, Latin America was in a period of extreme unrest, with riots and revolutionary activity on the rise.

At Medellin the bishops tried to analyze the situation in its historical context, and came up with guidelines for the transformation of the church as it ought to respond to misery and injustice. They said that liberation from oppression follows naturally from liberation from sin made possible through Christ. God sent His Son in the flesh to liberate all men from the slavery to which sin subjected them; this includes hunger, misery, and the ignorance of a world of injustice and hatred. Peace is linked to justice. The document was extremely significant because in it the church openly opposed the exploitation practised by governments and large corporations.

Since then, the mood of revolution and hope for radical social change has dwindled in Latin America. The hardening of the Brazilian regime, the fall of Allende in Chile, military takeovers, U.S. support of military regimes, censorship and tightening of national security, the exiling and torture of priests, have all contributed to a greater realism which is reflected in the fact that several theologians now speak of a theology of captivity rather than of liberation. Latin Americans ask themselves if there ever will be a change for the better, and they are overwhelmed by a feeling of defeatism. Nevertheless, small local Christian communities continue to work at liberation and evangelism.

Father Ray O'Toole, a Catholic priest who spent eight years as a missionary in the Amazon regions of Brazil, spoke at the seminar about his personal involvement in this situation. He explained the way he has worked closely with the tribal groups, begun team ministries, and set up small Christian communities of 20-40 families which, aided by the church, have formed agricultural unions to prevent the further erosion and takeover of arable land and forests by big multinational corporations.



Plenty of discussion between the participants



Seminar leader Vandervelde (r) with Dr. Sidney Rooy

Father O'Toole, who studied at the Institute last year, is now in a doctoral program at the University of Toronto, doing research on Canadian corporations in Brazil and their effect on the native population. He gave some grizzly examples of the oppression and destruction caused by huge companies like BrasCan and Alcan, and he impressed the registrants with the urgency of the challenge posed by the Latin American scene.

Dr. Sidney Rooy, seminary professor at Instituto Superior Evangelico de Estudios Teologicos (ISEDET) in Buenos Aires, Argentina, also addressed the seminar. He outlined both the positive contributions of liberation theology and its dangers. On the one hand, he said, in liberation theology the Christian faith is clearly being put into practice. And, diverse as the many forms of this movement may be, all liberation theologians agree that at the very heart of their theology lies the essential call to do justice and to walk humbly before the Lord.

On the other hand, Rooy noted that the danger of doing theology in a concrete situation like this is the possible subordination of the Word of God to the human context. One could make the human situation the norm for Christian activity, or could be selective in choosing only those scriptural passages which point to God's acts of liberation for the oppressed. Rooy also pointed to the danger of pragmatism, in which man's activity and purpose becomes an end in itself. He analyzed some of the Marxist ideologies that are sometimes used in liberation theology.

Rooy explained that in Argentina public meetings or associations are illegal. The reading lists given to the students at the seminary where he teaches are scanned by government officials. In January of 1977, one of his colleagues at ISEDET disappeared, and was never seen or heard from again.

Rooy urged North American Christians to make themselves aware of what is happening in the first and third worlds; he said that a global concept of mission and human need is important. He encouraged the participants to become aware of the needs here at home, and to raise the consciences of people in our own churches and in our mission outreach. Academic research such as the study of Marxism at the ICS is one way, he said, of answering to the concrete historical situation of Latin America.

Rosanne Lopers Sweetman is educational services coordinator at the AACCS.

Institute faces serious shortage

In the first six months of this year our program and salary expenses have been greater than our income. By the end of June our monthly shortages totalled \$83,000. The staff is working hard for a financial turnaround and they report some hopeful signs. If every member would give an extra \$30 and if others who receive Perspective would give just \$5 each, we could wipe out this deficit. The Institute staff is gearing up for another good academic year, trusting that the money we need will be provided.

Some agonies and ecstasies: the Trustees meet again

by James Skillen



Dr. John Van Dyk,
new AACS Trustee

Under the sun there is a time for everything, according to Ecclesiastes. The trustees of the AACS experienced almost everything at their June meeting under a bright spring sun on two beautiful, cool days in Toronto. Joy and sadness, deep satisfaction and frustrating perplexity, some building up and some wearing away, the very old and the strikingly new all bombarded trustees in a concentrated period of less than thirty-six hours. With the trustees for the first time was Dr. John Van Dyk, a Dupont chemist from Wilmington, Delaware, newly elected from the Eastern United States, AACS Region Four.

