

Date: Sept. 26, 1974

Place: 361 Craigleith, Waterloo

Participants: John Willms, Abe W. Bergen, Gerhard Tiessen

Pre-War :

- very strong anti-German feelings among the Canadians eg. condemning articles in the Windsor Star complaining of these "foreigners" who were buying away the land from the "natives"
- very strong pro-German feelings among the Mennonites; identified more closely with the happenings in Germany; abundance of short-wave radios to listen to Hitler's broadcasts; much communication between Germany and Canada; some questioned by RCMP because of Nazi sympathies; German periodicals very important

War:

- until the war had never heard about "wehrlosigkeit", therefore, had no definite convictions about being CO's
- all went first to Montreal River camp – crowded conditions, poor food
- expressed deep appreciation for J. Harold Sherk, the camp pastor; related well to everyone, but disappointed with the lack of unity among the CO's
- next: transferred to B.C. forestry, Camp C3 on Vancouver Island
- much respect for the camp foreman; resented the "constant stream of fanatic visiting ministers, sent petition for churches to send money for recreation facilities instead
- congenial attitude among the CO's but not unity; deterioration of worship services
- fire-fighting gave them the sense of having tangibly contributed, but the rest of the time was spent in "busy-work", which, combined with the isolation, led to restlessness

Comments:

- disenchanted with the church's lack of instruction; felt pressured into going into A.S.W, without understanding why they should
- expressed appreciation for the positive witness of Bishop Janzen, J.. Harold Sherk, N.,N. Driedger, and some of the genuine CO's
- recommendations in retrospect: 1) a form of A.S. that exposes the Menn. youth to the same dangers as the military; 2) better education of the youth so that they understand all the alternatives