

TO THE EDITORS:

. . . It is always refreshing to run into contributions with a new approach. This stimulating presentation by Mr. Zuck ["Anabaptism: Abortive Counter-Revolt," *C.H.*, 1957, 211ff.] is very timely and appropriate. It is indeed high time that American Anabaptist research pays attention to some of the questions raised in his article and in his dissertation. In looking over the major fields of research, particularly in America, we are justified in claiming that in our research we have in a way lifted Anabaptism out of its total context and investigated it in this isolated position. There were some valid reasons for this. The question may be raised whether the time has come when Anabaptism should be investigated as an integral part of the Reformation in relation to the total economic and political problems of that day, including such phenomena as Humanism, Peasant Revolt and other radical reform movements. Anabaptism was unique and at the same time a part of a greater entity.

For this reason I am happy that Mr. Zuck wrote this article and that you published it. By this I do not mean to say that thoughts expressed by him are entirely new, particularly not in Europe. In fact, they are to some extent a revival of the traditional denominational views as expressed by European Lutheran and Reformed schools of thought. Nevertheless they are timely in this particular stage of American Anabaptist research.

One could raise some questions regarding some methods of interpretation found in the article; for example when Menno Simons supposedly expresses his conviction "that in the last days Anabaptists would crush their enemies under their feet," which is said to demonstrate his kinship with Jan van Leiden. It is true Menno Simons says: "Then shall all our persecutors be as ashes under the soles of our feet." He even says: "I know of a certainty

that with this my doctrine, which is Thy Word, I shall at the coming of Christ judge and sentence not only men, but also angels" (*Complete Writings*, 1956, p. 81). It is obvious that Menno Simons quotes or refers to Scripture passages like "know ye not that we shall judge angels" (I Cor. 6:3), etc. Menno's writings abound in Scriptural references. He is a Bibliocist. This does not mean that all passages he quotes have the same weight in his total thinking. In order to see these few references to a participation in the Judgment Day in a proper light we must take into consideration all writings of Menno in which he definitely stresses that God himself will usher in the Judgment and his children must patiently exercise love and if need be endure martyrdom. Above all, his writing "Against the Blasphemy of Jan van Leiden" (1535) cannot be overlooked.

If Mr. Zuck's thesis were too seriously and consistently pursued it naturally would lead into another extreme. It is well to point out that there was some similarity and common background between the various types of Anabaptism but at the same time we should never lose sight of the fact that Anabaptism itself is only another form of Protestantism, as has been pointed out by such church historians as Walther Koehler and Roland Bainton. This is not emphasized in the article. It is well to remind ourselves at times of the Catholic emphasis that all of the movements of the 16th century, including Anabaptism and the Peasant Revolt, are somehow a part of the Reformation movement. For this reason I cannot accept the author's terminology expressed in "Abortive Counter-Revolt." To use tags like this is misleading and altogether too negative. None of the streams of the Reformation succeeded to the extent their promoters wished; and some of the ideas and movements of the day, although

outwardly crushed, succeeded ultimately as foreseen and expressed by the martyr Balthasar Hubmaier: "Divine truth cannot be killed although it may be apprehended, punished, crowned with thorns, crucified and placed in a

tomb. It will nevertheless arise victoriously on the third day and rule and triumph throughout eternity."

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MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL

December 26, 1957

President H. Shelton Smith called the Council to order at the Sheraton-McAlpin Hotel, New York, N. Y., with F. A. Norwood, J. H. Nichols, G. S. Klett, G. H. Williams, C. E. Schneider, L. J. Trinterud, R. T. Handy, H. J. Grimm, R. C. Petry, and W. S. Hudson present. The minutes were approved as printed, and the treasurer's report was received. C. E. Schneider and H. J. Grimm were appointed to audit the treasurer's books. It was voted that the treasurer be authorized to dispose of the remaining copies of the *Papers* and *Studies*, and that his stipend be increased \$200.

The report of the editors was received, and it was voted that the editors be given authority to make any arrangements made necessary by the absence of F. A. Norwood, including any necessary extra secretarial help. It was also voted that the American Theological Library Association be given permission to microfilm the *Papers* of the Society, and that an index of *Church History* and the *Papers* be published in volume 30 of *Church History*, with the editors and G. H. Williams as a committee to make specific recommendations for the index at the next annual meeting.

The Brewer Prize Committee reported that the Prize, with the concurrence of the editors, had been awarded to William R. Hutchison for his manuscript "Transcendental Religion: A Study in American Liberalism." It was voted that the next Brewer Prize be awarded in 1960 with the manuscripts to be submitted to the secretary by September 15, 1960.

The death of Prof. George B. King of Canada was reported.

For failure to comply with the constitutional requirements, the following persons were dropped from membership: H. Emerson Abram, Rev. Erik H. Allen, Prof. Robert S. Arthur, Robert W. Burtner, Prof. Mauro Calamandrei, Prof. Leland H. Carlson, Rev. John W. Christie, Rev. Asa Collins, Dr. Ruth E. Decker, Robert Egigian, Howard B. Ford, Jr., Charles E. Hoover, Archie H. Jones, Noel L. Keith, Prof. William F. Kerr, Rev. Melvin A. Kimble, Ralph Lazzaro, Miss Mae M. Link, Malcolm McCallum, Ronald A. McCreery, Dr. A. Stanley MacNair, Rev. Donald H. MacVicar, Rev. Owen R. Orr, Lindsay P. Pherigo, Rev. Cuthbert Pratt, Rev. Robert C. Senior, Rev. Herman Strub, Prof. W. Ralph Thompson, Prof. William Toth, Prof. Theodore L. Trost, Prof. Reuben S. Turner, Prof. Henry H. Walsh, Prof. Archibald Watters, Prof. Walter L. Yates, Prof. George E. Zachariades.

The resignations of the following members were accepted with regret: Dr. Ira V. Brown, James Cameron, Paul D. Caravetta, Rev. J. Ayson Clifford, Rev. Irwin W. Emmons, Prof. Robert Fortenbaugh, Prof. Merrill E. Gaddis, Rev. Bruce C. Galloway, Rev. Joseph Gregori, Kenneth F. Hall, Rev. E. M. Hughes, Rev. William L. Hiemstra, Prof. Milton J. Hoffman, Prof. M. M. Knappen, Prof. Ernest S. Larson, Dr. Paul B. Means, Prof. Conrad H. Moehlman, Prof. Charles F. Mullett, Rev. M. Jerry Neiwirth, Prof. Alfred W. Newcombe, Prof. Hugh J. Nolan, Prof. Elizabeth F. Rogers, B. H. Taylor, Rev. Robert L. Tucker, Prof. John D. Unruh, Rev. Malcolm E. Van Antwerp, Dean Tertius van