SECOND CHURCH — HOST COMMITTEE
Convention Dates — August 22, 23, 24
BEACON LIGHTS

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Shall We Attend Our Young Peoples’ Convention?

This question will surely be in the minds of many of us as the season for our annual Young Peoples’ Convention is again upon us. And for many of us this is rather a serious question. It means the arrangement of our vacations, perhaps laying-off from our work with its resultant loss of pay. It may mean that we have to forgo other possible pleasures and lay aside long anticipated vacation plans in order to attend. Shall we do so? Is it worth while?

When considering this question it will have to be admitted that from the viewpoint of dollars and cents the bargain is not too bad. This is especially true if you are a delegate, but of course delegates go anyway, so we will drop them from our consideration for a moment. But even from a purely financial point of view you get much for little. Three days of entertainment for the price of your trip and a banquet ticket.

But much more important than the matter of the cost is the question, “What do you get for your money?” Children of God, also young Christian people, have to be good businessmen and women. Usually we call this being good stewards. It means that before we spend our money we determine whether we are getting our money’s worth. In this connection it must be emphasized that what you will receive for your “money” will be not simply entertainment but Christian entertainment and not simply entertainment alone but spiritual food.

That this last is the case is evident as soon as we look at the program which has been lined up for us by our Host Society of the 1950 Convention, Second Protestant Reformed Church of Grand Rapids, Michigan. The theme: “The Power of Godliness”, is one that immediately strikes a sound note not only because it is Scriptural but because it is something that affects you and me in our day to day living as children of God. The Power of Godliness, What is it? How must it become evident? What does it imply for me? How can it be demonstrated? Is there a danger of denying it? What is that particular danger today? How is it possible to possess that power of Godliness, especially for us as sinners and more particularly
as young people? No, I do not intend to answer these questions, but when I look at the outline of the convention program for the days of convention and see the list of speakers, I hope to be able to hear some of the answers myself.

Shall we attend the 1950 Convention? Well that depends on you and me. We will, if it is at all possible from a physical point of view. We will if we are interested in spiritual things. We will if we are interested in the truth as God has given it to us to possess it and called upon us to live it. We will if we are interested in what our leaders have to tell us out of the Word of God concerning those precious truths given to us as an heritage.

Personally I am very happy to see that again as last year the attempt is being made to use the talents and gifts of our young people. This is the most encouraging sign in our Young People’s Conventions and augurs well for the future. After all, we as young people will soon be the leaders of that movement which we believe God has called into being and it is well that we begin to prepare also for those positions of leadership as soon as possible. By attending this convention therefore we will be given the opportunity of seeing our young people in action.

By attending this convention we shall be giving our support to the truth which we as Protestant Reformed Young people have been privileged to receive. This we do by our very attendance, for by it we testify that we belong to that group which is called Protestant Reformed and are not ashamed to confess it. We declare thereby that we hold that truth dear, that we mean to learn it also in its practical application to our lives and living and that we confess it now and will continue to do so.

By attending we are given the opportunity to grow in that truth and in the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. Oh I realize of course that this presupposes that we attend in the proper spiritual state of mind and heart. But I am assuming that this is the case and then there is no doubt that our Conventions are a very well worthwhile means of growing in the truth. And remember that the more you put into it the more you will receive again.

Not to be forgotten is the other beautiful aspect of our conventions to which I would call attention. In this I refer to the opportunity which is presented to us to fellowship with one another as young people of the same household of faith.

I could perhaps point out to you various instances of such fellowship which have grown and blossomed and born fruit in life-long friendships and in happy Christian homes, but I shall not cite examples at this time. Sufficient to say that when you attend our Conventions you should be in the best company in the world, and I trust you will be.