Reports from the curators, the Institute staff, the AACS staff, and the Board of Directors all confirmed that the 1978-79 academic year had been one of substantial productivity and excitement. Educational services expanded, conferences and seminars succeeded, and curricular programs were strengthened. The details fill many pages and

most of these developments have been or will be reported in *Perspective*. Everyone gave thanks to God.

But Sander Griffioen, the economic theorist who contributed so much during his brief sojourn at the Institute, had to bid farewell, and two other disciplines, it was noted, will continue with only half-time service from their respective instructors next year. (More about that in a moment.) The Trustees heard the curators' report that even though Bob Goudzwaard would fill the economics post this coming academic year, the future of that field is uncertain after 1980. (And soon after the meeting was over we all received the sad news that Goudzwaard would be unable to come due to his wife's serious injury in an automobile accident.) The trustees prayed that God would grant patience and wisdom to the ICS staff and the curators as they look for a qualified person in economic theory or possibly for someone to fill a new position in sociology and social theory.

The fact that Bernard Zylstra will be working only half-time in political theory next year is cause for both regret and satisfaction. The regret is that he will be unable to do all that he and others would like him to do in

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Goudzwaard will not come

We are very sorry to say that Dr. Bob Goudzwaard will not be able to come to the Institute as guest professor during the 1979-80 academic year as we had planned. On June 14 Mrs. Rinie Goudzwaard was in a serious car accident and suffered severe back injuries which will require a long period of convalescence. We are thankful to the Lord that she is making excellent progress in her recovery to date. However, all of their plans and ours for the coming year needed to be changed as a result. We are trying to arrange for Dr. Goudzwaard to come to the ICS for a special three-week course in January and will have a further announcement about this later.



*Pinpointing the problems,
attempting solutions*

in his academic field. (An additional part time assistant in political theory might be considered for 1980-81.) On the other hand, there is the satisfaction that the important administrative task of the principalship in the ICS will now be given one half rather than one third of Zylstra's attention.

Administrative oversight of AACCS activities outside the Institute will continue to be the responsibility of Robert VanderVennen who was reappointed Executive Director for another term.

The confidence expressed in VanderVennen and Zylstra does not mean, however, that the trustees are fully satisfied that all administrative and structural problems in AACCS/ICS have been resolved. One year ago a committee representing all AACCS/ICS

staffs and boards was given the job of drawing up a new, more coherent organizational structure that would allow for improved coordination of actions and decisions. The committee worked long and hard but came to the trustees with a proposal fulfilling only one dimension of its mandate. The proposal was to establish a new "Joint Staff Council" consisting of the ICS Principal, the AACCS Executive Director, and two other persons, one from the AACCS staff and one from the ICS senior members. The Joint Staff Council will help to coordinate internal activities and decisions of AACCS/ICS. The trustees approved the proposal.

But many questions were still not answered regarding some of the relationships between staffs and boards and among the boards themselves. For example, though the Board of Directors meets monthly to oversee the operations of AACCS/ICS, it is not clear whether that Board has authority to act for the Board of Trustees and whether it has any authority in ICS affairs. Many of the trustees expressed frustration that so much ambiguity still exists at these points and that so many important matters are not resolved or faced squarely because of confusion over lines of responsibility and accountability. With a number of these loose ends in view the trustees voted to have their president, Rev. James Joesse, meet with the Board of Directors every other month during the next year in order to continue the process of structural assessment and redesign, hoping that remaining issues might be resolved by next spring.

Among other decisions, the trustees approved slates of nominees for trustee elections to be held this summer in Region Five (S.W. Ontario) and Region Six (Niagara Peninsula). The Board also extended its sincere thanks to Dr. Paul Schrottenboer whose term is ending as trustee-at-large.

In the weeks and days just prior to the trustee meeting a number of the ICS senior members and curators were intensely involved for many hours with their colleague Arnold De Graaff who is facing some serious personal problems. The trustees expressed deep appreciation for the care that is being shown in this unprecedented case and decided that a special arrangement should be made for the 1979-80 academic year. De Graaff's appointment at ICS for 1979-80 had been approved last fall as only a half-time position. With the endorsement of the ICS staff it was agreed that he would be suspended as senior member for the coming year. He would be engaged to fulfill some of those half time responsibilities within a tighter framework of accountability for the next twelve months, after which the situation will be thoroughly reviewed.

