



Ottawa, March 6th, 1919. 191

Dear Sir,

I beg to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 17th ultimo with enclosures which I have carefully read and I thank you for the information therein contained.

Yours sincerely,

A large, elegant handwritten signature in cursive script, likely belonging to the Acting Minister of Justice mentioned in the text below.

Acting Minister of Justice.

S. F. Coffman, Esq.,  
Vineland,  
Ont.

Vineland Ont., March 10th, 1919.

M. M. Bearinger,  
Elmira Ont.

Dear Brother:- Greeting.

Your letter received and noted.

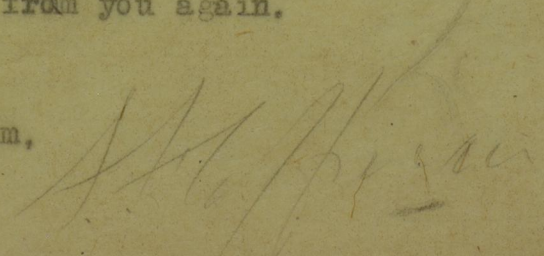
I am enclosing you a copy of the letter and the Statement that has been sent out to the members of the Committee to the Government. I have sent copies of these Statements to several persons interested and have had an acknowledgement from Hon. Arthur Meighen who is Acting Minister of Justice.

There seems to be some difference of opinion among the members of the Government respecting the making of the donation to the Premier. Some think that it should be given at once to the Organizations that are making use of such funds and others think that it would be better to let the money go through the hands of the Premier. That of course would mean some delay, and it would look a little as if we wanted to make a special demonstration of our gift.

It will be a matter for the Committee to decide as to which will be the best method to follow. There will likely be no action regarding our position unless we are notified of this beforehand. We ought to have done our work first, so that we would be able to say that we have taken an interest in the works of mercy and not for the sake of the show but for the sake of the need.

I have sent Mr. Weichel a copy of this letter to the Committee and the Statement. Will be glad to hear from you again.

Yours in Him,





House of Commons

OTTAWA

Ottawa, March 11th, 1919.

S. F. Coffman, Esq.,  
Vineland, Ont.

Dear Mr. Coffman:-

I have your letter of the  
27th ult., enclosing facts concerning Mennonite,  
Amish and Tunker people.

I thank you for the information  
contained.

Yours very truly,

*F. S. Scott*

FSS/MHS.

Elmira, Ont., Mar. 17th, 1919.

Rev. S. F. Coffman,

Vineland, Ont.

Dear Friend:

Mr. Weichel informs me that he had a long conversation with Mr. F. S. Scott regarding the best method of presenting our donation to the government. It seems that Sir Robert Borden will not return to Canada for some time although the new Franchise Bill is being drawn up.

Mr. Weichel and Mr. Scott came to the conclusion that under existing conditions, it were better for our committee to distribute the funds to the various places mentioned in the resolutions passed at the recent meeting and to prepare a memorandum of these distributions.

It was further suggested that a copy of this memorandum be forwarded to Mr. Weichel who will be pleased to present it at the proper time to Sir Robert Borden, (or to Sir Thomas White) and the Honourable Mr. Meighen. In this way the donation would receive the recognition of the government.

Your opinion on the suggestion as outlined above would be appreciated.

Yours very truly,

*A. M. Bearinger*

vineland Ont., March 19th, 1919.

Noah M. Bearinger,  
Elmira Ont.

Dear Brother:-

Your letter of the 17th received and noted. The suggestions made to you by Mr. Weichel are practically the same that he suggested to me as a course of procedure in case the Premier, Sir Robert Borden did not return to Canada in time to receive our donation. The course decided upon by Mr. Weichel and the Honourable Mr. Scott, I think is in perfect agreement with the opinion previously expressed by Mr. Scott in a conversation with him last month. As to any opinion that might be expressed now, I think that it would be advisable to proceed as suggested, but, we should make it clear that our gift to the Government is not at the present time an attempt on our part to secure favorable legislation for our people in the new Franchise Bill. If our people are worthy of any consideration on the part of the Government, they are such by reason of what they have done in the past and not what they are doing now or will do in the future. Our gift to the Government is one of respect to the Government for what they have done for us, and being a gift to be used in works of Charity is in accord with the spirit which has actuated our people and has been a characteristic of our people during their residence in Canada and previous to their coming here. We shall expect to continue our relief work as occasion demands, and shall also continue loyal to the Government that has been so considerate of our religious convictions as far as in our power, together with an effort to fulfill our duties to our fellow-citizens. The Government must judge us according to their appreciation of our merits. It is rather unfortunate that our gift should be offered just at this time, for our effort is very much in danger of being judged as a bribe to further our own ends, and as an alternative for the

m. 111. 13.  
military service which we could not render.

It has been rumored that the soldiers will refuse to accept the portion of the Donation that has been assigned to the relief of orphans Etc. I am not aware from what sources these rumors have come. But it is an evidence that what we do is being noted and we should exercise the greatest discretion in this matter. If the Government is not inclined to accept this gift, let it be used directly by the Organization which will make use of it. If the Government wishes to acknowledge the fact that we have thus shown our appreciation of their favors by taking note of what we have done, our report to the heads of the Government will answer the same purpose as the gift.

Our preference would be to meet the Premier and present to him the gratitude of our Non-resistant people, But if this cannot be done we may do what is considered the most advisable thing.

You will likely see Mr. Weichel, and you may also hear from other members of the Committee, and convey our convictions to him regarding this matter. It must be decided by the Executive Committee what course to pursue.

Yours in the cause,

*Copy of Original.*

Non-Resistant Relief Organization.  
Committee to Interview the Government.

*Dr. W. Buehler  
Mr. Heise  
Thomas Reiss  
Samuel Goudie  
Chas. Goshw*

*a note to Ann Gosh.*

Vineland Ont., March 19th, 1919.

Brethren:- *On Mr. Beringer.*

After sending to certain members of the Government a copy of the Statement Concerning the Non-Resistant People in America, an acknowledgement was received from the Honourable Arthur Meighen, Acting Minister of Justice, and from Honourable F. B. Scott.