Finally a word of encouragement to our host society, for after all most of the work and headaches will rest upon you as we know so well here in Pella and Oskaloosa. Let me assure you that in spite of all the work and effort or maybe because of it we enjoyed the con-
vention of 1949 more than anyone else and also feel that we have reaped the most benefit. But does it last? Well, perhaps the best answer I can give you to that question is that here in Oskaloosa we have an active membership of eleven in our society and of those eleven members nine are definitely planning to be at the Convention and one of the two remaining members is trying to make arrangements so that he can also attend. Yes, I would say, in our experience, the benefits, spiritual, mental, and social, have lasted so well that none of us would like to miss the Convention this year.

Therefore I would close this article with a parting "Hope to see you in Grand Rapids during Convention time".

Rev. J. Howerzyl.

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CONVENTION THEME SONG

Grace and truth shall mark the way
Where the Lord His own shall lead,
If His word they still obey,
And His testimonies heed.

For Thy Name’s sake hear Thou me,
For Thy mercy, Lord, I wait;
Pardon my iniquity,
For my sin is very great.

He who walks in godly fear
In the path of truth shall go;
Peace shall be his portion here,
And his sons all good shall know.

They that fear and love the Lord
Shall Jehovah’s friendship know;
He will grace to them accord,
And His faithful covenant show.
Marriage

One of the most important phases of our christian living as covenant young people is that which comprehends the period of courtship consummating in marriage. If ever there is a time of life when the immutable truth,—“An one soweth, so he reapeth”—is consciously known, it is then. If ever there is a time of life that leaves its indelible imprint upon all of our future days, it is then. It is during this pre-marital period that the seeds of happiness and distress are sown in the lives of the individuals concerned but more important in the acquaintances made and relationships established the very foundation of happiness or distress for future generations is laid. The courtship of the covenant youth today as it leads to marriage effects the church, the state, society of tomorrow and years to come.

It is no doubt because of the practical and vital significance of this subject that volumes in the past have been written; unnumbered words have been spoken on the subject unendingly prolonged. It is not our desire to reiterate what has been said but only to stimulate the thinking of our covenant youth that before God they may sincerely and most seriously consider these vital things so that in their decisions and actions they may be thoroughly prepared to give a good account. It is with this in mind that we warn you so that you may be insured against the tragedy of an unhappy marriage, and also in light of God’s Word encourage you to follow what is right that you may be assured of the blessing of the Lord which is the principle and only prerequisite to a happy home.

A first guiding thought for covenant youth is that also in matters of courtship they are constantly aware of their specific calling to be separate from the world. The premarital relationships of a covenant young man and covenant young woman must never be patterned after the example and practices of the world. The latter consider this the playtime of life and via dancing, drinking and playing, the young man leads her whom he audaciously claims to love down the road of sin. Relying upon science and the wisdom of men, they ignore the law of morality, for to youth is given the liberty to sin without the fear of consequences. “Yet, for all this GOD, Who seeth in secret, shall bring them to judgment.” Be not like them!

Covenant youth must look upon courtship as a means to an end. Even as the
end is the entering into a sacred and holy state, so the means is pure and spiritual. By means of a sanctified friendship two are brought to the consciousness that more than flesh binds them but operative is the uniting power of true love rooted in Christ. That love leads them by way of prayer, spiritual communion, wholesome recreation on the upward road to marital joy. Follow it all the days of your courtship!

From this we deduce a second guiding thought, that in courtship there must be spiritual compatibility. This is not just a ‘desirability’ or ‘ideal’; it is a requisite —a must! Mixed marriages are outlawed in the Word of God with all emphasis; listen to Nehemiah: “I contended with them (Israel), and cursed them, and plucked off their hair, and made them swear by God, saying, Ye shall not give your daughters unto their sons, nor take their daughters unto your sons, or for yourselves” (13:25). Where the possibility of marriage is outlawed by God Himself there can be no good purpose in a courtship. It is positively contrary to the Word of God to enter friendship with the world and in doing so we may reasonably expect only Divine enmity.

