

# Mennonite Studies in Economics

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## *I. The Scope of Mennonite Studies in Economics*

Mennonite scholars in North America have examined an extremely broad range of economic issues from a wide variety of perspectives. Though the number of professional economists in the North American Mennonite community is relatively small, numbering perhaps half a dozen in U.S. Mennonite colleges and less than that in Canadian universities, a large number of other social scientists and theologians have addressed economic problems in significant ways. The focus of this paper is not on the work of Mennonite economists as such, but on the treatment of economic questions by Mennonite scholars, including economists, sociologists, historians, theologians, and others, from a perspective that is quite consciously Anabaptist-Mennonite. The work of a Mennonite scholar is considered if it deals with economic issues as they affect the Mennonite community, or if it deals with economic issues in a more general way but from a concern that stems clearly from that scholar's use of Anabaptist-Mennonite values. This last proviso begs the question of what is meant by Anabaptist-Mennonite values, and how one determines whether a scholar's work is influenced by them. Fortunately, in most cases the writers define their orientation very explicitly.

The Anabaptist roots of many of our social scientists are by now fairly well developed and obvious. Where that is not the case, the selection of work to be examined here has been made on the basis of the discussion immediately following.

## *II. The Anabaptist Approach to Economic Issues:*

The 16th century Anabaptist precursors of modern Mennonitism were extremely interested in economic questions. As one scholar has observed: "Rarely do Anabaptists get as passionate as they do on economics".<sup>1</sup> Their interest stemmed both from their basic understanding of

the Christian faith and from the application of specific Biblical teachings to actual economic practices around them.

The Anabaptists had little to say about the great questions of faith so vigorously discussed by other 16th century reformers. They said relatively little about the nature of God, in an abstract way, or about other "doctrines" of the faith. "The question of the Anabaptists was, 'What does it mean to follow Christ as a disciple?' Hence ethics was central in emphasis and inseparably tied to faith."<sup>2</sup> They consequently made no distinction between "sacred" and "secular" concerns. All of life, and particularly the business of making a living, was to be brought under the lordship of Christ. It was this understanding of their position which prompted their greatest 20th century interpreter to plead that we might "eliminate from our minds the dangerously unscriptural and un-Mennonite duality by which we often draw a line between sacred and secular, between church and community."<sup>3</sup> To the Anabaptists, in short, economics was intrinsically related to salvation. The way a Christian conducted his economic life — as well as every other aspect of life — was fundamental to the whole process of being reconciled to both God and man.

This serious, general approach to economic questions was accompanied by particular economic teachings, which can only be mentioned here.<sup>4</sup> The non-resistant love which the Anabaptists attributed to Jesus led them to reject all social, political, and economic activities in which force appears to be indispensable. It implied a fundamental conflict with the economic values of their society. This conflict was buttressed by their concept of two radically opposed kingdoms — the "world" dominated by Satan, and the true Church ruled by Christ. It prompted the Anabaptists to develop a Christian community separate from the rest of the world. The Anabaptists remained deeply concerned about economic issues, but only as they pertained to life within the redemptive church community. With regard to standards and practices in the outside world they adopted what one scholar has termed a spirit of profound "Gelassenheit," serene detachment.<sup>5</sup>

Within the community of Christian disciples the most perfectionistic teachings of Jesus were to be followed. No economic gain was to be made from mere buying and selling. There was to be no "mine" and "thine" with regard to material possessions. Property was treated as common, though not owned as such. A simple life-style was extolled; usury was condemned.

Anabaptist economic teachings represented a clear threat to the established order since they set about to realize a counter-society. To the extent that Mennonites follow Anabaptist-Biblical principles they "are committed to a way of life and an attitude toward society which places them in opposition to the ways and goals of civilization."<sup>6</sup>

How and to what extent have these radical economic principles informed the work of North American Mennonite scholars in this century?

### III. *The Influence of Anabaptist Principles on Approaches to Economic Issues by North American Mennonite Scholars*

The main principles which the Anabaptists adopted in their economic life may be summarized as follows:

1. The Christian faith is fundamentally concerned with economic questions.
2. Christians are to apply social-economic ethics to their life within a distinct, redemptive Christian community. Their concern is not with the application of such ethical principles in the outside world. It is assumed that Christian economic teachings are radically opposed to the economic teachings of society in general.
3. Christians, hopefully exercising their faith within a redemptive Christian community, shall:
  - a) Deal with everyone in a nonresistant manner, and refuse to engage in activities where force might be necessary.
  - b) Adopt a simple style of life, supported by useful, non-aggressive, non-exploitative labour.
  - c) Treat all material possessions as common property, to be dispensed freely to all needy members of the community.

The purpose of this section is to examine the effect that these principles have had on recent Mennonite treatments of economic issues.