A letter received from Bro. H. H. Beringer, Elmira, states that he has had a recent interview with Mr. Weichel, of Waterloo, and that Mr. Weichel and Mr. Scott have had a long talk over the matter of our presenting the Memorial Donation to the Government. Their opinion is, that the return of the Premier, Sir Robert Borden being at some indefinite date, and the present conditions regarding legislation that might effect our status are somewhat in the focus of public opinion, and legislation imminent, our Organization should proceed with the distribution of the funds according to the resolution of the Committee at their recent meeting, and a statement prepared by them regarding the disposition of the funds which will be handed to the members of the Government responsible who shall acknowledge the same. In this manner the Government would recognize the gift of our people and the object for which it was given. Mr. Weichel has consented to hand the Statement to the Government at the most opportune time.

This suggestion from both Mr. Weichel, and Hon. Mr. Scott is in accord with their suggestions previously given to your secretary, in view of the absence of the Premier.

It is said that the new Franchise Bill is in course of preparation and that our Committee should have their report in the hands of the members interested so that our claims could be substantiated. We should make it clear that we are not giving this fund to the suffering ones on account of court ing the favor of the Government. What we do is out of gratitude for what we have received, as well as out of sympathy for the suffering, and this spirit has been the characteristic of our people in the past. But if there are those who enquire of us, we should be ready to give to them the evidence of our works.

It will be the duty of the Executive Committee to take whatever action they deem advisable under the recent circumstances.

Yours in faith,

Vineland Ont., March 19th, 1919.

Thomas Reesor, Treas.,  
Pickering Ont.

Dear Brother:- Greeting.

I am enclosing a copy of a letter to the members of our Committee of the Relief Organization. It will be self-explanatory and I think that the Executive Committee can take action on it and proceed to whatever their decisions may be.

The enclosed Cheque is a contribution to the General Relief fund. There were some contributions promised by some of the brethren here, and it has not yet suited them to pay the same. We were waiting for these contributions to be collected, but think that we cannot wait longer. Whatever they may have to give may be donated through the Organization to other causes, at a later date.

It would have been more satisfactory if all of the contributions could have been sent in together, so the congregation could have been credited with the whole amount but, if the Fund is now paid out, as per the suggestion of the gentlemen representing the Government, those who have not paid in will have to be credited in later reports. I would like to have seen the fund amount to at least a hundred thousand, and it could easily have been made up if each would have done his part, but I know that some were backward on account of fearing that the Government would perhaps have a share in it. For myself, I feel that our Committee is free from any political interests and all are working for the good of the Churches and for the sake of the suffering, and when we consider the amounts paid to these relief funds in other places, our churches in Canada, or in Ontario have done remarkably well in contributions. But, May God have all the praise and may He keep our hearts warm with love for all the suffering so that our ministrations of mercy may continue as long as there is need.

Yours in faith



*Bulletin No. 21*



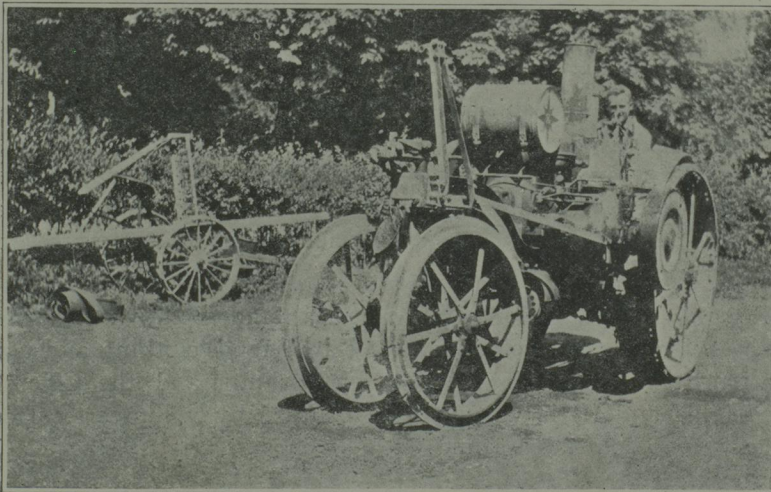
## AMERICAN FRIENDS SERVICE COMMITTEE

20 South Twelfth Street, Philadelphia

### MENNONITE CO-OPERATION

(An appreciation by Isaac Sharpless)

THE Mennonites and Friends have had much in common. The Mennonites antedate the Friends by a century. But, when George Fox and William Penn and their friends made a religious tour of the Rhine Valley they were warmly received by the pietistic bodies which had their home there. The Rhine Valley, then as since, has been the battle ground of Europe and when these sufferers found a chance for a home in the New World among a congenial people, in a land devoted to liberty and peace, they came in great numbers. Francis Daniel Pastorius and his company landed only ten months later than William Penn and settled Germantown. The various sects found great community of doctrine and interest and to some extent merged with each other. They had a common objection to war and oaths as unchristian and common introversive and mystical tendencies. In many ways up to the time of the Revolution they



One of Our Men on a Mission Tractor at Sermaize

drew together and we find them consulting with each other at the opening of this struggle as to the best course to pursue. In general their attitude, whatever their personal sympathies were, was in opposition to the methods of warfare and an endeavor to take a neutral position for conscience sake. But they felt that they could not be neutral in the face of the general suffering and none gave more liberally to relieve distress of friend and foe alike and reconstruct society in the districts which war had ravaged. They preached and lived lives of love not hate, of helpfulness not destruction.

Since then their ways have somewhat diverged and they have grown more of strangers to each other. Happily a new movement quite in line with their past history has again brought co-operation and a better understanding.

When our country went into the war a bill was passed granting to certain religious bodies with peace records the opportunity for alternative service instead of straight army duty. While this did not go as far as many desired, it drew attention more especially to Mennonites and Friends as in the past consistently objecting to war. A number of these were conscientiously unable to take advantage of the relief, for it involved service under military authority. Nevertheless, they were loyal Americans and quite willing to aid the country in ways of which their convictions approved. The chance came in relief and reconstruction work in France.

