

Transnational Representation: Mennonite Central Committee Canada and the Founding of Disabled Peoples' International, 1981¹

Ryan Patterson, *Carleton University*

Disabled Peoples' International (DPI) is a worldwide non-profit organization serving as a voice of people with disabilities, as a focal point for self-representation, and as an advocate for the human right of all people to live without physical or social barriers.² This paper explores the pivotal role of Mennonite Central Committee Canada (MCCC) in the founding of DPI and the rise of disability rights in Canada. In addition to much-needed funding, the MCCC provided DPI's founders with contacts and lent its credibility as an established charitable organization. Most importantly, it provided sustained support of talented individuals through the Volunteer Service Worker program. Based on participant interviews and archival research at the Mennonite Heritage Archives in Winnipeg, this paper outlines MCCC's central role in the success of the inaugural DPI World Congress in Singapore during the 1981 United Nations' (UN) International Year of Disabled Persons.

Origins of Disabled Peoples' International

Organizations for disabled people have a long history. Disabled Peoples' International originated in a new wave of pan-disability organizations of disabled people in the 1960s. In 1964, several disability-specific organizations in Sweden joined and formed the Handicappförbundens centralkommitté (HCK), or Disability Federation Central Committee. One of the issues uniting them was their rejection of the medical model of disability. The medical (or biomedical) model locates the source of disability diagnosis in an individual's physical body. According to this point of view, disabled people are unable to fully participate in society as a direct result of their inability to perform certain physical or mental tasks. As the source of the problem is intrinsic to the individual, the medical model holds that the solutions to disability should also focus on the individual. "Rehabilitation" thus teaches the disabled person to adjust to or "work around" barriers in society.

The HCK advocated for an alternative social model of disability. Its leadership argued forcefully that the problem, in fact, lay with society and people's tendency to *assume* that disabled persons could not participate in society. Attitudinal barriers led to the construction of cities littered with physical barriers hindering movement, excluding disabled people, and reinforcing the perception that they were functionally incapable of living regular lives.³ These ideas increasingly resonated with the disability community worldwide.

The movement for disability self-representation soon took hold in Canada. By the late 1970s, all ten Canadian provinces had province-wide disability organizations representing people with all disabilities (pan-disability) that were run and operated primarily by persons with disabilities themselves. Many of these had formed through the coming together of uni-disability groups (meaning those representing a single type of disability: for the blind, deaf, amputees, etc.), in which mobility-impaired young adults were particularly prevalent in membership numbers. In 1979, these provincial organizations united federally to form the first national multi-disability organization in Canada, the Coalition of Provincial Organizations of the Handicapped (COPOH). Headquartered in Winnipeg, Manitoba, the COPOH focused on advocacy and lobbying.⁴

Rehabilitation International (RI) is a worldwide organization founded in 1922 to advocate for disabled people. With member organizations in more than one hundred countries, it is comprised of service providers, government agencies, academics, researchers, and advocates with and without disabilities.⁵ Both the Canadian COPOH and the Swedish HCK were member organizations in 1980,

when RI announced it would host its upcoming World Congress in Winnipeg. Many in the COPOH and HCK believed that RI was too tightly focused on a medical model of disability that defined the disabled as sick and needing treatment. They argued, in line with the social model of disability, that persons with disabilities were a distinct social group with common needs and interests and a desire for self-representation. They felt that medical professionals controlled the leadership of RI with comparatively little practical input from disabled people themselves. The COPOH and HCK planned a strategy to change this at the 1980 World Congress.⁶

Before the Congress began, RI convened a delegate assembly to discuss the participation of persons with disabilities. Bengt Lindqvist, an RI delegate from Sweden, introduced an amendment calling for a change in the RI definition of “organizations of disabled people” which would require at least 50% of representatives to be people with disabilities. In other words, the majority of the decision power in RI would be in the hands of disabled people.⁷