But there is more to this, for also intercourse and intermarriage between those of different faiths is a very dangerous practice and as is so often the case consummates in a relation of ‘tolerance’ instead of ‘unity and love’. Oh, you hear them say as they agree to tolerate one another that he may go to his church and she to hers but this is only a fanciful and hopeless compromise that practically results in griefs untold. We are, of course, not ignorant of the fact that the possibility of procuring a mate of the same faith is for many, especially in smaller churches, apparently rather remote, but that ‘providential’ situation may never be our excuse to violate the will of God. Covenant youth, may we remember that the principles of our faith are more important than our marriage for our Lord taught us that “whosoever loveth father, mother, husband, wife, etc., more than Me is not worthy of Me.” It is better to have Christ without a husband than to have a man and be Christ-less. Don’t forget this in your anxiety!

But this brings us to a third thought. In seeking a life companion we must be willing to be submissive to the Lord’s choice. In our marriage form we read how God brought to Adam his wife and in this connection it is stated that “He doth yet as with His hand bring to every man his wife.” The Lord, perhaps, does not do this in the same physical manner in which He did to Adam, Isaac, Jacob and others, but in His providence and grace He brings His own children to their proper partners. This means that we must avoid two things. First, we must guard lest we try to run ahead of Him and seek one that meets our own fancies and perhaps fits our description but who, in the light of the Lord’s demands, is a horrible misfit. Secondly, we should not assume a wholly indifferent attitude, expecting that the Lord will drop a mate out of the clouds. Rather, the Lord provides means even in
His church and in the sphere of His kingdom through which He brings the children of His covenant together. Our societies may be instrumental in this and it seems to me that there are more than a few marriages within our churches that are the fruit of our annual Young People’s Conventions. Now, we may never neglect our calling as young people of God’s church to be active in the things He gives us to do in our local church and in inter-denominational activities and then complain to Him that He does not provide what we may desire. And above all, the fact that to us there appears to be no one for us in our church never justifies our going into worldly places to catch the eye of a man or to find a woman. It is a woeful disgrace when this or that young couple explains how they first met in the bowling alley or the roller rink and like places. God’s house is the place where God’s people meet and there God, by His Spirit, unites them in real love. When God unites a man and a woman by His Spirit and grace in true love, nothing can separate!

There is much more to be said about this subject but our space for this issue is about taken. We will, therefore, take up the thought in the next issue and until then, do some real spiritual pondering about your courtship or the one you propose to begin. Courtship and marriage are like all other things in this life: “If you leave God out of them they will positively fail. They may succeed according to worldly standards but as far as attaining the real purpose of marriage is concerned, a marriage without God is like a ship without a rudder.” We shall have more to say about that, D.V., next time.

COMING:

in the October Issue . . . .

THE CONVENTION STORY IN PICTURES.
CONVENTION HIGHLIGHTS
SUMMARIES OF CONVENTION ADDRESSES,
ESSAYS and DEBATES.
A Word of Appreciation

Almost from its very beginning, there is not a single individual who deserves more credit for the success of Beacon Lights than our ever faithful, industrious and capable Assistant Editor, Miss Alice Reitsma. I make this statement without any fear of contradiction. For the past ten years she has served almost continuously as Business Manager, and Assistant Editor. And she has served well. It is with most sincere regrets that the Board accepted her resignation after so many years of unstinted and ever faithful labours. But very few of our readers realize what hours of painstaking labour go into the publishing of each issue of the Beacon Lights, and for many years the brunt of this labour has been borne by our ever congenial, and ever willing Associate Editor. Her interest in Beacon Lights and in our Federation was not just a mere passing fancy, but with devoted loyalty, and earnest zeal, she gave unstintingly of her time and talent for this worthy cause. It was under her leadership that the launched project of Beacon Lights weathered many a storm, and continued to develop, so that now it has an esteemed and honourable place in almost every Protestant Reformed home. We hereby assure her of our sincere appreciation for the work so faithfully performed, assuring her that our labour is never vain in the Lord. As president of the Federation I shall call upon the coming Convention to extend to you a rising vote of thanks for labour so well performed.