On the first issue — the centrality of economic, social, and political factors in the Christian faith — there is widespread agreement among Mennonite scholars, at least in theory. Theologically the position has been stated most forcefully as follows: "Jesus was not just a moralist whose teachings had some political implications; he was not primarily a teacher of spirituality whose public ministry unfortunately was seen in a political light; . . . Jesus was . . . the bearer of a new possibility of human, social, and therefore political relationships."<sup>7</sup> In the words of a Mennonite sociologist, "What does the market place have to do with my faith? Everything . . . almost every parable, every teaching, and every act of his (i.e. Jesus) had either direct or indirect economic implications."<sup>8</sup>

Dozens of similar quotations could be garnered from other Mennonite scholars. Economic issues are not considered peripheral. In light of this it is somewhat surprising that only a few of our hundreds of graduate students have chosen economics as their field of study, or that none of the post-secondary Mennonite institutions in Canada have economists on their regular staff (the situation is different in the United States), or, perhaps more seriously, that one of our theologians maintains after a study of Mennonite church concerns that "Mennonites have said

very little either implicitly or explicitly about economic justice."<sup>9</sup> Notwithstanding these disturbing observations, Mennonite scholars have quite consistently assigned economic issues a fundamental role in their understanding of the Christian faith. The numerous sources consulted in the preparation of this paper also indicate that there is a lively attempt to deal with a wide assortment of economic problems, so that it is not entirely accurate to infer that little is being said about economic justice.

On the second Anabaptist principle, the restriction of Christian socio-economic ethics to practices within a distinctly separate Christian community, there is profound disagreement among Mennonite scholars. The two scholars who have elucidated and defended this Anabaptist viewpoint most vigorously are John Howard Yoder and Guy Hersherberger. The Christian, Yoder argues, has no responsibility to make history "move in the right direction". The Christian is asked not to save the world, or assume responsibility for it, but to be obedient. Yoder distinguishes sharply between the work of "redemption," which is the work of the church, and the work of "conservation" which is the work of the "good heathen."<sup>10</sup> However, this is not perceived as a strategy of withdrawal or an act of indifference to the problems of the world. The calling of the church is to "be the conscience and the servant within human society",<sup>11</sup> but it can only be this if it works at its mission of being faithful to God's highest commands within the redemptive community of those who are more concerned to be obedient than to be "responsible" or relevant. Guy Hersherberger, whose two books *War, Peace, and Non-resistance* and *The Way of the Cross in Human Relations* "have in effect served as texts for normative Mennonite ethics for more than a generation,"<sup>12</sup> has also set the church, as the "colony of heaven", against society's economic and political structures. The Anabaptists, he notes approvingly, "built their church on the New Testament pattern and invited men and women to leave the world; to take up their cross and follow Christ into the life of the holy community, the colony of heaven, which was planted within the pagan world. . . . They were indifferent toward the state; and they kept themselves largely separate from the economic struggles of the time."<sup>13</sup> This permits Hersherberger, as we shall see, to call for the most rigorous application of principles like nonresistance to economic and political affairs without worrying unduly about how this can be done in the world as it is. Christian "realists" like Reinhold Niebuhr and John C. Bennett, he argues, have created an unnecessary dilemma for Christians by assuming "social responsibility beyond that which God Himself has assigned to the Christian."<sup>14</sup>

While this position is undoubtedly true to much of what the Anabaptists advocated, it is not shared by many other Mennonite social scientists and theologians, for both ideological and pragmatic reasons.

Theologians like J. Lawrence Burkholder and Gordon Kaufman insist that the nature of Christian love, and the care of God for His whole creation, necessarily involve the Christian in the structures of the world. "Love itself demands responsible participation in society for it is in the social order that the Christian meets the neighbor. . . . If the corporate neighbor is to be the recipient of Christian love, the way to help him . . . is to engage in the struggle for justice through the use of social and political power."<sup>15</sup>

Other scholars have pointed out that, regardless of ideology, modern Mennonites have largely bypassed this aspect of the Anabaptist vision and are very deeply involved in society's structures. As Donovan Smucker notes, Mennonites, with a few exceptions like the Holdemans and some small, scattered "intentional communities", have forsaken both the stance of "Gelassenheit" vis-a-vis the world, and the sense of basic confrontation which it paradoxically implied. Instead they have adopted the Protestant ethic of individual economic achievement and have decided to match wits and economic skills with other members of society. It is important, Smucker maintains, "to set aside the rhetoric of the Anabaptist situation of the sixteenth century to describe fairly and accurately what economic and social institutions we do, *in fact*, have and what goals and models we *ought* to have."<sup>16</sup>