Lindqvist’s amendment was defeated by a margin of sixty-one to thirty-seven.⁸ Lindqvist announced the results at a COPOH information-sharing meeting that had gathered before the Congress. Later, Henry Enns, a RI delegate from Canada and member of the COPOH, said that the feelings of frustration and anger felt at the defeat of what many were calling the “equality amendment” sparked a bond of group solidarity among the 250 people with disabilities from forty countries then in the room. The RI vote, he recalled, “made the handicapped delegates realize that the only way they would gain a voice was to form their own organization.”⁹ After an impassioned discussion, the group agreed that a worldwide autonomous organization of disabled persons was needed in which disabled people would make the decisions about how to best represent themselves.¹⁰

Founding a Movement

As the RI World Congress continued nearby, the group of disaffected disability advocates split off to form their new organization. Henry Enns and Jim Derksen of Canada were both elected to an international Ad Hoc Planning Committee that drafted a proposed founding philosophy, structure, and leadership configuration.¹¹ The new organization would be named the World Coalition of Persons with Disabilities (WCPD). It would be composed entirely of disabled people and be multi-disability.¹² The coalition would “be based on the philosophy of equal opportunity and full participation of

handicapped people in all aspects of society as a matter of justice rather than charity.” Membership in the WCPD would be “open to all organizations ‘OF’ handicapped people. This means that the decisive control of the organization should be in the hands of the handicapped.”¹³ On June 26, the proposal was unanimously accepted by a meeting of three hundred disabled delegates.¹⁴ This meeting elected a formal Steering Committee for the WCPD with two representatives from seven regions of the world. Henry Enns was named Chairperson and Bengt Lindqvist Vice Chairperson.¹⁵

The steering committee met in October 1980, February 1981, and August 1981.¹⁶ To better reflect the transnational nature of disability identity and advocacy, they changed the name of the organization to Disabled Peoples’ International (DPI), prepared a constitution based on that of the International Labour Organization, and agreed to hold a World Congress to truly inaugurate DPI on the world stage.¹⁷ (The title DPI will be used in the remainder of this article, including for the period when the organization was named WCPD).

The founding members of DPI drew attention to the contemporary UN figure that 10 percent of the world population was “handicapped” (roughly equal to the population of India).¹⁸ This was no niche group. Of course they lived very diverse lives, yet they also shared a common, overlapping set of concerns and sense of identity. Of the several international organizations focused on disability, Henry Enns explained, DPI would be “the only international cross-disability organization in which disabled people have a decisive control.”¹⁹ Jim Derksen later contended that “rehabilitation tries to change the disabled person to accommodate society. Our organizations accept that many disabilities are permanent and tries to change society so that it accommodates disabled people.”²⁰

The steering committee settled on Singapore for the first DPI World Congress, a country thought to be a good practical balance between the first world and the developing world. Their selection of November 1981 for the meeting, was significant because the UN had declared 1981 as the International Year of Disabled Persons (IYDP). A UN IYDP fund had been established (a likely source of critical funding) and the year would draw attention to disability issues around the world.²¹ It would be the perfect time to introduce the world to Disabled Peoples’ International.

Henry Enns and MCC

Born in the Soviet Union, Enns fled with his family during the Second World War and ultimately settled in Manitoba in 1954, when

he was eleven.²² He developed rheumatoid arthritis in his high school years and by graduation required a wheelchair.²³ When he applied to study social work at the University of Winnipeg (UW), the university registrar initially resisted, in part because the campus was not wheelchair accessible. Possessing a persuasive and optimistic personality, Enns convinced the registrar to allow him to study for a probationary semester to demonstrate that he could manage.