Unfortunately, the trustees had little time to consider the old and recurring

problem of serious financial shortages. Although thanksgiving was still on the lips of everyone for the outpouring of support in 1978, there were many good reasons for asking questions about current conditions. The deficit is already equal to the deficit faced last year and it is unclear what can be done. The staff members responsible for fund raising (especially Marcia Hollingsworth and Nick Loenen) are doing everything possible to explain the work of AACS/ICS to members and supporters and to urge their financial support. But inflation and growing needs still seem to outstrip the regular and generous giving of so many faithful supporters.

No one disagreed when the statement was made at the end of the meeting that 1979-80 might be the most difficult one that the AACS and ICS have ever faced. Prayers of petition were offered asking God for sustaining strength and wisdom. Indeed, if the work of academic reformation undertaken at 229 College Street is going to continue, then God must grant wisdom, strength, hearts of repentance, and unusual commitment to the boards and staffs. The trustees ask that you who are close to the work of the Association pray diligently and give abundantly (of your wisdom as well as of your riches) in the months ahead.

James Skillen is an AACS Trustee for Central Canada and Central U.S.A. and teaches political science at Dordt College in Iowa.

From the Principal's point of view

by Bernard Zylstra



Sander Griffioen is leaving the ICS. He is the first senior member (professor) to do so. Sander joined our team in 1976 to teach economic theory and social philosophy. We knew from the start that he, his wife Dorine, and their two children would be with us for only a few years. So we were prepared for their departure. Nevertheless, they will certainly leave a large gap in the ICS community.

Sander's dual academic background--economics and modern philosophy--shaped the kind of contribution he made to our work. His first task was to begin forming a team of Christian economic theorists at the ICS. This was a tough assignment since today most students in economics are much more interested in the practical area of business management than in in-depth foundational questions about economics. Yet, when Sander leaves after his short stay he will leave behind him a small but competent group of students whom he has taught to think through fundamental issues in economic theory and practice from a biblical perspective.



Sander's second main contribution was made in the interdisciplinary marxism seminar which brought most of the senior and junior members together on a common project in 1977-79. Here his knowledge of modern European philosophy proved to be of great importance. The initial inspiration for this major seminar at the

ICS arose out of a conversation between Calvin Seerveld and Rene Padilla of the International Fellowship of Evangelical Students in South America a few years ago. "Look," said Padilla, "the major intellectual development in South America concerns the relation between Christianity and marxism. What can we as evangelicals contribute to this matter?"

This question made us decide to organize a two-year seminar on marxism, neo-marxism and liberation theology. But how can one do this responsibly? This can be done only when one has a good understanding of the spiritual and philosophical context in which Marx did his thinking and in which neomarxism has developed. In short, one needs to know Hegel, Germany's most influential 19th century thinker. And Sander Griffioen is the only one among us who knows Hegel's thought well. He was the backbone of this seminar and the coordinator of the book in which we hope to publish the main themes dealt with in our discussion of liberation theology.

Sander is a real philosopher, a careful scholar, a humble Christian, an excellent teacher--always available for his students. He is a person of tenacity, of quiet but strong conviction. He is the kind of person the ICS needs as the cement to hold the building blocks together. We'll miss him!

We had worked out an excellent plan to fill the vacancy for a period of one year. The Free University of Amsterdam had generously offered to loan Bob Goudzwaard to the ICS for 1979-80. Since Goudzwaard is well known in ICS circles, several students had made special plans to come here. But these hopes were dashed quite suddenly when we were informed that Mrs. Goudzwaard had broken her back in a car accident and that it will take nearly a year of convalescence before she can assume her normal tasks again. So we will have to do without Sander Griffioen and without Bob Goudzwaard. Well, not quite. There is a very good chance that Goudzwaard will be able to spend three weeks with us in January of 1980, so that we can organize an intensive seminar with him around a new book he is writing on an alternative economic theory. But that will depend upon Mrs. Goudzwaard's recovery.

Sander will return to the Free University to teach social philosophy in the faculty of social sciences. Dorine may well receive an opportunity now to engage in medical practice, for which she was trained. In any case, we wish the entire Griffioen family Godspeed, in the knowledge that we will not lose sight of them nor they of us.

That leaves us with a vacancy in economic theory. The Institute for Christian Studies cannot afford to leave this vacancy unfilled for long. After all, we live in the most industrialized phase of world history. We live after Karl Marx, who believed that the very maintenance of Christian belief is nothing but a cover-up for injustice. An institute devoted to Christian scholarship must face the challenge of both capitalism and marxism. So we'll be on the lookout for a new social philosopher, another economist, or someone who can help us think through the implications of technology for the culture we live in.

