



REPORT OF FINDINGS COMMITTEE
BOARD OF REFERENCE AND COUNSEL STUDY CONFERENCE
Calgary, Alberta, April 27-29, 1988

Overall Impressions

1. We have experienced a good and free exchange of concerns and ideas. We affirm the process of study and interaction used at this Study Conference.
2. We thank God for the emerging consensus of this Study Conference, and for the experience of confessional discussion and integrity as a dynamic process.
3. We affirm the importance of a unified Confession of Faith instead of the idea of a two tiered Confession.
4. We are agreed that pastors and conference agency personnel should be in agreement with the Confession of Faith.
5. We endorse the practice of regular BORAC/Faith and Life Study Conferences and consultations.
6. We have heard a strong call for the streamlining and coordination of conference structures.
7. We have noted the absence of a representative number of women delegates.

Findings re Articles 9 and 10 - Baptism, Church Membership and Lord's Supper

Points of Consensus

1. The theological unity of conversion, baptism, church membership and Lord's Supper.

Issues Requiring More Work

1. The nature of the church, including the relationship of the local church and the universal church.
2. The meaning of church membership
3. The meaning of the church as covenant community
4. The meaning of baptism
5. The relationship of baptism and the Lord's Supper
6. The meaning of the Lord's Supper

7. The observance of the Lord's Supper at weddings
8. The relationship of the local church and the denomination
9. A theology of child conversion, spiritual and moral development, and church membership
10. The practice of open communion and confessional integrity

Findings re Article 15 - Peace and Nonresistance

Points of Consensus

1. Article 15 should be revised to:
 - be more positive;
 - be more inclusive of NT peace/reconciliation language;
 - address the whole spectrum of violence and peacemaking.
2. Peacemaking and nonresistance is biblical.
3. Peacemaking is integral to the gospel, and thus to being a Christian.
4. The doctrine and the practice of peace/reconciliation should be integrated more fully into the total teaching ministry among us.

Issues Requiring More Work

1. The role of the state
2. How to deal with evil in society
3. Screening of pastoral and conference agency personnel
4. The relation of Mennonite Brethren to other peace churches, positions and movements
5. The practice of civil disobedience
6. The involvement of Mennonite Brethren in policing functions
7. The interpretation of the Old Testament re the peace position
8. The practice of self-defense
9. The normativity of the cross as a model of nonresistance. The cross is a unique salvation event. Does it also serve as a normative ethical model for Christians?

10. The compatability of peacemaking and evangelism

Findings_re_the_Proposed_BORAC_Vision_Statement

Re_Style

- 1. The statement should be shortened and popularized.
- 2. The statement should be separated into sections on vision, goals, strategies.

Re_Additions

- 1. A statement on theological education in the Conference
- 2. A statement on the role of the Confession of Faith in relation to the Bible and to other confessions of faith
- 3. Provide a more biblical/theological definition of identity

Re_Process

- 1. How do we develop ownership of the vision in the churches?

The Findings Committee: Clarence Hiebert, John Wall, John E. Toews (ch.), 4/29/88