During his time at UW, Enns spent his summers living in a rehab hospital at Winnipeg's Health Sciences Centre. Flare-ups of his rheumatoid arthritis repeatedly left him in debilitating pain. The medical professionals at the hospital focused his treatment on "rehabilitation" by keeping him on his feet and walking without a wheelchair. At a certain point, Enns realized that that his attempts to walk were exacerbating the arthritic flare-ups, worsening his disability, and leaving him in so much pain that he could not function. He decided walking need not be his ultimate goal. He believed that, in his case, maximizing his quality of life meant accepting life in a wheelchair. It worked. His health improved and his pain returned to more manageable levels. He left the Health Sciences Centre, excelled in his studies, and completed a Bachelor of Social Work all while having friends carry him and his wheelchair into and out of buildings and lecture halls.²⁴ This case was illustrative of (and likely an influence on) the outlook on disability and choice that would guide Enns through his life of advocacy and social work. The staff at the rehab hospital certainly had good intentions and their knowledge and skills allowed them to help people with disabilities. However, the key, for Enns and the founders of DPI, was to help disabled people achieve *their own* goals and not decide those goals for them.²⁵ In 1975, Enns became a community development officer with the Manitoba League of the Physically Handicapped (MLPH), and in 1979 helped to found the COPOH.²⁶

Enns was a member of the Mennonite community. Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) is the international service and relief agency of the Mennonite and Brethren in Christ churches in the United States and Canada.²⁷ Based in Akron, Pennsylvania, it serves as a central hub to organize and deploy charitable funds and supplies gathered from a wide range of constituent churches. The diverse churches and communities that contribute to MCC share a commitment to "respond to human need through the utilization of the personnel and financial resources."²⁸ MCC had helped Enns's family to relocate to Canada. Then, in the 1960s, MCC Canada was established in Winnipeg, Manitoba. Though the two national units operate in close communication, their charitable projects are

administered largely separately.²⁹ (Unless otherwise stated, “MCC” in this article refers to MCC Canada.)

Central to the MCC’s charitable work at this time was the Volunteer Service (VS) program, which had over 750 personnel working in some forty-five countries in agriculture, education, health, social services, and economic and technical development.³⁰ The VS program provided financial support to voluntary service workers serving two- to three-year assignments on MCC projects. This support was not a salary, but only intended to cover basic living expenses.³¹ In 1981, MCC Canada had ninety-two volunteers on VS assignments, growing to 115 and then 140 over the following few years.³² The program priorities at the time of DPI’s founding were “Native Concerns, Victim-Offender Ministries, [and] the handicapped.”³³

In 1979, Enns submitted a proposal for a bold new project to the VS program. The program director, Dave Dyck, had a personal interest in disability and, together with Enns, created the MCC Canada Handicap Awareness Project.³⁴ In 1980, Enns began a two-year voluntary service assignment (later extended) as a consultant on disability issues.³⁵ The plan was for him to spend two to three months in each province with substantial Mennonite presence, conducting workshops at constituent conferences and conference schools to raise awareness of disability issues.³⁶ Within a few years, the project mandate had expanded to include making every constituent church and building wheelchair accessible, developing a new system of independent living centres, and supporting DPI in its early years. To reflect this broader mandate, in 1983 the project name was changed to Handicap Concerns Programs.³⁷ Enns served as the director of handicap concerns from the its inception until August 1986, while working variously as the chairman, deputy chair, and UN spokesperson for DPI.³⁸ His energy and passion were so inexhaustible that, when he left the director position, MCC established an entire committee to take up his duties.³⁹ Meanwhile, Dyck enshrined in policy that at least 50 percent of the Handicap Concerns Committee would be disabled or the parents of disabled children.⁴⁰

When the DPI steering committee decided to hold its first World Congress in Singapore, Henry Enns, its newly elected chairman, submitted a form to the MCC VS program requesting an additional volunteer to work for one year as a “Community Development Officer.”⁴¹ He explained that the “main emphasis of [the] project is to organize the World Conference in Singapore. This involves contacting resource people, assisting with fund raising, communication and correspondence of the Steering Committee.”⁴² It is worth highlighting that he was thus asking MCC to materially support a *secular* organization as part of its charitable mandate. “Our organization is

concerned about improving the living conditions of some 500 million people on the earth,” he wrote in his VS request form. “Many of our members are Christians but the organization is not a ‘Christian organization.’”⁴³ Diane Driedger, a university student and member of the Mennonite community, applied and was approved for the new VS position to begin in May 1981.⁴⁴ Driedger was a nondisabled person with an active interest in social movements who had worked with Enns in the MLPH.⁴⁵