However, before we examine how this agenda has been tackled, by the application of particular Mennonite teachings to practical economic problems, it must be emphasized that the Mennonite community ideal has had, and continues to have, strong impact on Mennonite thought and action. Mennonite scholars in the United States in particular have tended to identify a link between a particular type of economic community, based on agriculture, and the retention of Anabaptist-Mennonite values. An extensive literature has developed around this subject.<sup>17</sup> During the 1930s and 1940s particularly, scholars like J. Winfield Fretz and Guy Hersherberger called for the creation of new mutual aid programs which would enable young Mennonites to remain in their rural communities to nurture their principles of non-resistance and church cohesiveness. Fretz observed that "a high percentage of those Mennonites who leave the farm and find work in non-agricultural pursuits are lost to the Mennonite Church. . . . The urban soil is not the kind of soil in which the Mennonite Church can grow. . . . It is literally true that the city soil is too hard, stony and shallow for Mennonite ideals to take root."<sup>18</sup>

Other scholars have disagreed sharply. Paul Peachey writes, partly on the basis of his sociological study of the urban origin of the early Anabaptists, that "the urban environment provides a more congenial setting for vital Anabaptism than does the rural" because "in the closed or semi-closed Mennonite rural community, ethnic factors are a constant

threat to the spiritual impulse as the constitutive dynamic of community."<sup>19</sup> The expression "vital Anabaptism" is a clue to the disagreement between Peachey and some of our other sociologists on the one hand, and the pro-agriculturalists on the other. The latter stress community cohesion and the maintenance of church practices and values. In the words of a somewhat milder supporter: "One reason that agriculture was so acceptable as a way of making a living was that it also supported and sustained the total church program and life. . . . As farmers we did not have many contacts with people holding values different from ours. We did not belong to a trade association or labor union that demanded loyalty and support. All of our economic, social, and religious life was centered around the church."<sup>20</sup> In contrast to that, the pro-urbanites want to test the cutting edge of vital Anabaptism by applying it precisely to difficult urban situations. As Leland Harder observed: "it is possible that the forces of our time thrusting us out into the urban centers of our nation are just what our communities need in order to fulfill our mission in the world."<sup>21</sup>

Other scholars have been content to observe that Mennonites are indeed becoming urbanized, and if they are to survive and be effective Christian citizens they will have to learn to apply their Christian faith in the urban environment.

The point of the preceding discussion was not to assess the relative merits of the pro-agricultural and pro-urban arguments but to note that in both cases, and on the part of most Mennonite scholars, it is generally assumed that Mennonite-Anabaptist values are fostered and transmitted best through Mennonite *community* structures. The notion of the church as being more than the sum of its members, of its being a *community* if it is to be vital, is shared by virtually all these scholars. To that extent the original Anabaptist vision remains significant in their thinking. Scholars like Peachey, Smucker, Harder, and Leo Driedger may not like the strong ethnic foundation of many Mennonite communities, including those in the city, but they consistently perceive the strength of the Mennonite vision in terms of community or brotherhood action. Smucker observes that in some Canadian cities "Mennonite city dwellers are *coping* with the city by way of physical proximity to create neighborliness, developing excellent institutions, congregational, educational, service, musical, medical and welfare; delineating an identity which is not lost in the seas of urbanity and communicating with the city while keeping it at enough distance to permit non-conformity."<sup>22</sup>

But how have scholars advocated that Mennonites deal with actual economic problems in both urban and rural areas? Three basic Anabaptist principles of ethical action have been noted above: nonresistance, simple non-exploitative living and working, and free sharing of material posses-

sions. What has happened to these ideals in the hands of 20th century Mennonite scholars?

The teaching of nonresistance has proved to be one of the most difficult and contentious components of Mennonite social ethics. Scholars like Yoder and Hershberger have virtually equated Christian love with nonresistance. By nonresistance they mean a self-sacrificial, cross-bearing love which refuses to use any force whatever to obtain its goals.

Such a position may not bring about social change or create the conditions for economic success in society but then, as was noted previously, these scholars do not hold Christians directly responsible for society. It is primarily within the church community, functioning as a social, economic, and political unit, that nonresistant love should be not only necessary but effective.

Guy Hershberger has tried to apply the teaching of nonresistance to concrete economic problems. Negatively he uses it to reject any participation by Christians in coercive bodies like labor unions, agricultural organizations, and large corporations. Positively he urges Christians to become involved in small business and agricultural enterprises in which they can ensure that buying and selling methods and the settlement of working conditions will correspond to the principle of nonresistance; they cannot even be nonviolently resistant. He also encourages Christians to exercise non-resistant love by practical acts of mutual aid.<sup>23</sup>

Hershberger has spent much of his life attempting to improve labor-management systems and race relations, and has actively participated in the creation of numerous mutual aid models. However, his strong emphasis on nonresistance has been severely criticized, even by those who admire his obvious human concerns. One criticism has been that nonresistance leads inevitably to social passivity. J. Lawrence Burkholder has argued "Nonresistance . . . produces a psychological type. By exalting the absence of conflict rather than the peaceful resolution of conflict it exalts passivity."<sup>24</sup> Neither Yoder nor Hershberger would, of course, agree that it should do this, but Burkholder knows enough about its influence in the Mennonite community to suggest that it may in fact have that result.