At this time the board would also like to express its appreciation to our Editor-in-chief Mr. Homer Kuiper, whose resignation has been accepted by the Board. Also Mr. Kuiper has served the Beacon Lights and the Federation in various capacities for many years. We hereby assure him that his labours were also appreciated and wish him the Lord’s blessing.

The Federation Board,
Rev. Bernard Kok, Pres.

Think It Over

As we take pen in hand to discuss briefly the proposals which will face the delegate board of the 1950 Convention of the F.P.R.Y.P.S. we are inevitably led back to the last convention which was held in Iowa. Never have we attended a gathering of young people which was so spirited, so spiritually uplifting. Vividly we remember the lively discussions, the timely and inspiring addresses. Yes, “even the business meetings were interesting”. That phrase was
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heard over and over again during the course of the convention. Imagine!! Those otherwise dull and boring sessions—interesting. But it's true. How well we remember our friend Carl, with his silver tongue, pleading with the convention to adopt a certain measure, but to no avail—among his opponents was another great friend of ours—the Rev. Vos. Everything seemed to be a "hot issue." And yet above it all one could not miss the feeling of love and fellowship.

This year's convention promises to follow closely in the footsteps of its predecessor. Again "the Federation Board Proposes". It is concerning these proposals that we would like to talk to you for just a few minutes—for purposes of information surely, and—well—maybe even for purposes of persuasion a little bit. Of course now you'll be doubly on your guard so no one will talk you into something you don't want to be talked into, but that's all right, it makes for intelligent voting.

The first proposal, as you will note by looking at the next article, deals with a project designed to bring you after-recess material. If no one else is in favor of this proposal, we're sure anyone who has ever served on the societies' program committee certainly will be! The idea is to edit, publish, and collect the wealth of material which is at our disposal. Our ministers' files are replete with wonderful material which could be put to good use in this way. From time to time each member society will receive this material as it is made ready. You see in this way each society will be able to maintain a sound, workable, reference of reliable material on a host of subjects. Included with each article would be various suggested topics for debates, round-table discussions, essays, etc. Why not start thinking now of some suitable members for this committee—it has to be TOP NOTCH.

The second proposal speaks pretty much for itself. About all we can say is, if you pass no others PLEASE pass this one. Haven't you noticed how thin and frazzled the present members of the board are beginning to look. The Rev. Kok is even losing more of his hair; Fran has been taking little lumps of sugar to work to eat in between meals to keep her going; Tillie is kept going only by the consolation that her term expires in August; Al has quit smoking in hopes that that will replace the tissues which have been so ruthlessly destroyed by overwork. Truly the work load is too great for the size of the present board.

Proposal 3, a.—At present all the members of the Federation Board, with the exception of our president are from the First Church. The Federation Board earnestly feels that a greater representation is mandatory. The problems and wishes of such a large congregation are not always the same as those of our sister churches. The young people are the church of tomorrow! Their problems and difficulties, in as far as they are met by an organization such as this, must be faced for all; not for just a particular group.

Proposal 3, b.—The grounds stated for
this proposal seem to us quite self-explanatory. We might add that besides the inability to attend board meetings, it is also true that it would be very difficult for out-of-town members to serve on any of the various board-committees which function frequently through the year.

Proposal 3, c.—As you will probably remember, this was one of the stickers last year. We would rather discuss this with you face to face on the floor of the convention than enter into a lengthy discussion of it now. For now just please note that "NOMINATION WILL BE LEFT OPEN FOR ADDITIONS FROM THE DELEGATE BOARD". Really the Federation Board isn't looking for more power or control, but is doing what it believes is best for the whole Federation.

Proposals 4 & 5.—Welcome and may the Lord continue His blessing upon us as a Federation of covenant Young People.

John Hofman Jr.