The First DPI World Congress

The first secretariat office for the fledgling DPI was established in a strip mall in Winnipeg. It was, in fact, a shared space with the MLPH and consisted of “little more than two desks.”⁴⁶ Jim Derksen joined Enns and Driedger in the office as the part-time DPI acting international coordinator.⁴⁷ A wheelchair-user due to polio, Derksen grew up in Manitoba. Though not then a practicing member of a Mennonite church, he was of Mennonite descent and familiar with Mennonite culture.⁴⁸ “That fact that all three of us were Mennonites, I think that’s a very important factor,” Driedger later recalled. Their shared culture provided shortcuts to communication and understanding, which Driedger likened to a long marriage. With the immense task that lay ahead of the team, this anchoring “was a real advantage.”⁴⁹

A 1986 MCC policy report reflected that “MCCC has played a major role in the development of a world movement of disabled people.”⁵⁰ Critically, while MCC contributed substantial material support, Driedger recalls, “there was no interference in the work of DPI.”⁵¹ MCC leadership trusted Enns and DPI and permitted wide latitude in pursuing what they thought was best. In doing so, MCC embodied the principle that people with disabilities should represent their own needs and interests. As active VS workers, Enns and Driedger were supported with living and travel expenses allowing them to devote their energies to the significant work of organizing this new movement. Enns’s VS assignment was repeatedly extended, enabling him to continue to perform his international work alongside his original MCC accessibility projects.⁵² The Handicap Concerns Program directly listed as one of its 1986 objectives “to make staff available to serve as chairperson of Disabled Peoples’ International.”⁵³ This continued support of talented individuals represented a real practical investment on MCC’s part to the founding of DPI.

As elected representatives of the organization, the steering committee focused on publicizing DPI, organizing groups, and meeting with government officials and funding organizations. Meanwhile, the DPI staff members at the Winnipeg secretariat worked to raise the \$240,000 budget for the World Congress.⁵⁴ In that respect, Derksen and Driedger handled the bulk of the fundraising and planning work.⁵⁵ Often travelling for his responsibilities as both chairman of DPI and director of the Handicap Concerns Program, Enns phoned the office every week and visited every few months as his schedule allowed.⁵⁶

“We had to raise a lot of money here in the Winnipeg office”, recalled Driedger.⁵⁷ They had a wealth of experience in disability organization and advocacy between them but no previous experience with international funding bodies or with fundraising at this scale.⁵⁸ Fortunately, their connections to MCC gave them a head start. “One of the most significant contributions MCCC has made in the rapid development of DPI has been contacts and credibility,” an internal MCC report stated. These provided “the newly emerging organization with sufficient credibility to elicit support from funding bodies.”⁵⁹ John Wieler, MCC director of overseas projects, put Enns in touch with MCC’s contact at the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA).⁶⁰ CIDA knew MCC as a reliable non-governmental development agency. The very fact that DPI already had MCC support granted it an important air of legitimacy in its interactions with funding agencies.⁶¹ CIDA first offered a grant of \$17,200 for the first steering committee meeting to be held in Ireland. Unfortunately, CIDA could only deliver funding to formally incorporated organizations. Fortunately, DPI also had close ties to COPOH. Thus, CIDA granted the money to COPOH to administer on DPI’s behalf.⁶²

As a member of the Canadian delegation to the UN Advisory Committee for the IYDP, Enns pursued these contacts and forged new ones.⁶³ His enthusiasm and optimism did much to arouse interest in DPI and generate good international visibility. “He was a salesman; very charismatic,” said Driedger. “He could convince you just to be involved in everything because it was the exciting thing to do.”⁶⁴