A second criticism of nonresistance, when used as a key to ethical decisionmaking in economic or political situations, is that it is too simple or narrow a concept to provide guidance for the complexities that are sure to be encountered. J. Richard Burkholder suggests that nonresistance may be an adequate way of solving problems between two parties, when the nonresistant person has to deal only with the possibility of his own suffering, but it is not able to deal with conflicts between more than two competing claims. He asks, "If love as nonresistance is to be an absolute ethic, how does the disciple respond to competing neighbor claims,

particularly if they make contradictory demands?"<sup>25</sup> Other writers, like J. Lawrence Burkholder and Gordon Kaufman, have advanced such criticisms even more forcefully. Burkholder argues that in his insistence on nonresistance, and by refusing to distinguish between violent and non-violent forms of nonresistance, "Hershberger cuts the theoretical ground out from under those who would participate directly in social action."<sup>26</sup> According to Burkholder, "we have driven ourselves into an ideological trap which is unnecessary."<sup>27</sup> Interestingly enough, he draws an absolute line at violence, and is evidently uncomfortable about having to move even from pure nonresistance to nonviolent resistance. "The conflict between the perfectionism of Christ's ethic and the ambiguity of the world order makes some concession to a *lower ethic* necessary."<sup>28</sup> To go beyond absolute nonresistance, he confesses, "means the end of innocence and the beginning of a vast and troublesome quest for places to draw the line short of pure nonresistance."<sup>29</sup>

Burkholder's agonizing struggle with this aspect of Mennonite social ethics is stressed here because it is representative of difficulties that many Mennonites face in coming to terms with modern economic institutions like labor unions and coercive methods used in business to deal with workers and competitors. Violence is never condoned, but when is resistance justified and when isn't it? Few Mennonite scholars have gone as far as Gordon Kaufman in accepting the world, with its structures and methods, without prior conditions, as an act of love. "Love," he has argued, "goes to the very heart of the most sinful situations that it can find, and there it gives of itself without any reservation whatsoever. This is the absurdity of the Christian ethic; it is an ethic of radical imprudence. The Anabaptist-Mennonite tradition has always tried to interpret love in the radical sense of the New Testament, but in its tendency to withdraw from participation in the power struggles of the world it has badly compromised itself."<sup>30</sup> Such love, he maintains, will try to correct the wrong or inadequate ethical standards of society, but it will simultaneously act in accordance with the best aspirations and structures of that society, even if the "best" does not conform to Mennonite standards. Far from seeing this as a form of compromise, or as a retreat to a lower ethic, Kaufman insists that it is entirely consistent with Christian love. "Love is just that which has adequate resources within itself — the very resources of God Himself — to make it possible to meet with and deal with every situation it confronts in all its variety and all its sinfulness."<sup>31</sup>

But most Mennonites, and Mennonite scholars, do not think of love in that unconditional way when they ask how it can be exercised in our modern economic system. Several Mennonite church conferences, prompted by some of the scholars mentioned in this paper, have opposed



official participation in labor unions on grounds that they use coercive actions.<sup>32</sup>

Recently, however, Mennonite Industry and Business Associates, made up of Mennonite business and professional people, prepared a "Report on Management/Labor Relations" which condemned the use of coercion and suggested several alternatives to confrontational union — management tactics, but which nevertheless took a position close to Kaufman's in its acceptance of given economic structures. "Christians must be aware," it observed, "that management and/or unions do not necessarily operate on Christian principles and so each Christian, in the context of Christian community, must determine his or her response to management/union operations under given circumstances."<sup>33</sup> What is also noteworthy about this report is the balanced treatment it provides of possible abuses by both labor and management. In the past the concern has often been exclusively with "labor problems." Similar approaches have been taken in recent years by John H. Redekop, a frequent commentator on labor-management problems, and by the present writer.<sup>34</sup>

The teaching of nonresistance has clearly posed significant problems for Mennonite scholars working with economic issues. It is probably accurate to say that it is no longer a major consideration in the social ethics of most of these scholars, who have come to accept institutions and practices where coercion is very evident, but it remains a constraining factor in Mennonite participation in some of society's structures.

The Anabaptist emphasis on simple, non-aggressive and non-exploitative living has also influenced Mennonite scholars in their approach to our economic system. No economic problems have been written about so extensively by Mennonites as those associated with such aspects of our economy as consumerism, the individual pursuit of wealth, competition and profit-taking. In short, while thoroughly immersed in the western capitalist system, many Mennonites are profoundly critical of the basic ethos of that system.