The English Friends were already in the field of organized effort. Nothing seemed better than to unite the forces of English and American friends of peace and send support in money and volunteers to be used by the "Friends' Reconstruction Unit" in rebuilding houses, renewing farming conditions, establishing hospitals, saving life and property in the face of a German drive, and giving cheer and comfort, material and spiritual, to the civilian sufferers of France. In this international work the Mennonites have joined most heartily. The American Red Cross and the American and French Governments furnished invaluable aid in money, supplies or permits, and the work has gone on with great efficiency and at a very low cost for administration.

Roughly speaking, some 300 American and 200 English workers have been kept on the field. They received food, clothing and transportation. The managers served for nothing, and the offices in Philadelphia and Paris were largely manned by volunteers. Hence of every \$100 expended some \$96½ went directly to the victims of the war.



Friends Operating a Motor-driven Thresher

When our government got through the task of sorting out the "sincere" conscientious objectors in the camps these were furloughed to the work, if acceptable to the Committee in charge. These men whose fidelity had been proven by suffering showed their conscience in the quality of their efforts, and many testimonials may be cited from unprejudiced sources telling of the value of services rendered and the warm appreciation of the French people.

But the nation of 180,000,000 which stretches over vast territory in Europe and Asia—unorganized, illiterate, suffering Russia, may be our next call to duty. Here Mennonite co-operation may be of highest value. Many of them have had ancestors from Russia. They sympathize and understand the people and the work cannot begin too soon. A delegation has been selected to go to Russia to study the situation and select the fields for work and the sort of work to do. There is good reason to believe that a strong company promising to remain in the country at least two years will follow.

The Mennonites and Friends have joined in this movement. The first delegation will be a joint one, the Russian portion of the Mennonite Committee supplying the knowledge of the language and customs of the Russian people. They will co-operate in purchasing goods and in the machinery of the effort, but will probably have different fields of work when the preliminary inquiry is over and the regular labor begins. A great and promising field for physical and educational aid and for the spread of New Testament morality seems to be opening for our joint efforts.

The following list of Mennonite young men indicates to what extent the Church has entered into the work in France up to date:

## MENNONITES IN FRANCE

March 19, 1919.

J. Roy Allgyer .....	West Liberty, Ohio
Fred D. Augsberger .....	Elida, Ohio
Alfred W. Brenneman .....	Denbigh, Va.
Roy Buchanan .....	Roanoke, Illinois
J. Boyd Cressman .....	Kitchener, Ont., Canada
Arthur D. Diller .....	Elida, Ohio
Edward R. Drange .....	Low Point, Ill.
Jacob B. Flory .....	Lancaster, Pa.
Christopher J. Gerber .....	Wakarusa, Ind.
Orie B. Gerig .....	Smithville, Ohio
James E. Gnagey .....	Archbold, Ohio
Lloyd E. Hershey .....	Intercourse, Pa.
Asa M. Hertzler .....	Denbigh, Va.
Abraham E. Hiebert .....	Hillsboro, Kansas
Dietrich R. Hoepfner .....	Hillsboro, Kansas
Atlee A. Hostetler .....	Baltic, Ohio
Forrest E. Hostetler .....	Topeka, Ind.
Hamer V. Hostetler .....	West Liberty, Ohio
James A. Hostetler .....	Baltic, Ohio
Elmer H. Jantz .....	Larned, Kansas
Cornelius C. Janzen .....	Hillsboro, Kansas
D. Chauncey Kauffman .....	West Liberty, Ohio
John Mervin Kauffman .....	West Liberty, Ohio
George S. Klassen .....	Lehigh, Kansas
Russell A. Lantz .....	Topeka, Ind.
Harry M. Liechty .....	Sterling, Ohio
Ora R. Liechty .....	Sterling, Ohio
Harvey G. Mack .....	Philadelphia, Pa.
Jacob C. Meyer .....	Sterling, Ohio
Eli Abraham Miller .....	Millersburg, Ohio
Payson Miller .....	Shipshevana, Indiana
Trueman T. Miller .....	Middlebury, Ind.
Mervin S. Meyers .....	Lancaster, Pa.
Walter E. Oswald .....	Charm, Ohio
Walter N. Rutt .....	Florin, Pa.
Walter H. Smith .....	Metamora, Ill.
Ralph W. Snively .....	Landisville, Pa.
Albert J. Sommer .....	Metamora, Ill.
George O. Springer .....	Metamora, Ill.
Ernest I. Stahly .....	Middlebury, Ind.
Robert M. Stemen .....	Lima, Ohio
Eli Stoltzfus .....	Lima, Ohio
Floyd Yoder .....	Shipshevana, Ind.
John S. Zimmerman .....	Ronks, Pa.

### In Training at Philadelphia

Amos T. Bontrager .....	Shipshevana, Ind.
Alvin J. Miller .....	Grantville, Md.

### Returned

Chester S. Graybill .....	Bareville, Pa.
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## RELIEF SEWING

THE extraordinary call for relief workers since the fateful August of 1914 has drawn countless women from their retired home surroundings, from household duties, literary and social occupations, and led them to toil in new fields and think new thoughts. Among those who have thus contributed generously and effectively to relief work are the gentle Mennonite matrons and maidens of our country. Earnest minds beneath dainty white caps and tender hearts under plain cornered capes have prompted skillful fingers, and thousands of garments have been made and sent to the needy ones abroad, without neglecting the unfortunates in our home land.

The storeroom of the American Friends' Service Committee, at 15th and Cherry Streets, Philadelphia, has received consignments from Mennonites in twenty different States, aggregating 27,189 garments. Nearly one-third of these have come from Pennsylvania, and one-fourth from Lancaster County, Pa.