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Delegates and Societies please note:

THE EXECUTIVE BOARD proposes to the Federation:

1. That F.P.R.Y.P.S. begin at once through its Board to provide its societies with suitable after recess-material in the form of pamphlets, booklets, etc.; that the Board establish a library-research committee to carry out the work.

   Grounds:
   a. We feel there is real need in our circles for good sound Protestant Reformed literature which lends itself to society activity.
   b. There is at hand in the possession of our ministers and others a considerable amount of this type of material which only needs editing and publishing to place it in the hands of our Young People's Societies.
   c. The possibility is not too remote that the very existence of such a committee would serve to encourage some of our ministers to prepare additional material especially written for society use.

2. a. That Article VII of our Constitution be amended to add two members to the Board to fill the positions of Assistant-Treasurer and Librarian. That Article VII will be re-written to read as follows: The officers of the Executive Board shall be seven in number, including: President, Vice-President, Secretary, Ass't-Secretary, Treasurer, Ass't-Treasurer, and Librarian.

   b. That Article III of the By-Laws be amended to alter the third sentence of the first paragraph to include a two-year term of office for the Ass't-Treasurer and Librarian.

   Grounds:
   To provide a larger working group to carry out Executive Board work more efficiently.
3. a. That a policy be adopted in the selection of officers of the Executive Board to restrict the representation of any one church to four.

Grounds:
This policy will ensure a more balanced representation from all our societies.

b. That a policy also be adopted whereby officers of the Executive Board be chosen from churches in Grand Rapids and vicinity.

Grounds:
Past experience has shown that officers living at a distance are frequently unable to attend Board meetings and are handicapped in carrying out their duties efficiently.

c. That the Executive Board of the Federation be permitted to make two nominations to replace each retiring officer. Nominations will be left open for additions from the Delegate Board.

Grounds:
The Executive Board knowing the work of each particular officer can nominate individuals qualified for the various offices.

4. That the Federation admit our Hamilton Young People’s Society into our membership.

5. That the Federation admit our Sioux Center Young People’s Society into our membership.

The Board Of The Federation.

THE FEDERATION BOARD

Terms ending this year:
Rev. Bernard Kok, President; Miss Tillie Noble, Secretary.
Program
for the 10th Annual Convention of the
Federation of Protestant Reformed Y. P. Societies

Theme: "The Power Of Godliness".

TUESDAY — August 22:
Welcoming of Delegates at the church
Lodging arrangements carried out
Inspirational Mass Meeting, 8:00, church auditorium
Speaker, Rev. H. Hoeksema
Topic: "The Significance of the Power of Godliness".

WEDNESDAY — August 23:

MORNING
Registration
Get Aquainted Hour
Opening activities
Business session.

AFTERNOON
Special numbers
Address by Rev. L. Vermeer
Topic: "The Danger of Denying the Power of Godliness"
Second business session
Outing at 4:00 P. M. (via motor coach to Long Lake).
THURSDAY — August 24:

MORNING
Special numbers
Debate on the subject: "Resolve that Christians must promote social reform". Participants: Young Men's Society and Talitha Society of Fuller Ave. Church.

Final business session.

AFTERNOON
Special numbers

Presentation of the Question: "Are we Living in the Last Days?" by Y. P. Society, Hull, Iowa

Discussion.

EVENING
Banquet at Roosevelt Park Community Hall, 6:30
Musical numbers
Address by Rev. P. De Boer

Subject: "The Possibility of Possessing the Power of Godliness"

Theme Song and Farewell Time.
Chatham Young People’s Society

About a week after the organization of our Church here in Chatham, Ontario, Canada, the Young People's Society was organized. At our first meeting about 15 Young People were present and decided to become an active society. Rev. W. Hofman, who led the first meeting, was elected President pro-tem and served as our Chairman for the balance of the season. The following other officers were chosen: Vice-president, John Oosterhof; Secretary, Saakje Rosier; Treasurer, Dien Koster; General Adjunct, Arend Vander Gaag.