Only brief reference can be made here to the voluminous literature. Carl Krieder's recent book, *The Christian Entrepreneur*, is one of the more comprehensive and complex treatments of these concerns.<sup>35</sup> It appears on the surface to justify elements of our economic system found questionable by others. For example, it provides a reasoned justification of both profit and interest. However, it is quite radical in its criticism of general economic acquisitiveness. Grave reservations are expressed about concentrations of land ownership, the doctrine of *caveat emptor*, the production of goods not clearly useful to society, and the existence even in the Mennonite community of great disparities in income distribution. Kreider expects the Christian entrepreneur to operate with a mini-

mum of material incentives and with a collegial attitude toward his employees.<sup>36</sup>

Other scholars have focussed more specifically on the dangers of income disparities,<sup>37</sup> the impact of wealth and technology on Christian values and motives,<sup>38</sup> the tension between individualism and brotherhood concerns,<sup>39</sup> and the general motivation of modern business. Loren Friesen expresses this latter concern: "We seem to have totally accepted the world's system of being involved in economic activities for the purpose of personal selfish gain."<sup>40</sup>

Issues of this type, involving critiques of aggressive competition in capitalism, alienation, and the role of wealth, have also been treated at length by entrepreneurial scholars like Calvin Redekop,<sup>41</sup> Rudolph Dyck and Arthur DeFehr.<sup>42</sup>

Recently, questions about the pursuit of wealth and income disparities have also prompted some of our scholars to broaden their concern beyond the Mennonite community, and beyond North America. Arthur DeFehr<sup>43</sup> and economists like Henry Rempel,<sup>44</sup> Ronald Friesen,<sup>45</sup> Fremont Regier,<sup>46</sup> and Leonard Siemens<sup>47</sup> have given increasing attention to the impact of our production and consumption patterns on world-wide disparities, and to methods that might be used to alleviate such disparities. In this particular instance, insular Mennonite concerns of a micro nature have resulted in the examination of macro problems beyond the Mennonite community. As will be argued in the concluding section of the paper, such a development has been singularly lacking in much of our work in economics.

The appropriate form of property in a Christian community is another issue that has been handed down to modern Mennonite scholars from the Anabaptist tradition. While the Anabaptists, apart from the Hutterites, did not advocate common ownership of property, they stressed that individual rights to material possessions are to be subordinated so completely to the needs of the neighbour that such rights have at most a very limited claim among Christian believers.

The Mennonite community in North America is, however, fundamentally committed to the institution of private property. While Mennonite scholars generally accept that orientation, a number are challenging the highly individualistic conception of such rights and are suggesting ways in which Mennonites might develop ownership patterns which more closely approximate the Anabaptist-biblical ideal.

A number of writers have sought to make possessions more social by promoting programs of mutual aid. J. Winfield Fretz, Guy Hershberger, and others have been instrumental in the creation of such programs as mutual insurance, health care, and orphan and widow

assistance, in line with practices that were developed by the Mennonites in Russia and elsewhere.<sup>48</sup>

Henry Rempel would like to see the Mennonite community undertake a radical program of income re-distribution to overcome the inequalities created by the system of private property. An individual fellowship, he suggests, might "take some average number, let's say \$10,000 to make it simple, and those of us with after-tax income above this level will turn over the excess to the group to be used as the fellowship decides." The important thing, he adds, "is to take consumption and production decisions out of individual and family hands, where action is constrained solely by whether we can afford it, and to place such decisions voluntarily in the hands of a small group of sisters and brothers who share with us a common commitment to serve Jesus as Lord."<sup>49</sup>

Other economists are encouraging Mennonite businesses to share the proceeds of their property not only through wages but through profit-sharing schemes.<sup>50</sup>

Others are asking businesses to reorganize along lines developed in Western Europe, where collegial forms of decision-making make workers effective co-owners in all but name.<sup>51</sup>

These writings, and many more, indicate that Mennonite scholarship in the area of economic property remains imbued with Anabaptist views, though the same may not be said about general Mennonite practice, except in the form of mutual aid programs and some scattered experiments in profit-sharing and shared decision-making powers.

#### *IV. An Evaluation of Mennonite Studies in Economics: Concluding Observations*

The economic studies discussed in this paper share features which may be assessed both positively and negatively. First, most of the studies are ethically oriented. This may be due to the selection criteria used. No attempt was made to examine studies by Mennonite economists which did not focus on the Mennonite community or which did not emanate from an ethical concern. Studies dealing with the Mennonite community might have been purely descriptive, but it is clear that most of our scholars view the Mennonite community in terms of religious-ethical values. Descriptions, therefore, of economic practices in these communities were usually designed to test reality against ethical theory. We, therefore, have no examples here of "positive" or so-called objective economics. Because the writer is not certain that such economics exists, though it has many proponents, no negative judgment is implied in this observation. It might be argued, however, that the time has come for both our theologians and our social scientists to devote less effort to debating the ground of our ethical concern and more to ethical examination of practical economic problems. Duane Friesen predicts that from those

Mennonites actively involved in economic and political pursuits there will come "increasing impatience with the Mennonite unwillingness to go beyond theological and ethical platitudes and an increasing call to speak to the practical conditions in which they find themselves."<sup>52</sup> A host of economic issues will have to be addressed in a more practical way.