The organization of sewers in that county is a very efficient one. A central organization, under the leadership of Mrs. Ezra H. Melinger, directs the number and kind of garment that each of more than twenty groups of sewers shall make, and once in two months gathers the results in their Lancaster Meeting-house. Aided by a committee of men, they wrap and label the bundles, and encase them in big bags. Five of these bi-monthly consignments have aggregated 7,877 garments, of good material and careful making.

Few sights are more interesting and pleasing than a group of such earnest, placid workers in a good cause.

Some of the garments these women are making may follow Aaron Loucks and his young men companions, who have gone to play their part in relief work in Syria and Armenia. Some are already on their way to Salonika, Greece, thence to Serbia, as ten of the American Friends' Service Committee's big boxes left Philadelphia on March 15th for that destination. Wishes for comfort and good cheer are wrought into each garment, and good thoughts are strong forces at all times.

—*Mary H. Wilson.*

**THE MENNONITES HAVE GIVEN GENEROUSLY**

The financial support received from the various bodies contributing shows the substantial help given by the Mennonites:

Contributions received by the American Friends  
Service Committee up to and including  
March 1, 1919.

MENNONITES .....	\$128,325.50
BRETHREN .....	8,697.70
FRIENDS .....	
Five Years Meeting .....	\$151,329.81
Ohio Yearly Meeting .....	8,743.88
Hicksite Yearly Meetings .....	236,789.13
Conservative Yearly Meetings .....	15,684.39
Philadelphia Yearly Meeting (Orthodox).....	250,012.42
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	\$662,559.63
OTHER GROUPS AND ORGANIZATIONS.....	13,951.48
INDIVIDUALS .....	145,376.27
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	\$958,910.58

For further information on the joint reconstruction work of the Friends and Mennonites write to

The American Friends' Service Committee,  
20 South Twelfth St.,  
Philadelphia, Pa.

*WILBUR K. THOMAS,*  
*Executive Secretary.*



Two-horse-power Thresher. Mennonites and Friends Helping the Peasants of the Marne to Harvest their Crops

Elmira, Ont., Mar. 21st, 1919.

Rev. S. F. Coffman,  
Vineland, Ont.

Dear Friend:

Your letter of March 19th has been received and its contents give me cause to believe that possibly I have been more or less mis-understood in one of my former letters.

In referring to the new Franchise Bill I had only one object in view. The discussion of this bill on the floor of the House will no doubt include the Mennonites and one need not refer to the reception that the mention of this name will receive at the hands of some of the members. The trouble which the non-resistants caused during the war and the favors extended to them will not be forgotten. There are members in the House who will understand the situation and they will try to explain. They will be glad to show that these Mennonites are not selfish. that, while they lived up to the doctrines of their faith, they are aware of the suffering which the war has caused and have distributed a large sum of money amongst the different organizations assisting the sufferers. They will explain that such is the duty of the true Mennonite and that they are doing it for duty's sake and out of gratitude to their government for the favors which were extended to them during the time of war. I believe that the donation will serve to furnish the foundation for these statements.

The future bearing which the Franchise Bill will have upon the Mennonite as far as the right to vote, etc., is concerned, (if one may venture an opinion) should be of no interest to us. I have not yet been able to see my way clear to present myself at the polls during a Federal or Provincial election.

It is to be regretted that the soldiers refuse to accept our donation if the rumor is true. As you stated in your letter, the greatest care should be exercised that the purpose of the donation should be properly presented.

Trusting that I have made myself clear and that I may be of further assistance to the committee in its noble service, I am,

Yours very truly,

*N. M. Bearinger*

## *Mennonite Relief Fund*

R. R. No. 2, Pickering, March 27, 1919.

To the Brethren who have contributed to the Non-Resistant Relief Fund I beg to submit the following report:

At a meeting of the Executive Committee held at Wideman's Church, January 7th, 1919, the following resolution was duly passed unanimously:—

“That the Treasurer shall have a report issued in printed form for distribution, of the receipts, up to date (in sum total) and expenditures, in detail, with auditors' report attached.”

On motion, duly seconded, J. L. Byer and David Grove were appointed to audit the Treasurer's accounts.

D. W. Heise, seconded by S. Goudie, moved that—

“Whereas, by recommendation of the Committee of the whole of this organization, at its last meeting, the Executive Committee were asked to consider the Merchant Sailors' Organization, and also the Reconstruction and Relief Organizations, which are looking after the interests of Belgium, France and other countries, when deciding upon the dispensing of monies to the memorial fund, and inasmuch as there has been paid over to the Merchant Sailors' Relief more than \$7,000.00, donated by members represented in this organization;

Therefore be it resolved—that a further sum of \$5,000.00 be appropriated to the said Merchant Sailors' Relief Fund; \$15,000.00 to the Soldiers' Aid Commission of Ontario, for the care and education of soldiers' children; and that \$40,000.00 of the said memorial fund be appropriated as per recommendation of the committee of the whole as follows:

To the Belgian Relief Fund,	\$15,000.00
To French Relief Work,	10,000.00
To Armenian Relief Work.	15,000.00

I therefore have endeavored to follow the instructions of the committee, and am able to report as follows:—

*Relief Fund*

Mar. 27, 1919, Total receipts	-	\$68,367.62
Total expenditure		<u>60,005.50</u>
Balance in banks		\$8,362.12

EXPENDITURES IN DETAIL

Mar. 24 Soldiers, Aid Commission of Ontario for the relief of soldiers' children	- - - -	\$15,000.00
Belgian Relief Fund	-	15,000.00
Secours National, French relief		10,000.00
Armenian and Syrian relief		15,000.00
The Navy League, for merchant sailors' widows and orphans		5,000.00
Exchange at banks	- -	<u>5.50</u>
		\$60,005.50

*Expense Fund*

Mar. 27, 1919, Total receipts	- -	\$435.96
Total expenses	- -	<u>303.20</u>
Balance in bank	-	\$132.76

The above expenses were incurred by several of the committee interviewing government officials at Ottawa, and also interviewing members of parliament re the Military Service Act.