Promises of funding slowly came together. Although very little actual money had arrived, the team in Winnipeg was able to turn their attention to travel planning. The real focus of Driedger’s time and attention was the many disability advocates and representatives of disabled organizations who wished to attend the World Congress but could not possibly do so without financial assistance. “We have to figure out how to get so-and-so from Dakar, Senegal, to

Singapore,” would be the challenge of her average day. “And these were the days when there was no Internet. We had to do everything by telegram or telex.”⁶⁵

One of the difficulties they faced was the delay that often took place between a promise of funding and the arrival of money. For example, CIDA committed \$100,000 for the World Congress but could only transfer funds to incorporated international organizations. DPI’s lawyer submitted an application to incorporate but mistakenly left out one required sheet. Consumer and Corporate Affairs Canada (CCOC) noticed the omission and rejected the application after three months. DPI’s second submission was again rejected for not clearly indicating a maximum number of board members. Again, DPI had to appeal to the trust and support of a well-placed contact, this time at Health and Welfare Canada, who prodded CCOC to process the application as quickly as possible.⁶⁶ Disabled Peoples’ International Canada was incorporated on October 16, 1981, six weeks before the scheduled start of the World Congress.⁶⁷ The certificate declared that the head office of the corporation would be in Winnipeg and that its primary objective would be to “democratically represent the disabled people of Canada as part of a World-wide organization to the United Nations and other international bodies.”⁶⁸

Airline tickets needed to be purchased months in advance and wired to attendees. Throughout the planning phase, the team in Winnipeg had to book arrangements for fifty representatives from twenty-five developing countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Caribbean before having the money on hand to do so. With the World Congress fast approaching and no time left to wait, Derksen, Enns, and Driedger agreed on a plan. They opened lines of credit with a travel agency in Winnipeg and another in Ottawa based on the existing promises of funding, for which they had documentary proof. Derksen told the travel agents that the money would arrive to settle these lines of credit before the start of the Congress. The lines of credit totaled \$120,000 when the Winnipeg DPI office still had only \$20,000 available.⁶⁹

Such calculated risks relied on a high level of trust between the members of the secretariat office team, the hosts in Singapore, and a diverse group of disabled delegates who had, at that point, never met. “I’ll tell you, I was scared,” Driedger said, “and Jim was scared, but Henry was not scared.”⁷⁰ Ron Chandran-Dudley in Singapore even mortgaged his house to pay for the necessary arrangements.⁷¹ The many leaps of faith, large and small, that so many individuals and organizations made in this time were evidence of the powerful sense of group solidarity on which Disabled Peoples’

International was founded. When asked if she, as a non-disabled person, felt included in that group solidarity, Driedger recounted, "Oh, totally. Not at any time did I feel excluded."⁷²

Six days before the start of the World Congress, they took all the money the secretariat office had left and flew to Singapore. They had no way of knowing if the tickets sent to faraway DPI delegates would reach their destinations in time. Meanwhile, in Ottawa and Winnipeg, travel agencies were awaiting repayment.⁷³

Against the Odds in Singapore

The first DPI World Congress took place as scheduled from November 29 to December 4, 1981. It had three stated goals: to establish and create an administrative structure for DPI, to initiate international political action towards disabled rights, and to provide a forum for the discussion of ideas and issues of international scope.⁷⁴ Derksen, Enns, and Driedger were thrilled to find that all but three of the subsidized delegates had received their tickets and made it to the Congress. In total, four hundred individuals with disabilities from fifty-one countries arrived in Singapore to participate, more than the organizers had ever expected. A full half of them would not have been able to attend without the subsidy program organized in Winnipeg and supported by MCC.⁷⁵