Perhaps Sander's departure and Goudzwaard's inability to come bear an important message for us--namely that the time has come no longer to depend on the Free University as heavily as we have in the past for professors, but to look closer to home--to look among the generation of scholars that received its first impulse for Christian theorizing right at the ICS itself!

A story for our friends

Once upon a time a teacher set out for the Promised University. It would be a place where Spirit-filled leaders would be nurtured for God's people and the neighbour. The teacher had counted the cost of the trip and decided it was worth his lifetime. So he began the journey.

Hard times befell the teacher on the road. Large establishments closed their doors to the teacher, for he lacked all the credit cards in use. Even Christian concessions along the way looked askance at this teacher. His language betrayed him to be a foreigner to the country. The teacher was less than wise too. He not only wore his heart on his sleeve; he waved it like a banner.

In good time the teacher settled down in an old building, and a student or two came who wanted to be a wise leader of God's people. It will take time, the teacher said. Read with me a few years, pray without ceasing, learn to renew a tradition of faithfulness in studies, and the Lord will bless you with insight.

Years passed.

The large establishments hardly noticed the University of Promise because it still lacked the credit cards in use. Even the Christian concession stands wondered about its whereabouts and quietly laughed; it was so small and its building was so old. And wisdom is not noisy like banner-waving.

Imparting wisdom seemed very expensive because it was so slow, and not even guaranteed. The teacher's sin hurt the process too. Excitement gave way to routine, and resources dwindled. So the teacher's clothing became threadbare and his food simple indeed. But he himself grew wiser, and so did the students who believed.

Later on potential supporters of the Promised University came to see what was going on, because they heard that money and prayer was in short supply.

A man from Ontario came and said, "I don't see enough results to warrant my money. Why there's not even a market for wise thinkers today. But I will pray for you a little."

An oil executive from Alberta flew in by jet to see how P.U. in Toronto was surviving. "You should have started in the West," said he. "We do things bigger. Here's a thousand bucks. See ya around." And he left.

A U.S. delegation arrived and wondered at the closeness of teacher and student and such inefficiency--no mass production at all of anything. "What do you do?" they asked. "And how do you spell 'Dooyewierd'?"

"Wisdom like love is hard to measure," said the teacher brightening up. "And knowledge of the truth is not a pearl you can buy on the open market. University trained leaders too, who are far-sighted and gentle, are gifts of the Holy Spirit. We who teach can only fertilize them. You spell 'Dooyeweerd' V O L L E N H O V E N."

A B.C. farmer perked up at the mention of fertilizer. "I always thought you guys forked manure," he said, "but I never heard you admit it. Here's \$100 for honesty. I think you cover up your sins as weaknesses too easily and magnify the fruits of your work into bumper crops, but I'm for the underdog."

Then a long-time supporter of the University of Promise, a wise woman of God herself, who knew the teacher and the ups and downs of the institution, visited. "I think," said she, "O teacher, you need to be less active and to pray and reflect more deeply in your field. If God is for you, in spite of your sin, He shall provide. Only make certain your research and teaching is singly for the Lord and not at all for your ego. I will leave you all my belongings, despite many other worthy causes that cry out for cash, because wisdom is the chief thing, and not very popular next to success."

Her legacy was like the widow's two mites, and the teacher grew hungry but glad.

Revised M.Phil. program takes two years to complete

by Robert VanderVennen



*Research at the Institute
a team effort*



*M.Phil. students discuss
their work*

Suppose you were going to study for a master's degree at the Institute, what would you be doing? This question comes to our minds (if not to yours) because this year we've made some changes in the program resulting from our five years of experience with it.

These changes have a historical background which we should look at first. When the Institute started in 1967 it had just one teacher; others were added one by one. This meant that in the early years there were lecture courses, but groups of courses could not yet be put together into a balanced program that could lead to a degree. Later when more people were added to the teaching faculty, the spirit of the counter-culture led young people to turn away from degrees and requirements and structure.

But a few years later--and these social attitudes change quickly--there was a move toward awarding degrees at the Institute, since students realized that without a degree it was hard to show people you had done meaningful study. By 1973 the Institute was giving shape to what is now called the Master of Philosophy (M.Phil.) degree, and also the Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degree. Provision was made, too, for students to earn a Certificate in Christian Studies--which was not a degree--after one year of study.