It also includes traveling expenses on behalf of our boys who were called up for military service, and in addition incidentals under the heads of stationery, postage, telephoning, etc.

The books will be open for inspection at all times to members of the society who contributed to the fund.

THOMAS REESOR, Treasurer.

*Auditors' Report.*

Markham, March 27th, 1919.

We the undersigned have carefully examined the accounts of the Treasurer of the Non-Resistant Relief Organization, and we find report as submitted for your consideration to be correct in every way.

DAVID GROVE,  
J. L. BYER,  
Auditors.

## Indiana-Michigan Mennonite Conference

SECRETARY

Goshen, Indiana, 4/15/19.

Dear Brother Coffman:

Pardon my thick-headedness. Your distinctions between exceptions and exemptions in your last letter have muddled me a little. Am I to understand that exceptions were made in the law so that some people would not need to register at all? then that there were others who had to register, and in the registration apply for exemption, and that exemption was only from combatant service. In that case, if they were called and took the position of no service, it would mean court-martial and prison?

Again, they could apply for exemption from combatant service and it would depend on the tribunals as to whether they could get exemption from that or not. It was not a foregone conclusion that they could get noncombatant service. That depended on the tribunals. Being granted the privilege of being placed in the noncombatant class, they were then left at home until that department of the war needed men, at which time they were obliged to go. Did any have to go who were not excused from combatant service? What did they do? Were some classed as noncombatant, and had to go? What did they do?

After what you doubtless consider a very plain explanation, to come with questions like this may seem to show a lack of brains, and possibly it shows facts, but some of the correspondence on the part of some of the officials is not at all clear to me in the light of your correspondence with me. I think the above questions answered will make it all clear. I do not seem to have gotten hold of the right string in the tangle, and can write this in much less time than I can go over all that to get it cleared.

Thanking you very much for a reply in the near future, and begging your pardon for trespassing on your time, I am,

Your brother,

J. S. Hartzler.



Vineland Ont., April 19th, 1919.

J. S. Hartzler,  
Goshen Ind.

Dear Brother:- Greetings of the season.

Your letter of 15th Inst. to hand and noted.

This is not a case of what you suggested. Other men who were supposed to have understood the operations of the Military Service Act as it was framed in Canada had the greatest difficulty in making the proper applications of its terms. There was a great variety of opinions as to the meaning of many of the clauses in the Act.

In the first place, there is a difference between the "Exceptions" to the Act and the "Exemptions" provided under the Act. The Exceptions were of such classes who in no wise came under the ~~provisions~~ operation of the Act. They were a together free from service and also free from complying with any of the regulations required by all the classes who came under the operations of the Act. The Excepted classes are mentioned in the Proclamation, a copy of which is in the file and in the Regulations for the Registrars, one of the larger pamphlets in the file. Exceptions to the Act were not required to register, nor apply for exemption, but were required to carry proofs to the effect that they were among the classes excepted. The Russian Mennonites, under the treaty of 1873, and the Doukhobors, under the treaty of 1899, were exceptions to the Act. Priests, and Ministers of the Gospel, and certain exclusive religious orders came under the Excepted classes.

All other persons who were not of the exceptions were required to register under the Act, and had the privilege of applying for exemption from military service. The eight or ten provisions for exemption are also mentioned in the exceptions. Those who did not avail themselves of applying for exemption within a certain period of time were required to serve in the army, subject to the physical examination by the army officials. All who did not register at all were treated as defaulters.

Those who applied for exemption could apply under the various clauses of the exemption provisions. Business, financial hardship, education, dependents, health and conscientious scruples, Etc. If any of the grounds were sustained before the tribunals, either a limited exemption from all service could be secured, depending on the reasons on which such claims were made; for example, - a farmer could be exempted until after his crops were harvested; a husband could be exempted until his family was in good health, Etc; or, he could be exempted entirely from all service, depending on the nature of his business or his health or his position relative to the needs of the country in carrying on the war.

There conscientious objector, having no other valid grounds for his exemption, could not be freed from all military service. The Local Tribunal could not make such a disposition of his claims. He was restricted to granting exemption only from Com-batant service. But, such an objector could not be made to do combatant service unless he voluntarily accepted it, although they were tried in many instances to be made to accept such service after they were in the army. None of our boys were obliged to accept even the non-combatant service, although they were detained in the barracks and camps for some time awaiting the disposal of their claims for leave of absence, and while they waited they were tried as to their accepting non-combatant service. They steadfastly refused to accept such service also.

J.S.H.-2.

Before the Government had decided to grant the leave of absence to our boys, there were some cases who were called into camp for service according to the decision of the tribunal, that they are relieved only from combatant service, and such were held for non-combatant service. Upon their refusal to accept the non-combatant service, they became amenable to military discipline and were ordered to be court-martialed. It was such cases that had to suffer imprisonment for some time. These cases were especially among the Tunker Brethren, who did not at first receive the same recognition as did the Mennonites. All these boys were afterwards released, their sentences being quashed and they were returned to their army corps and allowed out on leave of absence the same as others of our faith.

When our brethren applied to the Tribunal for exemption from all service, the tribunal could grant only exemption from combatant service. In case those of other churches which were not opposed to military service asked for release from combatant service, it depended on the tribunal as to whether they could be thus released and granted Non-combatant service. If such C.O.'s volunteered for non-combatant service of some kind, it was their privilege to do so, and in that case they would not be required to apply to the tribunal for exemption, their applications being made directly to the militia department. It was a foregone conclusion that our boys could get non-combatant service, either by applying to the militia department or by the decision of the tribunals, but they always applied for relief from all service.

It is true, that, when the Local Tribunals, and District Tribunals and even the Central Appeal Judge granted only exemption from combatant service, that our boys were left at home until they were ordered to report by the District commanding officers. It was understood by our Committee which interviewed the Premier at Ottawa, that none of our boys would be called for non-combatant service before again having an audience with the Premier regarding such service; but that arrangement seems to have been overlooked, and our boys were called indiscriminately with all other classes and were expected to accept some class of non-combatant service with the divisions to which they were called. None of our boys had to go into combatant or non-combatant service. They uniformly declined to accept any form of service, it being contrary to their faith to do so. Outside of our respective non-resistant churches, they were those who were required to accept either combatant or non-combatant service. They were taken by force with the divisions going into service. Those who resisted were treated as rebellious and court-martialed.