Also problematical is a second observation, namely, that almost all of the studies are extremely insular in their concern, and, therefore, almost entirely micro in scope. We are concerned with *Mennonite* labour-management relations, with income disparities within our communities, with the appearance of materialistic drives in our midst. We discuss property forms in our enterprises and mutual aid programs designed to help our people. However, a breakthrough has occurred in our concern for the poor. A number of our scholars have focussed our attention on the special problems of less developed countries, a trend in keeping with the growth of some of our mutual aid programs like MCC. and MEDA.

Part of our insular focus may be assessed favorably. It has always been our peculiar strategy, as this paper has tried to demonstrate, to tend to the creation of a redemptive community which *then*, as a community, can help the society around it. There remains much to be said in favor of this vision. We may have done a lot more good for our society, and even for third-world countries, by trying to do a few little things well, because we had some control over them, than we would have if our first concern had been to influence society from the top. There is a tendency for some church groups today to direct much of their ethical concern outward and upward. We may do well to err in the other direction.

However, by limiting our focus in this way we may have restricted too much the kinds of economic issues about which we are concerned. Our economic studies tend to confirm this third, more disturbing characteristic. The major economic problems confronting North America today are undoubtedly inflation, unemployment, and the depletion of our natural resources. Yet Mennonite economic studies have largely failed to address these macro issues, even on the micro level of the Mennonite community. Some past and current exceptions may be noted. J. Winfield Fretz examined the problem of unemployment as it impinged on the Mennonite community in the Great Depression, and proposed some practical solutions.<sup>53</sup> Henry Rempel has recently begun to write about unemployment and inflation in his regular column in *The Mennonite Reporter*, and scattered efforts have been made by other economists.<sup>54</sup> However, much more work obviously has to be done. No one in the Mennonite community has produced the kind of comprehensive works emanating from Christian communities in England.<sup>55</sup> In the area of resource use and conservation even less work appears to be done. The brief work of A. D. Stoesz in the 1940s<sup>56</sup> needs to be greatly extended. The

issues are clearly there. More work and more scholars trained in economics are required to enlarge the scope and effectiveness of Mennonite scholars in this area.

### Notes

<sup>1</sup> Walter Klaassen, "The Nature of the Anabaptist Protest," *Mennonite Quarterly Review*, Vol. 45, Oct. 1971, p. 301.

<sup>2</sup> J. Lawrence Burkholder, "Ethics," in the *Mennonite Encyclopedia*, Vol. IV, p. 1079.

<sup>3</sup> Harold S. Bender, "The Mennonite Conception of the Church and its Relation to Present Day Needs," *Mennonite Quarterly Review*, Vol. 19, April 1945, p. 90.

<sup>4</sup> For a detailed discussion see Peter J. Klassen, *The Economics of Anabaptism 1525-1560*, (The Hague: Mouton and Co., 1964).

<sup>5</sup> Donovan E. Smucker, "Gelassenheit, Entrepreneurs, and Remnants: Socio-economic Models Among the Mennonites", in John Richard Burkholder and Calvin Redekop, (eds), *Kingdom, Cross, and Community* (Scottsdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1976), pp. 219-241.

<sup>6</sup> The quote is from J. Lawrence Burkholder, "Social Implications of Mennonite Doctrines", *Conference on Mennonite Cultural Problems*, No. 12, 1959, p. 94. This section also relies on Walter Klaassen, "The Nature of the Anabaptist Protest," *op cit*, pp. 301-303.

<sup>7</sup> John Howard Yoder, *The Politics of Jesus* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmann, 1972), pp. 62-63. In his use of the term "political" Yoder clearly includes the whole spectrum of economic-social relationships.

<sup>8</sup> Calvin Redekop, "The Church's Responsibility in the Marketplace," *Direction*, Vol. VIII, No. 3, July, 1979, p. 12.

<sup>9</sup> Duane K. Friesen, "Mennonites and Social Justice: Problems and Prospects," *Mennonite Life*, March, 1982, p. 20.

<sup>10</sup> Among Yoder's numerous writings these views are presented most clearly in "The Anabaptist Dissent," *Concern No. 1*, June 1954, pp. 45-68, and *The Politics of Jesus*, *op cit*. They are examined critically by John Richard Burkholder in his monograph *Continuity and Change* (Akron, Pa.: MCC Peace Section, 1977).

<sup>11</sup> John Howard Yoder, *The Politics of Jesus*, p. 158.

<sup>12</sup> John Richard Burkholder, *Continuity and Change*, *op cit*, p. 5.