One of the concerns in setting up a master's degree program is how long it ought to take a student to complete. Master's degrees are set up to take anywhere from twelve months to two or three or more years. The Institute faculty wanted to have a degree that would call for a solid, in-depth, soaking-in study, not a skimpy superficial study aimed at getting a degree as quickly as possible. A more leisurely, sustained program fit well with the early unstructured years of the Institute, it fit well with the European style of advanced education most of the professors had received themselves, and it fit with the fact that the Institute accepts many students who want to re-orient their whole way of thinking about academic study into radically different Christian ways. On the other hand, we need to take into account the North American instant-everything feeling and the fact that other universities have master's degrees that require only one or two years of study.

The changes in the Institute program now will make it possible for the typical student to finish the master's degree in two years, normally including one summer of study along with two school years. At the same time the student who wishes to take the program more slowly and in greater depth will have up to four years to do so. Until now only one person has finished the degree in two years, with most requiring three or four years.

If you were to study for a master's degree at the Institute, you would first need a college bachelor's degree. This requires four years of study after high school graduation. Generally you would need to be in the upper half of



Classes at ICS allow for much individual attention.

your college graduating class.

Your school year at the Institute runs for eight months--from the second week of September to the end of April--which is standard for Canadian universities. You would take four "units" of study for each of the two years. A unit might be a seminar course, or it might involve your reading a stack of books in a certain field and meeting regularly with a teacher to discuss the reading, or it might mean doing your own research study of a certain subject and writing a paper on it.

Your first year of study calls for two required courses, one in Biblical Foundations and one in Philosophical Foundations. The Biblical Foundations course shows you how to read and interpret different types of Biblical writings, such as the prophets, the historical writings, the gospels and Paul's letters. Various Biblical themes important for academic study are discussed systematically, themes such as covenant, kingdom of God, love, creation, redemption, communion, and the return of Christ. Philosophical Foundations teaches you to think in systematic ways that apply to Christian work in any field.

Your Institute courses each meet once a week for three hours, taking up an entire morning or an afternoon. In the second half of the year you will probably take a turn leading a class, presenting research study you have done for the class. You need to write a major paper of perhaps 30 pages for each course, reporting on your research study. Your grade for the course is based on contributions to class discussions and on the quality of the research paper. Courses run for the entire year.

A special feature of the Institute is that classes are small and you can have a great deal of personal contact with your professors, especially the one you choose to work with in your major area. There is a genuine spirit of teamwork. Especially in their research, teachers and students work closely together. That is why the Institute speaks of "senior members" and "junior members" when referring to professors and students.

Particularly the interdisciplinary seminar, which you take in your second year, is a team effort. This is a course in which all the second year students and most of the professors take part. A certain topic or problem is tackled from all the different angles and academic disciplines of the people who take part. During the past two years, modern-day Marxism was the topic for this comprehensive study, and the people who participated are now writing up their research studies into a book.

As a candidate for the M.Phil. degree you select a major area for concentrated study. The current choices are theology, philosophy, philosophy of history, political theory, aesthetics (theory of arts), and psychological theory. In both the first and second years you take a full course in your major field. In your first year you also take a "reading course" in your major field. This involves reading about six or seven assigned books to build background that may be missing from earlier study, and extending your general knowledge of the field. For each book you are required either to write a short paper (3-4 pages) or to have an oral discussion of the book with your professor.

For at least half of your second year you will do special research on a selected topic within your major field and will then write your conclusions in a 70-100 page "thesis" paper. This study and writing will be supervised

by the professor in your chosen field, through regular meetings with him. When this is completed at the end of the second year, you will be given an oral examination on the thesis by three professors who have read it, including one from outside the Institute staff. Upon passing this exam you will be granted the master's degree.

This ICS master's program is not intended to train you for a specific job. Rather, it provides a strong Biblical foundation to help you do systematic Christian thinking in a great variety of fields. Many Institute graduates move into teaching positions, while others have used their Institute study for careers in counseling, the ministry, law, writing, social work of many kinds, and a host of other services, often after further professional study or study for a doctoral degree. One former student said of his study at ICS, "It is the kind of learning that is integrated into your life and becomes a real part of you." Through you, such an education can be a blessing to many others.

Robert VanderVennen is Executive Director of the AACS.

From the edge of the Pacific

News items from Nick Loenen, our Western Representative in Vancouver, B.C....