The DPI World Council, comprised entirely of disabled representatives, was formed and elected Rob Chandran-Dudley from Singapore as chairperson, Henry Enns from Canada as deputy chair, Bengt Lindqvist from Sweden as secretary, Joshua Malinga from Zimbabwe as treasurer, and a vice chair from each continent (except Oceania) to represent regional interests. A DPI constitution was passed, solidifying the structure of the organization, as well as a manifesto, and a plan of action. They agreed that the World Council would meet once a year and a World Congress could meet every four years.⁷⁶ The congresses would serve as forums for discussion and inform the World Council of the international issues most important to people with disabilities. The World Council would then make DPI policy.⁷⁷ Papers were presented on issues such as disabled employment, effective political action, food imbalance as a cause of disability, and the independent living movement. The World Congress sent a letter the United Nations General Assembly calling on them to designate the 1980s as the Decade for the Disabled. Underlying all of this, the event strengthened and extended the feelings of unity and solidarity.⁷⁸

After arriving in Singapore, Derksen and Driedger distributed the last of the DPI money as meal allowances for the fifty subsidized delegates and some non-subsidized delegates who had managed to raise their own airfare and had arrived hoping that DPI could pay for their meals and accommodations for the week.⁷⁹ While the Congress made history by establishing a voice for disabled people, Derksen and Driedger anxiously awaited the money. By the penultimate day of the Congress, neither the funds from the CIDA nor from the UN had arrived. The organizers were faced with the very real possibility of arrest in Singapore if they could not get \$20,000 to pay the hotel bill by the next day.

Derksen phoned Bill White at the COPOH for help. The COPOH itself simply did not have that kind of money available, so White went to their bank. He arranged a \$20,000 line of credit by showing the banker a telegram from the UN promising the DPI funding grant. International money transfers took time in 1981, so he then convinced Canadian External Affairs to send the money through diplomatic channels. On the last day of the Congress, the office of the Canadian high commissioner to Singapore delivered the money to Derksen's hotel room. It is no exaggeration to say that it arrived in the nick of time. The funds from CIDA and the UN did not appear in DPI's Winnipeg bank account until after the end of the Congress.⁸⁰

DPI After Singapore

Enns continued to promote DPI and its mandate on the world stage. He contributed to the UN World Programme of Action Concerning Disabled Persons, adopted by the UN General Assembly in December 1982.⁸¹ This global strategy to enhance disability prevention and the equalization of opportunities stressed that disability should be approached as a matter of human rights. In 1983, Enns again met with UN officials and accepted consultative status on behalf of DPI to provide non-governmental organizations with a reliable conduit of communication with the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).⁸² The following month, Enns was in Vienna where DPI and the UN jointly launched the Decade of Disabled Persons 1983–1992. The Decade was intended to be a period of active implementation for the World Program of Action Concerning Disabled Persons among member governments featuring a wide-ranging public education program on disability issues.⁸³ Also, Enns contributed directly to UN policy as an advisor to the Canadian delegations to the UN General Assembly and ECOSOC.⁸⁴

At the time of DPI's founding, 80 percent of persons with disabilities lived in the developing world. In some countries, 20 percent of the total population lived with acquired disabilities due to malnutrition and communicable diseases.⁸⁵ These areas would remain a particular focus. As a special IYDP project, in 1982 Enns and Driedger embarked on a fact-finding trip through Asia to assess how disabled people and disability associations were connecting with DPI.⁸⁶ They visited and reported on schools for the deaf, blind, and developmentally disabled, a "Foundation for the Crippled," a vocational training centre, a veterans' hospital, an assistive living residence, and a fundraising telethon.⁸⁷ As part of its continued support for DPI, MCC paid for Enns and Driedger's travel expenses.⁸⁸

As an international institution, DPI coordinated and supported both national-scale organizations and international/transnational-focused work. In August 1983, the DPI World Council launched the "Self-Help Leadership Training Program," a series of seminars to provide disability activists in developing countries with financial and organization skills to establish homegrown national organizations and development projects.⁸⁹ This program was administered from the DPI Development Office in Winnipeg and continued through 1989.⁹⁰ As only one example, in October 1984, DPI held an International Symposium on Development in Jamaica and subsidized the participation of twenty disabled leaders from different regions of the world.⁹¹ The training, networking, and encouragement that such events provided achieved real results. By 1989, there were sixty-nine national multi-disability groups operating around the world, and a great many more uni-disability groups in almost every nation.⁹² In 1982, COPOH successfully lobbied to have the rights of disabled persons enshrined in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, part of the new Canadian Constitution.⁹³ MCC contributed to these initiatives as a DPI donor organization and through continued VS program support.