Our boys were not given their leave of absence according to the military service Act. Under that act no provisions were made for exemptions from service for conscientious objectors. They were free only from combatant service. The "Exceptions" to the Act freed the Excepted ones from all obligations under the Act. The Act was not operative in their cases. The Leave of absence granted our boys, recognized the fact that they had reported for service and the Officers in charge allowed them out by his consent for reasons decided upon by the Militia council. They were still considered a part of the army, and were required to report to the Officer Commanding every three months.

Since writing the above there has been a change in the attitude of the Government toward the Mennonites, Hutterites and Doukhobors, who, by a recent Order in Council are prohibited from becoming settlers in Canada until further notice. A new Franchise Bill is coming before the Legislature in which it is probable that the federal franchise will be denied the Conscientious Objectors. It would be well if you would make a trip to Canada at the time of our Conference, and get full information on these subjects.

Yours in faith,

COPY.

Guernsey Sask. 4/27/19.

L. J. Burkholder,

Dear Brother:- Greeting to you in His worthy name. Your letter of recent date to hand. Was glad to receive statement re the work of the Church in relief and reconstruction work, which is indeed a worthy cause. We have indeed reasons to be thankful to god for His care over us during the world's conflict: also that our Rulers have kept the promise once made to the Non-resistant bodies.

Well, finally peace was declared and we were glad to hear the same. This was declared just a few days before our daughter Bessie passed away. I told her the news when she was quite delirious, but she seemed to understand what I said. You may notice through the press the attitude that people take, especially the Veterans (returned men) re the Hutterites and Mennonites, - terming them undesirable settlers.

In fact, in personal conversation with those of other faith, we are made to see that there is an effort made to overthrow the rights of the non-resistant people.

By what I see and hear continually I believe that the non-resistant bodies should unite in an effort to secure total exemption for the future. Possibly this would be a good time to present our wishes to the Peace Conference, or the Big Four as they are called. This would be a good time and subject for Annual Conference, or for General Conference. I believe this will be up at our Conference.

This is giving in short words what I mean. In personal conversation we would be better able to give in detail what has ~~been~~ come to my ~~mind~~ notice. Hoping the subject will be taken up in a general way with the brotherhood. Hoping to hear from some one on the subject. This leaves us in usual health. The Spring has been favorable for seeding and the wheat is about finished.

Wishing you and yours the Lord's richest blessing.

In love, from

(Signed) I. S. Rosenberger,  
Box 18, Guernsey, Sask.

## Mennonite Collegiate Institute.

H. H. Ewert, Principal.

Gretna, Manitoba, April 21, 1919.

Dear Brother in Christ:-

I have received your esteemed letter of March 1st as well as the statement concerning non-resistant people in Canada. Thanks for the same. It may interest you to read the Memorial the Mennonites of Saskatchewan have sent to the government last Fall, so I ~~mail~~<sup>send</sup> you a copy by concurrent mail, which I would beg you after perusal to return to me.

It looks pretty bad just now for non-resistant people in Canada. The returned soldiers do their very best to stir up the passions of the people against them. For weeks they have had articles in our Winnipeg dailies particularly against the Hutterites who have begun coming to Canada. And the government is restricting our liberties in the schools and in our publications. The feeling against us is much worse now than during the war. To try to reason with the people would be in vain. The only thing left for us is to remain quiet and trust in God.

I have not forgotten your suggestion in a former letter, that we Mennonites should try to draw closer together. I will propose a plan to you for carrying that out. We are holding annual conferences either in Manitoba and Saskatchewan. Let the Mennonites of Ontario send a visiting delegate to them, if not regularly then at stated intervals. No doubt, you have your conferences in Ontario and you might give us permission to send a visiting delegate to your conferences. We need not aim to effect an organization binding us together, we need not even give formal recognition to each other, much will be gained if we get to know one another. Later we might act as the spirit leads us. Our next conference will meet sometime in July right here in Gretna, and I can assure you that any brother from your fold will be heartily welcomed in our midst.

*Yours in Christ* H. H. Ewert.



House of Commons  
Canada

May 2nd, 1919.

Rev. Mr. Coffman,  
Vineland, Ont.

Dear Mr. Coffman:-

You, no doubt, have noticed by the newspaper reports the proceedings of Parliament and that an Order in Council has been passed prohibiting the entry of Mennonites and Hutterites into this country as settlers.

I have before explained to you that there is a strong feeling existing at the present time in this connection. This feeling is largely as a result of the Western situation and the western members are taking a very strong stand upon the question. As there has not been an immigration of your people in recent years, I presume that it will not make a great deal of difference to you. I will be obliged if you will let me know how your people feel about the Franchise. Do they want the privilege of voting? The Franchise Act will come up in a short time and this is one of the questions that is bound to arise. There are a great many people who believe that a citizen who will not assume military service in time of war, should not be allowed to vote in Federal Elections. I know that there are a great many of your people who do not want to vote because they do not believe in it. What is the position of the Church in this connection?

Trusting to hear from you regarding this,  
I am,

Yours very sincerely,

*F. Scott*

Markham, Ont. May 6. 1919.

S.F.Coffman,  
Vineland, Ont.

Dear brother, Greeting :-

A press despatch in the Globe dated May 1. states that an order in council was passed and that until further notice the immigration of Doukhobors, Hutterites and Mennonites is prohibited.

The order recites that "owing to conditions prevailing as a result of the war, a wide-spread feeling exists throughout the Dominion, and more particularly in Western Canada, that steps should be taken to prevent the entry into Canada of all persons who may be regarded as undesirable because owing to their peculiar customs, habits, modes of living and methods of holding property, they are not likely to become readily assimilated, or to assume the duties and responsibilities of Canadian citizenship within a reasonable time".