For southern B.C. and northern Washington an AACS family conference is planned to be held August 31-September 3. Dr. Gordon Spykman will speak about liberation theology, the way the Bible speaks to us, and the cost of discipleship under the theme "Liberation for Discipleship." A drama group called "The Covenant Players" will perform on Saturday evening, and a missionary couple from Argentina will show slides and speak about the actual social and political conditions of their country and about how Christians respond to this. For more information, contact Nick Loenen, 9331 #2 Rd., Richmond, B.C.

AACS Trustee Dr. Edward Piers gave two lectures on the topic "Faith and Reason" for the 13th summer conference of the Vancouver Chinese Alliance Church which was held at Trinity Western College on Canada Day weekend.

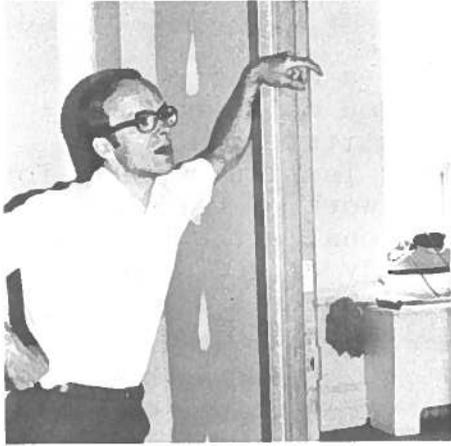
During the July 1 weekend, Rev. Jack Hielema of Calgary inspired, encouraged and challenged nearly four hundred participants (including children) at the Bulkley Valley Family Conference. Under the theme "Seek First the Kingdom of God," Hielema first urged us to deepen our personal relationship with God. Out of this, he said secondly, a cultural witness must grow. The hospitality and friendliness at such "northern" events are outstanding.

Earlier this year Nick Loenen spent two weeks in southern Alberta. He visited members and prospective members and addressed church groups, a high school class, and a Christian businessmen's breakfast meeting in Calgary where the topic was: "Should a Christian Businessman be a Capitalist or a Socialist?" The answer, in brief, was that Christians need to be critical of both.

Nine people attended the Christian perspective course held in Vancouver during nine evenings in July. Most participants were about to enter university; some are university students already. This course provides an excellent preparation for young people planning to enrol in a secular university.

We encourage students studying near Vancouver or Victoria during the next academic year to forward their name and address to the AACS Western Office (9331 #2 Road, Richmond, B.C. V7E 2C9, phone 274-3868). Again we wish to start discussion groups and keep each other informed.

New tenants found to fill AACS building



Building manager Vander Velde inspects a new partition

After more than two years of searching for new tenants, we report joyfully that the AACS building will soon be completely rented. We are very thankful for the congenial tenants who have recently taken the remaining space (3,850 sq. ft.) on our third and fifth floors. They include the Children's Book Centre of Canada, the National Survival Institute (an environmentalist group), and Urban Alliance for Race Relations. Many of our new and old tenants are non-profit charitable organizations.

When the Toronto library, our major tenant, moved to a new building two years ago we were left with four and a half empty floors and a possible rental loss of \$130,000 per year. Since Toronto has had up to 5 million sq. ft. of vacant office space in the past few years, finding tenants for our space was a real challenge. We steadily advertised our

modest space, praying that God would lead suitable tenants to our building. We feel very blessed in renting the rest of our space since there are two large buildings on either side of us with empty space.

To make our space suitable for new tenants it has been necessary to begin major renovations to these two floors. This involves installing new heat-conserving windows on the third floor, building partitions and replacing some of the old electrical wiring on these floors. When completed, the renovations are expected to cost \$28,000, which is less than the amount of rental income we will receive each year by renting this space. Without these changes the space could not be rented, so the improvements are a good investment. We hope to finance these improvements through new loans (see page 13).

Our two year process of rental negotiations and building renovations has taken place under the able supervision of Harry Vander Velde, AACS Building and Business Manager. While AACS work focusses on Christian higher education, Harry works behind the scenes maintaining our five storey building which gives us such an excellent location for the Institute. He has the help of Institute students who do most of the cleaning and maintenance of the building.

AACS Remittance Form

The AACS is an association of over 2,000 members from 13 countries worldwide. Its purpose is to promote Scripturally directed learning and biblical reformation of scholarship. Its main project is the Institute for Christian Studies, a graduate school for research and teaching.

The membership fee is \$50/year, \$5 for full time students. A lower dues payment is accepted where there is financial difficulty. Dues and donations are tax deductible. *Perspective* newsletter is sent free of charge to all members and contributors. Non-contributors are asked to pay a subscription fee of \$5 per year.