<sup>13</sup> Guy F. Hersherberger, *The Way of the Cross in Human Relations* (Scottsdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1958), pp. 155-156.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 109.

<sup>15</sup> J. Lawrence Burkholder, "The Problem of Social Responsibility from the Perspective of the Mennonite Church", pp. 33-34, quoted in John Richard Burkholder, *Continuity and Change*, *op cit*, p. 12. For Gordon Kaufman's views see especially his book *Nonresistance and Responsibility* (Newton, Kansas: Faith and Life Press, 1979).

<sup>16</sup> Donovan E. Smucker, "Gelassenheit, Entrepreneurs, and Remnants: Socio-economic Models Among the Mennonites," *op cit*, p. 241.

<sup>17</sup> In addition to the references cited below see, for example, Carl Kreider, "An Economic Program for the Mennonite Community of Tomorrow," *Mennonite Quarterly Review*, Vol. 19, April 1945, pp. 143-155; Melvin Gingrich, "Rural Life Problems and the Mennonites", *Mennonite Quarterly Review*, Vol. 16, July 1942, pp. 167-173; and Guy Hersherberger, "Maintaining the Mennonite Rural Community," *Mennonite Quarterly Review*, Vol. 14, Oct. 1940.

<sup>18</sup> J. Winfield Fretz, "Mennonites and Their Economic Problems," *Mennonite Quarterly Review*, Vol. 14, No. 4, pp. 199 and 201.

<sup>19</sup> Paul Peachey, "Early Anabaptism and Urbanism," *Conference on Mennonite Educational and Cultural Problems*, No. 10, 1955, p. 82.

<sup>20</sup> Howard Raid, "The Family Farm: A Question of Business Succession," *MIBA Newsletter*, Vol. 6, No. 3, Oct. 1976, p. 6.

<sup>21</sup> Leland Harder, "The Mennonite Witness in an Urban World," *Mennonite Quarterly Review*, Vol. 34, October 1960, p. 287.

<sup>22</sup> Donovan E. Smucker, "Challenges Facing MIBA Members in the Seventies," *MIBA Newsletter*, Vol. 7, No. 1, May 1977, p. 2. He notes Leo Driedger's caveat that "some of the

success may be due to ethnic, Germanic identity rather than the yeast of a biblical remnant in a hostile society" (*Ibid.*).

<sup>23</sup> Hershberger's views are presented most fully in this book, *The Way of the Cross in Human Relations*, *op cit.* They are discussed at length by a number of scholars in a "Festschrift" in his honor: *Kingdom, Cross and Community*, *op cit.*, edited by John Richard Burkholder and Calvin Redekop. See especially the essay by Theron F. Schlabach, "To Focus a Mennonite Vision," pp. 15-50.

<sup>24</sup> J. Lawrence Burkholder, "Violence, nonviolent resistance, and nonresistance in revolutionary times," *The Canadian Mennonite*, June 27, 1969, p. 8.

<sup>25</sup> John Richard Burkholder, *Continuity and Change*, *op cit.*, p. 7. A similar criticism is expressed in Roy Vogt, "Economic Questions and the Mennonite Conscience," in Henry Poettcker and Rudy Regehr (eds), *Call to Faithfulness* (Winnipeg: Canadian Mennonite Bible College, 1972), p. 162.

<sup>26</sup> J. Lawrence Burkholder, "Nonresistance, Nonviolent Resistance, and Power" in J. Richard Burkholder and Calvin Redekop (eds), *Kingdom, Cross and Community*, *op cit.*, p. 133.

<sup>27</sup> J. Lawrence Burkholder, "Violence, nonviolent resistance, and nonresistance in revolutionary times," *The Canadian Mennonite*, *op cit.*, p. 8.

<sup>28</sup> J. Lawrence Burkholder, "Ethics," *Mennonite Encyclopedia*, Vol. IV, p. 1080.

<sup>29</sup> J. Lawrence Burkholder, in *Kingdom, Cross, and Community*, *op cit.*, p. 137.

<sup>30</sup> Gordon D. Kaufman, "Nonresistance and Responsibility," *Concern*, No. 6, Nov. 1958, p. 8.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 21.

<sup>32</sup> See Ivan Lind, "The Attitude of the (old) Mennonite Church Toward Labor Unions," *Conference on Mennonite Cultural Problems*, No. 3, 1944, pp. 89-97.

<sup>33</sup> "Report on Management/Labor Relations," *The Marketplace*, March, 1980, pp. 9-12.

<sup>34</sup> See John H. Redekop (ed), *Labor Problems in Christian Perspective*, (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1972); Roy Vogt, "Strikes symbolize union power," *Mennonite Mirror*, May, 1975, pp. 7-8; and J. Daniel Hess, *Ethics in Business and Labor* (Scottsdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1977).