The order adds that numerous representations have been received that Doukhobors, Hutterites and Mennonites are of this class and character.

Thinking the above may have escaped your notice I felt like calling your attention to it. I am also enclosing a letter from brother Rosenberger which gives a little light as to the feeling which has grown against us.

Are You keeping in touch with our representatives at Ottawa ? I hope nothing drastic will be done at Ottawa which will affect our status without our having a chance to speak. Keep after it and we will continue to pray for our Master's cause.

The cut in my lip has nicely healed but a fractured rib and a sprained wrist are constant reminders of my fall. We trust you are all well.

Your brother,

*L.J. Burkholder*

Vineland Ont., May 16th, 1919.

H. H. Swert, Principal,  
Gretna Manitoba.

Dear Brother:-

Your kind favor with the manuscript copy was duly received and very greatly appreciated. Having the opportunity of adding to my records of the dealings of the Government with our non-resistant people, I took the liberty of copying the Memorial and also the Documents attached. I trust that this is not out of order. And I wish to thank you for giving me the privilege of reading this memorial. It is evident that a very great pressure has been placed upon the Government from some source that it has turned so abruptly from the policies that have controlled it heretofore and from the pledges so sacredly given, and from the principles of liberty, especially religious liberty that is one of the cardinal principles of all governmental liberty. One can only conjecture the source of this adverse influence and the power which threatens to renew the opposition to the practice of the Gospel of Peace which we had hoped would not again be molested.

Our Conference, (Ontario), will be in session at Markham Ontario on the 29th and 30th of this month. It is likely that some resolutions will then be brought before the Conference regarding the continuance of our efforts to retain the religious privileges that we have enjoyed in the past. It may be expedient to consider the united efforts of all the bodies concerned in Canada. I believe that some sort of co-operation should be considered and forwarded. Will be pleased to hear from you again.

Am forwarding the manuscript under separate cover. Again thanking you and may God bless and preserve His people and their testimony is my wish and prayer for you and all concerned.

Yours truly,

CONDITIONS OF EDUCATION AND LANGUAGE?  
AMONG WESTERN MENNONITE BRETHREN.

Number of Conferences in the West, (Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia). ----

Number of congregations adhering to each Conference.

Number of Membership of each Conference.

Number of total Mennonite Population, Especially Russian.

Number of schools under the separate school system allowed to the Russian Brethren.--

Number of private schools of any character.

Number of schools conducted solely in the German language.

Number of schools conducted partially in German.

Number of schools entirely English.

Number of schools conducted according to Government standards as separate schools.

Are any or all schools conducted under Government supervision?

Do Supporters of private schools contribute by taxation to the support of Public schools?

How many districts or colonies have no private schools and support the Public schools?

Where no private schools exist what methods are used for giving instructions or teaching German?

How many advanced schools under the direction of Colonies or the Church?

To what extent is German Taught or used in them?

How are standards related to Government Standards for such schools?

How many Congregations use only German in services?

How many use both German and English?

How many use English Only?



CONDITIONS OF EDUCATION AND LANGUAGE  
AMONG WESTERN MENNONITE BRETHREN.

// 2.

What were the most recent immigrations from Europe?

Where located?

If colony, or general settlement?

What were the most recent immigrations from the United States?

Where located?

What special arrangements were had with the Canadian Government, Provincial Government, Government Agent or Land Company with reference to these settlements?

What guarantees were given, and by whom, regarding religious exemption?

If Colony or general Settlement?

What is the character of schools in settlement, and the language used in the schools.

What is the nature of the opposition, if any, against the faith or language of the Mennonites in any locality?

Is there any opposition from the people in the community?

Is there any opposition from Government agents, either Provincial or Dominion agents or officials?

Is there any opposition from other Churches or Mission societies of other Church societies? and the nature of the opposition?

What progress is noticed among the younger generations in taking up the English language and securing an English education?

To what extent do the Church and Church leaders discourage English Language and education?

To what extent do young men and women enter the teaching profession for teaching in separate schools?

To what extent are young men and women preparing for and teaching in public schools?

To what extent are the young people remaining with the Church and becoming active members, and maintaining the Non-resistant faith?

H. H. Ewert

The Status of the Mennonites in Canada.  
To the Editor of the "Free Press."

The first Mennonites came to Canada from the United States as United Empire Loyalists soon after the Revolutionary War. They settled in Waterloo County, Ont., and adjoining districts. A larger party came in 1874 from Russia and settled in Manitoba, and their offspring together with others that followed them later from Russia have spread to Saskatchewan and Alberta. They came here on the invitation of the government of Canada. The Canadian government having learned through the British consul at Bordjansk, Russia, that there was unrest among the Mennonite colonists of Russia because of the intention of the government there to break its agreement with them in regard to exemption from military duty, sent assurances to them that they would enjoy in Canada the very freedom that was about to be denied them in Russia, if they settled here, and the government followed this up by sending a special emissary to them in the person of Mr. Wm. Hespeler who should personally lay before them the advantages Canada offered.

The assurance the Canadian government sent them was in the form of a copy of a report of a Committee of Council approved on Sept. 15, 1872 which reads in part as follows:-

"It is expedient to give the German Mennonites in Russia the fullest assurances of absolute immunity from military service, if they settle in Canada."

"That a subsection of Section 17 of the Act 31 Victoria, chapter 40 is as follows:-

"Any person bearing a certificate from the Society of Quakers, Mennonites or Tunkers, or any inhabitants of Canada of any religious denomination, otherwise subject to military duty, but who, from the doctrine of his religion, is adverse to bearing arms and refuses personal military service shall be exempt from such service when balloted in time of peace, or war, upon such conditions and under such regulation as the Governor in Council may from time to time prescribe."

"That under this section all the persons above mentioned, and the Mennonites are expressly included, are absolutely free and exempted by the law of Canada, from military duty or service, either in time of peace or war."