Members and other friends outside Canada can financially support AACS by making a donation to the following organizations. Receipts for tax purposes are issued promptly.

U.S.
AACS Foundation
1677 Gentian Dr. S.E.
Grand Rapids, MI 49508

The Netherlands
Calvanistic World Association
Potgieterweg
1851 CJ Heiloo
(gironummer 17 75 496)

- Enclosed are membership dues.
- Enclosed is a donation.
- Enclosed is a subscription fee.
- I would like to become a Member. Send me an application.

Name _____

Address _____

Postal Code _____

AACS
229 College Street
Toronto, Ont.
M5T 1R4

Loan money needed for building renovations



The AACCS building at 229 College, across from U of T

Do you have \$500 or more that you will not need in the next year? If so, why not lend it to AACCS for a time? We offer 10% interest, and you may recall your loan at any time, giving us 30 days notice.

By October we will need \$20,000 in new loans to finance building renovations necessary to accommodate new tenants for our building (also see p. 12). Since each rented floor gives us \$25,000 per year in rental income, the money we spend for these improvements will eventually be recovered through rental income.

Our building has proved to be a very sound investment. A six storey brick building, it is located in a prime area across the street from the University of Toronto. When fully rented it pays for

all maintenance expenses and generates extra income for our programs. We expect to have the building fully rented by September.

All money loaned to AACCS is safe because we have assets in the building that more than cover these loans. We could borrow the money from the bank at 12-13% interest, but we hope our friends will help us with the project and save us these high interest charges.

AACCS, 229 College Street, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M5T 1R4

____ Enclosed is \$_____ for the AACCS Loan Program. I understand you will send me a promissory note confirming the terms of my loan.

____ This loan program interests me, but I have this question:

Name _____

Address _____

Wolters participates in Pittsburgh Coalition program

At the end of May, Dr. Al Wolters, ICS Senior Member, travelled to West Virginia to lead an intensive two-week course on Christian worldview for the Coalition for Christian Outreach. It was a gruelling but enriching time for both the teacher and the 22 students, with Wolters lecturing for nearly 40 hours during a 12-day period. The course was considered to be the equivalent of one semester's work, and Fuller Theological Seminary is accepting the course as credit toward a degree.

The Coalition for Christian Outreach, based in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, is a campus ministry with 150 staff members working throughout the tri-state region which includes western Pennsylvania, eastern Ohio and northern West Virginia. Most of the staff members are college or seminary graduates who work closely with local churches in ministering to students. Many of them maintain close contact with students by taking positions right on the campuses, as dorm counselors, athletic coaches, members of the administrative staff or members of the teaching staff. Others are employed by campus-related churches and relate to students through the work of the church. The Coalition is presently working on 40 of the 80 colleges in the tri-state region.

Every summer, Coalition staff members are required to take an in-depth course which builds their Christian insight and their ability to serve as Christian leaders on campuses. Wolters was invited to lead one such course; his students were some of the more senior staff members.

Wolters discussed two main topics in the two weeks. He first sketched out a Reformational Calvinistic worldview, using the Biblical outline of creation-fall-redemption. He then contrasted that with some of the worldviews prevalent today, dealing with men like Sartre, Skinner, Marx and Freud. In some ways the course was similar to the Philosophical Foundations course taken by all first-year Institute students.

A large number of the students were relatively new Christians, and Wolters found their enthusiasm and openness to be very inspiring. For many of them the Reformational worldview was familiar, but for others it was new, and a few students approached it with some skepticism or even hostility. Tom McWhertor, one of the Coalition administrators, wrote the ICS recently, "Those who took Wolters' course were unanimous that it was the best philosophical analysis they had ever heard--quite a compliment from a number of those devotees." Wolters has been invited to repeat the course in the summer of 1980, with the possibility that this will become an annual event.

Over the past years, the Institute and the Coalition have been able to work cooperatively in various ways. Every summer a training session is held for new Coalition workers, and Dr. Bernard Zylstra has been one of the leaders in that session for several years. During the winter season, the Coalition often schedules weekend seminars which most of its staff attend; Institute staff members are occasionally asked to speak at these seminars. The Coalition has been able to make good use of the Christian Perspectives course manual which the AACCS/ICS published in early 1978; several of its staff members who teach perspectives courses on their campuses use it as their guide.

It is a joy for the ICS to be able to cooperate with a vibrant, deeply Christian organization like the Coalition. The Coalition staff contributes great enthusiasm and the practical experience that comes from working in the nitty-gritty details of campus life; the Institute provides academic insight and a theoretical Christian foundation on which practical Christian action can be based.