This first meeting was held in March and we continued gathering regularly until through May. These meetings were held on Friday evening following the catechism class for young people. Since we here in Chatham have no Church building or parsonage as yet we held our meetings at the home of S. Vander Veen.

It is customary in the Netherlands for a society to have a name so we selected one for our group. Our name is “Bidt en Werk”, which in English is “Pray and Work”. Although we have a Dutch name we are an English Society. We hope to master the English as soon as possible but for the present most of our discussions are in Dutch. At present we have about 23 members.

Our meetings are opened with singing; usually a Dutch Psalm but we are also beginning to sing some Psalter numbers in English. Many of the Psalter tunes are familiar, since they are the same as some Dutch hymn tunes, and so we are able to sing them quite well. We began our Bible study from the book of Genesis, discussing it verse by verse. This is somewhat different from the method we were accustomed to in the Netherlands but we found it very interesting and instructive. In many societies in the Netherlands it is customary for one of the members to give an introduction to the portion that is to be treated and then this introduction is discussed. The one giving the introduction is responsible to answer any questions that may arise. We believe the new method of verse by verse discussion aids in making for a better group participation.

Just before the close of our season we sent a letter to the Board of the Federation requesting membership. Some of our members expect to attend the Convention in August. Although there will be no official delegates from Chatham the society decided that whoever could go would have authority to represent the group in Chatham. We expect that they will be able to report back to us that we have been received as members of the Federation of Protestant Reformed Young People's Societies. We have enjoyed our first few months of meetings as a society and are looking forward to the time when we will be meeting again. May the Lord bless and guide all of our societies as they meet and also during the coming Convention.

Reporter.
To those who enjoyed the day at Spring Grove, and few there were who missed being there, these candid shots will bring a fresh remembrance of a wonderful day of fellowship and joy. Our people who could not attend can readily see that a good time was had by all.
Rev. G. Vanden Berg —
"In the way of living and loving the truth we can experience a spiritually prosperous present."

Rev. H. Hoeksema —
"The future of our churches does not concern the question of external growth, but is rather concerned with the maintenance of Protestant Reformed truth and with being faithful to the covenant of God in the midst of the world."
Dwight Monsma —
1st Peter 3:15—"... being ready always to give answer to every man who asketh you a reason concerning the hope that is in you. ..."

Marilyn Vos —
"Obedience in the home reflects true obedience to God."
YOUNG PEOPLE'S BANQUET
AT FIRST CHURCH
MAY 23
A Report of Synod

The 1950 Synod of the Protestant Reformed Church convened in Hull, Iowa, on the morning of June 7 after a fitting synodical sermon was delivered by Rev. H. Hoeksema the previous evening.

The business of the first day consisted of the appointment of the committees of pre-advice and the election of officers. Four committees were chosen of four men each—two ministers and two elders. The officers elected were Rev. R. Veldman, president; Rev. J. Howerzyil, vice-president; Rev. P. De Boer, secretary; and Rev. C. Hanko, assistant secretary.
During the afternoon and evening of the first day the committees of pre-advice met in various places to discuss the material assigned to them. After the committees finished their deliberations the reports were typed, mimeographed, and handed to the delegates and visitors of Synod for study. During the remaining days the reports of the several committees of pre-advice were discussed and acted upon.

While the weighty problems of Synod issues and pertinent questions were debated with much vitality during these recess periods.

In the main order prevailed at Synod although at times the delegates became so involved in certain questions that the rules of order were partially discarded. The vigor with which the problems of Synod were discussed plainly showed that the delegates were deeply interested in the welfare of the Protestant Reformed Church. The delegates were usually serious-minded although at times their humor showed through both on and off the floor of Synod. Even the vice-president played a few pranks on us visitors. However, we found Synod to be very interesting and would urge our young people to attend if possible.
This is the scene impression of our 1950 Synod and the accompanying photos were prepared for Beacon Lights by Bob Visser and Bernie Woudenberg, respectively. Bernie and Bob, together with Jim Kok and Herm Hanko (all four are pre-sem) are at present enjoying an extended jaunt by car thru our western United States. This material came to us from Zion National Park, St. George, Utah. Well, fellows, hope you get back by Convention time.