The 1981 DPI Constitution passed in Singapore had used the World Health Organization's contemporary definitions of "disability" and "handicap." However, many members felt that those definitions represented the very medical model of disability that DPI had been founded to oppose.⁹⁴ The steering committee adopted and distributed a manifesto of its founding principles during the Singapore event although this manifesto did not alter the language in the DPI Constitution. Under the heading "Disability—Handicap", the manifesto asserted:

Historically the analysis of the situation of disabled people has been made from an individual perspective. The focus has been on the various

limitations in the individual. The following definitions make a clear distinction between disability and handicap and make it possible to analyse the various problems we face with the focus on the various limitations in the society.⁹⁵

At their 1985 meeting in Tokyo, the World Council addressed this terminology issue and replaced the language in the DPI Constitution with the exact words that followed in the 1981 manifesto originally penned in Singapore:

a. Disability is the functional limitation within the individual caused by physical, mental or sensory impairment, and *b.* handicap is the loss or limitation of opportunities to take part in the normal life of the community on an equal level with others due to physical and social barriers.⁹⁶

In this new set of definitions, rooted in the social model of disability, DPI made a statement that barriers do not lie within disabled people themselves but in the societies in which we all live. DPI's goal of universal accessibility would therefore be achieved by educating and changing society to accommodate everyone.

Disabled Peoples' International established the voice of people with disabilities, a focal point for self-representation, and a worldwide call for the human right to live without physical or social barriers. MCC supported this fledgling institution when it needed it the most. It put its trust in talented and motivated members of the constituent community and allowed them to do what they knew was right. Through this open-handed utilization of human and material resources, MCC was truly a catalyst for positive change in the world.

Notes

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- ² More information about DPI today can be found on the organization's website, <http://dpi.org/>.
- ³ Diane Lynn Driedger, "The Origins and History of Disabled Peoples' International (DPI), 1945-1985" (Master's thesis, University of Manitoba, 1987), 25-26.
- ⁴ Driedger, "Origins and History," 29.
- ⁵ Rehabilitation International, "The Story of RI Global," <https://www.riglobal.org/about/history/>.
- ⁶ Diane Driedger, *The Last Civil Rights Movement: Disabled Peoples' International* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1989), 31.