<sup>35</sup> Carl Kreider, *The Christian Entrepreneur* (Scottsdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1980).

<sup>36</sup> For a more complete summary of Kreider's views, see his article, "The Christian Entrepreneur," in the *MIBA Newsletter*, Vol. 9, No. 3, Dec. 1979, pp. 1-3, and the review of his book by Roy Vogt in the *Mennonite Quarterly Review*, Vol. 55, April 1982, pp. 204-206.

<sup>37</sup> Melvin Gingrich, "Mennonite Attitudes Toward Wealth — Past and Present," *Conference on Mennonite Educational and Cultural Problems*, Vol. IX, 1957, pp. 89-98.

<sup>38</sup> See e.g. Vern Ratzlaff, "The Church and Changing Culture," *Direction*, Vol. 1, No. 3, 1972, pp. 85-91.

<sup>39</sup> See Roy Vogt, "The Costs and Benefits of Being An Entrepreneur," *The Marketplace*, Vol. 10, No. 7, Sept. 1980, pp. 1-4.

<sup>40</sup> Loren Friesen, "What really motivates us, God or Mammon?" *MIBA Newsletter*, 6, No. 3, Oct. 1976, pp. 7-8. See also Virgil Vogt, "God or Mammon," *Concern*, No. 11, March, 1963, pp. 22-58.

<sup>41</sup> See Calvin Redekop, "The Church's Responsibility in the Marketplace," *Direction*, Vol. VIII, No. 3, July 1979, pp. 3-13 and *The Free Church and Seductive Culture* (Scottsdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1970).

<sup>42</sup> See Rudolf Dyck, "Being Christian in Business," *The Mennonite Brethren Herald*, May 17, 1974, pp. 4-5 and 30-31 and Arthur DeFehr, "Financing a Growing Business in a Christian Context," address to the CIBA Annual Meeting, Chicago, Nov. 6, 1971, 8 pp.

<sup>43</sup> Arthur DeFehr, "Development from an Anabaptist Perspective," *Direction*, V, Oct., 1976, pp. 12-19.

<sup>44</sup> Henry Rempel, "Our Role in the World Food Crisis," *MIBA Newsletter*, Vol. 6, No. 2, July 1976, pp. 1-5.

<sup>45</sup> Ronald L. Friesen, "A Christian Witness in a World of Economic Disparities," *MIBA Newsletter*, Vol. 6, No. 3, Oct., 1976, pp. 1-4.

<sup>46</sup> Fremont Regier, "Status Quo or Revolutions: Are These the Only Options?" *The*

*Marketplace*, Vol. 10, No. 1, March 1980, pp. 1-6, and "Economics, Ethics, and Revolutionary Change," *The Marketplace*, Vol. 11, No. 2, March 1981, pp. 1-6.

<sup>47</sup> Leonard B. Siemens, "Give Ye Them to Eat," a series of four unpublished papers, presented at the Ontario MB Conference, Kitchener, June 18-20, 1976, and "The World's Shrinking Granaries," *Mennonite Reporter*, Jan. 20, 1975, pp. 7-10.

<sup>48</sup> See for example J. Winfield Fretz, "Mutual Aid Among Mennonites," *Mennonite Quarterly Review*, Vol. 13, No's. 1 & 3, Jan. and July, 1939, pp. 28-58 and 187-209.

<sup>49</sup> Henry Rempel, "Our Role in the World Food Crisis," *MIBA Newsletter*, Vol. 6, No. 2, July 1976, p. 5.

<sup>50</sup> See Carl Kreider, *The Christian Entrepreneur*, *op cit*, and Ezra Byler, "Profit Sharing," *MIBA Newsletter*, Vol. 7, No. 2, Sept. 1977, pp. 1-5.

<sup>51</sup> Roy Vogt, "The Costs and Benefits of Being an Entrepreneur," *op cit*, pp. 2-3.

<sup>52</sup> Duane K. Friesen, "Mennonites and Social Justice: Problems and Prospects," *Mennonite Life*, *op cit*, p. 23.

<sup>53</sup> J. Winfield Fretz, "Mennonites and Their Economic Problems," *Mennonite Quarterly Review*, Vol. XIV, No. 4, pp. 207-209.

<sup>54</sup> Since self-defence is more important than modesty, see, for example, Roy Vogt, "Unemployment," *Mennonite Mirror*, Feb. 1972, p. 17f, "Inflation," *Ibid.*, March, 1975, p. 7 ff, and "Price and Wage Controls," *Ibid.*, Nov. 1975, p. 22.

<sup>55</sup> See, for example, John F. Sleeman, *Economic Crisis: A Christian Perspective* (London: SCM Press, 1976).

<sup>56</sup> A. D. Stoesz, "Mennonites and Soil Conservation," *Conference on Mennonite Cultural Problems*, No. 2, 1943, pp. 67-72.