—ED.
Korea:

The situation in the world has become very tense again because of fighting between north and south Korea. The northern part of Korea is under control of the Soviets, while the southern part was given the freedom to vote its democratic government under protection of the United Nations and especially the United States. The northern forces crossed the line and attacked the southern part of Korea, and the U.S. intervened and is now committed to the defense of southern Korea regardless whether the whole might of the Russian army is entered into the defense of the northern Koreans.

That is the situation that causes everyone to fear the worst. Whether this crisis will be stopped for a time or not the pattern of the future seems to be war between the East and the West. The only thing that will change this pattern of war is some change in idealism of either side or both sides. This doesn't seem probable but it is possible. Even so, the Word of God gives us the course of development of the world in its ungodliness. The course leads to the final war. The possible peace moves do not change that course. History shows that it rather hastens the final chaos.

Calvinism and Political Action:

This is the subject of a symposium that has appeared in the recent issues of the Calvin Forum.

For our youth who are interested in Calvinism and especially in our calling as Christians to give testimony to the truth as it is given to us, it is worth while to read this series.

It is worthwhile because we have here the point of view of the type of Calvinism which we reject and deny to be true Calvinism. I wish to call attention, however, to an author that is new to me and who seems to have some of the same criticism that we have against some American and Dutch Calvinism.

He is Justus M. van der Kroef, Professor in the department of the history of civilization in Michigan State College.

Some of the points of view which are worth our notice and which indicate him to be someone who understands Calvinism and is intellectually honest in his quotations and presentation of arguments are the following:

First of all in his quotation and understanding of Scripture:

"This view has been criticized by Professor Donald Bouma as a 'talent in the napkin technique' (the idea of van den Kroef about non-participation in present
day politics) which by virtue of its retreat is in 'complete disregard of the clear teaching of Christ in Matthew 25:34 ff.' (refer to your Bible). 'True', van den Kroek adds, 'the command to render assistance and comfort to the poor and afflicted is incumbent on all Christians. But in order to give meat to the hungry, drink to the thirsty and clothing to the naked, is it necessary to participate in political life? And is there finally not the even greater objective of the Christian as laid down in Matthew 6:31, 33. (Cf. your Bible). In my belief it would be difficult to find a more explicit scriptural sanction than this for the statement I made in my previous article: 'The Calvinist's first and last concern is not with a place in the sun, but with a possible place in the Kingdom of Heaven.'

In the second place he gives a long quotation from Calvin's Institutes and draws the only conclusion possible from these words about Calvin's position. Vander Kroef states his position thus, "The very structure and character of the modern state makes any Calvinist political action prohibitive."

In the third place he seems to seek the truth regardless whether certain opinions of leaders have obtained currency as to the accepted Calvinistic position. For example he quotes Spoelhof's criticism of his position, "It would not be too difficult to defend van der Kroef's point from some of Calvin's own pronouncements, and from history and from an article in the old 'Calvinist Confession of Faith,' and adds, "yet Spoelhof maintains that despite all these historic affirmations, my view unreservedly contradicts a dictum of Kuyperian Calvinism." Then Van der Kroek pointedly adds, "whereupon, it may well be asked, is Kuyperian Calvinism really Calvinism? Is a movement, which does not hesitate to change its platforms with frequently dazzling speed and which is not adverse to political cooperation with Rome, at all representative of genuine Calvinism? In the first decade of its existence perhaps yes; but by now I believe that all the insidious secularism, which has also crept into Gereformeerde religious thought just as it has enveloped the Anti-revolutinary Party should be thoroughly weeded out if any Calvinist tenets are to be retained."