- 7 The language used at the time was “50% handicapped.” A similar motion to include persons with disabilities on the RI board was introduced and defeated at the previous RI World Congress in Israel, prompting disability advocates to prepare to press the issue at the Winnipeg Congress. Henry Enns, “Organizational Development of World Coalition of Persons with Disabilities, Steering Committee, Winnipeg,” MCC Canada Files 1982, Mennonite Heritage Archives, Winnipeg, MB (MHA), vol. 4319, file 767, 1.
- 8 Driedger, “Origins and History,” 40.
- 9 Enns, “Organizational Development,” 1.
- 10 Driedger, *Last Civil Rights Movement*, 32; Driedger, “Origins and History,” 50.
- 11 “World Coalition of Persons with Disabilities (W.C.P.D.). Proposal drafted by seven-member committee, presented and unanimously accepted on June 26, 1980,” MCC Canada Files 1982, MHA, vol. 4319, file 767, 1.
- 12 Driedger, *Last Civil Rights Movement*, 36; Driedger, “Origins and History,” 44.
- 13 “World Coalition,” 1.
- 14 Enns, “Organizational Development,” 1.
- 15 Driedger, “Origins and History,” 44.
- 16 Diane Driedger, “First VS Report From Diane Driedger, Disabled People International, Winnipeg,” MCC Canada Files 1982, MHA, vol. 4319, file 767, 1–2.
- 17 “Steering Committee, Disabled Peoples’ International, Burlington Hotel [Dublin, Ireland], Sunday 19th October 1980, 5pm,” MCC Canada Files 1982, MHA, vol. 4319, file 767, 1.
- 18 Enns, “Organizational Development,” 1.
- 19 Henry Enns, “Message from Mr. Henry Enns, Chairperson, First Congress of Disabled Peoples,” n.d., Bangkok, Thailand, MCC Canada Files 1985, MHA, vol. 4516, file 324, 1.
- 20 Jim Derksen, “Speech at DPI Dakar Leadership Training Seminar”, Dec. 1982, MCC Canada Files 1985, MHA, vol. 4516, 324, 5.
- 21 “World Coalition,” 3.
- 22 D. John McLean, “Henry Enns Doing His Bit”, *Caliper*, September 1983, MCC Canada Files 1983, MHA, vol. 4357, file 876, 14.
- 23 Esther Epp-Tiessen, *Mennonite Central Committee in Canada: A History* (Winnipeg: CMU Press, 2013), 134.
- 24 Diane Driedger (Assistant Professor of Disability Studies, University of Manitoba), interview with author, June 1, 2018, transcript, Carleton University Disability Research Group, Ottawa.
- 25 Driedger, interview with author.
- 26 Epp-Tiessen, *MCC in Canada*, 134; McLean, “Henry Enns,” 15.
- 27 Epp-Tiessen, *MCC in Canada*, 134; McLean, “Henry Enns,” 15.
- 28 Dave Dyck, “Voluntary Service Program: Assumptions, Objectives, Goals, 1981,” Report to meeting #109, Jan. 23–24, 1981, MCC Canada Archives, Winnipeg, MB (MCCCA), 1.
- 29 Driedger, interview with author.
- 30 McLean, “Henry Enns,” 16.
- 31 Driedger, interview with author.
- 32 Dave Dyck, “Voluntary Service Report,” Report to meeting #113 (Sept. 25–26, 1981), Exhibit 7, MCCCA, 4; Dyck, “Voluntary Service Program:

- Assumptions, Objectives, Goals for 1983,” Report to meeting #123 (Jan. 20–22, 1983), Exhibit 7, MCCCCA, 3.
- ³³ Dyck, “Voluntary Service Program: Assumptions, Objectives, Goals, 1981,” 1–2. The third priority was reworded to “services to and with the handicapped” in 1983; “Voluntary Service Program: Assumptions, Objectives, Goals for 1983,” 2.
- ³⁴ Epp-Tiessen, *MCC in Canada*, 134.
- ³⁵ McLean, “Henry Enns,” 16; Dyck, “Voluntary Service Report,” 1.
- ³⁶ Dyck, “Voluntary Service Program: Assumptions, Objectives, Goals, 1981,” 2.
- ³⁷ “Background Paper for Recommendation to Discontinue the Position of Director of the Handicap Concerns Program and to Establish an MCC Handicap Concerns Committee to the Mennonite Central Committee Canada Annual Meeting,” Report to meeting #151 (Jan. 16–18, 1986), Exhibit 12, MCCCCA, 3.
- ³⁸ Henry Enns, “Handicap Concerns Program Report to the Mennonite Central Committee Canada Executive Committee Meeting,” Report to meeting #146 (May 23–24, 1985), Exhibit 12, MCCCCA, 3.
- ³⁹ “Background Paper for Recommendation to Discontinue”; Dave Dyck, “Proposal for the establishment of a Handicap Concerns Committee for Mennonite Central Committee Canada,” June 17–18, 1983, MCC Canada Files 1983, MHA, vol. 4357, file 876, 1.
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