"That the intention of the Act in conferring upon the Governor in Council the power of making conditions and regulations was to enable the Government to provide, if necessary, for the registration of the exempted persons in such a manner as to prevent persons belonging to any other denominations than those specified in the section of the Act above quoted from avoiding military duty under false pretences."

It should be noted here that the exemption of Quakers, Mennonites, and others from military duty does not rest upon, or date from, an Order in Council adopted in 1873 but upon a statute of law passed in 1867, which is not a measure of the nature of a special inducement to intending settlers, passed for the occasion, but a statement of policy and principle.

The Mennonites of Russia having received invitations also from the other countries first sent out a delegation to investigate and study conditions. They had an interview with the Canadian government and told it plainly that while they would endeavor to the utmost to be loyal and obedient citizens they could not participate in any acts of war, the shedding of human blood, for any cause whatever, being contrary to their religious convictions.

They also told the government that they were used to conducting their own schools and that they would like to enjoy the same privilege in this country.

To these representations the government made answer by an Order in Council passed on July 23, 1873, and which reads in part as follows:-

"An entire exemption from military service is by law and Order in Council granted to the denomination of Christians called Mennonites."

"The fullest privilege of exercising their religious principles is by law afforded to the Mennonites without any kind of molestation or restriction whatever; and the same privilege extends to the education of their children in their schools."

With those documents in their hands the delegates returned to Russia. The pro's and con's as to whether to move to Canada or the United States, where the climatic conditions were more inviting, were discussed, and a large portion of the Mennonites decided, just because of these assurances, to settle in Canada. They would not be here had it not been for the invitation and the assurances of the Canadian government in whose sincerity they put implicit trust. In this trustful attitude they were confirmed by His Excellency, the Governor General, Lord Dufferin, who on the occasion of a visit to them in 1877 welcomed them in the following words:-

"You have come to a country where the people with whom you are associated are engaged in a great battle"....."The enemies in this battle are not human beings"....."The battle to which we invite you is the battle against the wilderness"....."You will not be required to shed human blood"...."You have come, seeking for peace and peace at least we can promise you."

After this war had broken out conflicting reports as to the intentions of the government began to reach the Mennonites. They therefore sent a delegation to Ottawa to make sure of their position. Their fears were quieted by a written assurance that "Canada will respect to the utmost its obligations under that Order in Council, "but that," in the words of the reply, "Every member of the Mennonite community is expected, in fact it is his duty, to devote his energies to the utmost of his ability in increasing the production of agricultural products in Western Canada during the present war. In that way he can render National Service, which while not essential to the success of our cause, is as important as military service, for the reason that armies cannot exist without food."

It is matter of common knowledge that also the Military Service Act passed at the beginning of this war affirms the intention of the government to stand by its agreements.

*This article written by H. H. Ewert is not the one referred to in my recent letter.*

Vineland Ont., May 19th, 1919.

Mr. W. D. Euler, M.P.  
House of Commons,  
Ottawa Ont.

Dear Mr. Euler:-

Copies of Hansard and of Ontario Journal duly received and many thanks for the same. I was very glad to get a full report of the discussion of the Immigration Bill, and noted that the Orange friends are not of the same faith as their honored head Prince William, who was among the first rulers to grant relief to the people of Non-Resistant faith and to the Mennonites, who had their first organizations in his country under the leadership of Menno Simon, a Hollander. I cannot understand why the Orange Society should oppose religious liberty, for is the very thing for which William contended and which he put into force.

We have been watching the movement at Ottawa and have written to Mr. Scott and to Hon. J. A. Calder and Hon. Arthur Meighan relative to claims. You are aware of the position which our people take regarding the use of their franchise. Some go to the polls and consider it the right. Others refrain from doing so as a matter of their individual conscience and the Church has taken no steps to restrict the privilege voting. Many would feel that a great injustice has been done them if the Government withdrew from them the privilege of taking a part in the Dominion elections, for they are citizens of this country as well as any others who are born here. The only difference being their belief that war is wrong. But many others who are not Mennonites are of the same belief. What test will the Government apply regarding this matter.

We trust that you will continue to use your good offices in favor of religious rights and citizens' privileges.

Yours truly,

Vineland Ont., May 21st, 1919.

Mr. Albert J. Rogers,  
408 Imperial Oil Bldg.  
Toronto Ont.

Dear Sir:-

Having had some correspondence with the American Friends Service Committee of Philadelphia relative to some literature, I was informed that you were interested in this work as a representative of the Friends Society in Canada.

Our Mennonite Society has been rendering assistance in relief work and the Ontario Congregations have been contributing through various organizations. Can you inform us whether clothing or other materials are needed or what assistance could be rendered at the present time?

During this session of the Legislature at Ottawa we are also interested in knowing what will be the attitude of the Government toward the people of Non-resistant belief. Can you inform me if any action being taken by the Friends as to preserving their rights as citizens? We are corresponding with several members of the Legislature who have given us assistance under the Military Service regulations in freeing our young men from active army service.

Our Committee represents the Amish and Tunkers especially of Ontario, and some congregations allied with the Ontario Conferences in the Western Provinces.

For identification I may refer you to Miss Moyer and to Miss Wisner whom, I believe, are in your employ and also of Vineland. Any information that you may be able to give us will be greatly appreciated.

Yours truly,

G.M.



OFFICE OF  
THE MINISTER OF IMMIGRATION AND COLONIZATION  
OTTAWA, CANADA

23rd May, 1919.

Dear Sir:-

In the absence of the Minister, Honourable Mr. Calder, I beg to acknowledge receipt of a communication dated May 19th, signed "For the Committee" dealing with the amendments to the Immigration Act, and not knowing exactly who the communication is from, I am sending an acknowledgment thereto to you, as you will doubtless know something about it.

The contents of <sup>your</sup> ~~your~~ letter have been very carefully noted, and, in due course, a copy of the new Act as passed by Parliament will be sent to you, so that you may be able to see exactly the legislation which has been enacted.

Very truly yours,

S. F. Coffman, Esq.,  
Vineland, Ontario.

Private Secretary.