C. Bouma, editor of the Calvin Forum was alarmed enough to think it necessary to make an editorial about the symposium and question van der Kroef's position for his readers. He thought that if more articles of the length of van der Kroef's were sent in, "our readers might loose interest." One of several questions he puts is, "Is this genuine Calvinism? Or is this the old Anabaptism world-flight in a slightly modern garb, drawing its sanctions from Kierkegaard and Barth?"

I believe I have quoted enough for your interest and further discussion.
THE ROBBER — by Bertram Brooks. Published by Duell, Sloan & Pierce, Inc.

The Robber is a tale of the time of the Herods. The story deals primarily with Barabbas who we read of in Scripture as being the one who was released at the time of Christ's crucifixion. Scripture does not reveal to us any more than that he was a robber and a murderer. However in the book Barabbas is not pictured in that light.

The story begins with Barabbas wounded and seeking refuge in the caves along the Jordan river. He is pursued by soldiers from the court of Herod Antipas and finally finds refuge with John the Baptist who also is living in the caves. John cares for Barabbas until he is well and the two find a common bond while Barabbas is in hiding. According to Brooker, both were men of lowly birth who aspired to greatness. . . . John as the forerunner of The Messiah, Barabbas as lover of men who would lead the world toward brotherhood.

Despite their deep understanding of each other, they disagreed strongly on the attainment of their beliefs. Elsewhere Barabbas was feared and revered, but The Baptist regarded him as a man of headstrong folly who would come to a violent end, while Barabbas put no faith in John's prophecies. He was convinced that God would not change the course of the world by a wrathful judgment out of heaven. Man, he believed, would have to change and save himself.

As soon as Barabbas' wound heals he disguises himself and sets out for Jerusalem. Here he meets Judas who in turn brings him to the house of Joseph of Arimathea. At the house of Joseph, Barabbas meets Joseph's sister Jerith and promptly falls in love with her.

Joseph is presented as the rich young man who came to Jesus and was told to sell that which he had and give to the poor. Barabbas is also of the opinion that riches are but shackles to happiness and adds his philosophy to the teaching of Jesus. As a result Joseph eventually sells that which he possesses and gives his lands to the poor. While there is no proof in Scripture that Joseph of Arimathea was the rich young man who came to Jesus, there are those in our circles who subscribe to this notion.

The story goes on and tells of the raising of an army by Barabbas and his attempt to free Israel from the Roman yoke. How he is defeated, captured and cast into prison to be released at the trial of Christ.

While the book is not classified as mere fiction, practically the whole of the
book is based upon the author's vivid imagination rather than the truths of Scripture. Barabbas is presented as a gallant Robin Hood who robs the rich to give to the poor. Jesus is characterized in the same way except that He would have the rich give voluntarily to the poor. Finally at the end of the story, Brooker has Barabbas slain at the foot of the cross, on which Jesus hung, in defense of the Christ. Scripture bears no record of this. Perhaps Barabbas did rob the rich to give to the poor. The Bible merely states that he was a robber and that he committed murder in the insurrection against the government. It is very well possible that Barabbas stole and killed because he desired to free Israel from bondage. The fact remains however that Scripture does not record this.

For this reason I think the book would be more enjoyable if it did not have as its setting the land of Palestine at the time of Christ. The reader is constantly aware of discrepancies between the story and the recordings of Scripture.

Turbulent, adventurous, blood-stained yet compassionate, the story moves with an impetus that would be hard to equal. Its setting—the alleys and palaces and temples of Jerusalem, the Jericho Road, Machaerus, the robbers' caves beyond the Jordan—has a brilliant authenticity and vividness. It can surely be recommended as interesting although certainly not Scriptural or Reformed. I think the book will find the greatest percentage of its readers amongst those who are not to well acquainted with the Scriptures.

Louis Regnerus.