Institute opening, September 10

The Institute for Christian Studies extends an invitation to members and friends of AACS/ICS to join us for the Institute Opening on Monday, September 10, 1979 at 8:00 p.m. The Institute will welcome new junior members, as well as returning junior members, senior members, boards and staffs. Presentations will be made to junior members being awarded degrees and certificates. One of the senior members will give a short address. We will join together in a time of singing, meditation and prayer. Refreshments will be served in the library.

AACS/ICS News

- * Bernard Zylstra presented a lecture on Christianity and American culture at the National Presbyterian and Reformed Congress held in Grove City College in western Pennsylvania on July 16-21.
- * Bernard Zylstra, with Professor Jack White of Geneva College in Beaver Falls, Pennsylvania, contributed to the training program of new staff recruits for the Coalition for Christian Outreach at Indiana University, Indiana, Pennsylvania, in the week of July 23-28. Their combined lectures dealt with basic elements of a biblical worldview.
- * On June 6 James Olthuis spent an enjoyable and enriching day in New Glasgow, Nova Scotia discussing "Growing with Your Children" with about 150 women at the Maritimes Annual Christian Reformed Women's Rally.
- * Paul Marshall, a former student at the ICS and an instructor in political science at York University (where he will soon be granted the Ph.D. degree), recently published an article entitled "Some Recent Conceptions of Operationalism and Operationalizing" in *Philosophia reformata* (vol. 44, 1979, no. 1).
- * Calvin College has announced its plans to publish the *Kuyper Newsletter*, a magazine devoted to Abraham Kuyper (1837-1920), the Dutch Calvinist political and religious leader. The *Newsletter* is not intended as a formal journal, but its aim will rather be to act as an "information center, a clearing house, a place for notes of interest." The first issue will appear in September 1979. If you would like to receive a copy, send your name and address to: *Kuyper Newsletter*, Department of Philosophy, Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Michigan, USA 49506.

AACS annual meeting October 27, 1979

1:00 p.m. AACS ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

4:00 p.m. ADDRESS BY DR. BERNARD ZYLSTRA

Principal, Institute for Christian Studies

"VISION AND DIRECTION FOR THE 80's"

Location to be announced

5:30 p.m. *Reception at the AACS Building*

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Letters to AACS/ICS

I have been intrigued for some time by the Institute, and the latest *Perspective* gives me the compulsion to inquire about your program, specifically "Worldview." I am about to begin Ph.D. studies in English here...but I feel...there are a lot of gaps in the way I view my "field" Christianly and I'm looking for all the help I can get....One other thing: I do not have a "Calvinistic" background. In fact, I guess you would say that my religious heritage...has been hostile to it. But as I read and study, I don't see very many others trying to come to grips with a Christian worldview in a secular society. I am much impressed with what I have read in *Perspective* about your vantage point. I am enclosing a sheet of addresses of friends who I think might appreciate hearing about the Institute as well.

Texas

I feel a need to write you all, after my telephone call...in relation to my wife's car accident. We are thankful that God saved her, and that so far there are no symptoms of paralysis...She sends you her personal greetings and feels real regret...that God in this strange way prevented again our coming. We both see His finger and will in what happened. He obviously wants us to stay here--I myself have obviously a task to fulfill in Holland. But because of that, God will also provide ways for *you* to go on. Let us together trust in His wisdom and guidance. Greetings of friendship and love.

Bob Goudzwaard, The Netherlands

I read with interest and thankfulness of your program to make your...resources available to campus workers. I constantly encounter students here at my university who need help in integrating their Christian faith with their field of study. I would appreciate regular reception of your latest lists of papers, books, and cassettes. I am quite interested also in your perspectives course outline...If possible, I would like to begin to regularly receive new publications for the purpose of making them available to students who need specialized help in foundations of their academic field. Also, I will be more than happy to steer potential Institute students your way... It is my hope that we can become partners in ministry.

Iowa

and finally, one of our Members called us the other day to say:

Hello, Marcia...I was reading your piece in *Perspective* (about Matthew 6 and being anxious about money). You should have read before that passage. Remember when Moses and the Israelites were standing at the Red Sea and the Egyptians were coming up on them fast. Do you remember how God answered their prayer? He said, "What are you complaining about? Go forward!"

Institute for Christian Studies Institutional Repository

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NOTES: Revised M.Phil. program to take two years to complete, Meditation on giving: A story for our friends

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