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## Contesting memory

### How a moment of small-town pageantry became a national news story

Arnold Neufeldt-Fast

A decade ago I represented Mennonites at a World Council of Churches “expert seminar” in Geneva on “The Responsibility to Protect: Ethical and Theological Reflections.”<sup>1</sup> A United Nations representative at the event reminded us that the churches in the West can play a vital role in their own countries—challenging warring rhetoric and encouraging their own governments in the work of peacekeeping.

Since that gathering in Geneva, an episode occurred in and around my own life that brought home that lesson. The event was of surprisingly broad public interest in Canada.<sup>2</sup> In writing about it, I hope to inspire readers to do something similar: to document your own journey, especially those events where in looking back,

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you see that the journey, contribution, strength, or orientation is explicable only because of the legacy you have inherited from previous generations.

In hindsight, my activity was almost instinctual—deeply connected to my identity in the wider Anabaptist-Mennonite story, and in particular in the long Russian Mennonite experience of vulnerability and displacement in various contexts of nationalism, revolution, totalitarianism, and fascism. A political situation arose, and I and my Mennonite church community knew that we had to speak together and that we had a unique and significant contribution to make, precisely as Mennonites.

### **A proposed military parade in a town with a pacifist history**

In 2006, after a six-year sojourn teaching at a Mennonite seminary in Switzerland, I returned to Canada with my wife and

daughter and settled in the community of Stouffville, Ontario. The town had been established in 1804, almost exclusively by Pennsylvania (Swiss) Mennonites, Quakers, and the Brethren in Christ (Dunkers): these are Canada's three historic peace churches. Today the town is a vibrant, multiethnic, pluralistic community just north of Toronto.

Little did I expect that Stouffville's earliest peace church history would come into the limelight in 2012 as the Canadian government planned bicentennial commemorations of the War of 1812. Through Mennonite Central Committee, some Mennonites, Brethren of Christ, and Friends had prepared materials to tell the peace church story of that time—especially in the Niagara area, where some of the battles occurred. But Stouffville was some distance from those historical sites, so it was a surprise that our community's Mennonites were thrown into a situation in which they could give voice to the concern of a broader segment of Canadian society troubled by the increasing militarization of Canadian life. As the federal government ramped up plans for the War of 1812 celebrations, supported by a budget of 28 million dollars—and a government-promoted reading of Canadian history with war as its “epitome and essence”—a not insignificant number of Canadians were looking for a different, more truthful and hopeful narrative that would shine a spotlight on Canada's peace-keeping initiatives. The stage was set for some group to articulate clearly and with authenticity a longer tradition of Canadian contributions to peacemaking.

That happened in May 2012 in Stouffville as a result of a local controversy. The area's member of Parliament, Paul Calandra, proposed to the Whitchurch-Stouffville town council a “Freedom of the Town” ceremony and military parade. The proposal identified the War of 1812 as “Canada's most formative war”; a parade would give opportunity “to commemorate” the town's “local history in relation to the War of 1812.” The traditional military exercise would include “a range of current and historical military vehicles” and possibly the participation of the Royal Canadian Air Force “through the use of CF-18s which [would] complete several fly-bys during the parade.” The Governor General's Horse Guard (with a War of 1812 connection to a nearby community, but not Stouffville) would be awarded the Freedom of the Town.

Perhaps the lieutenant governor general for Ontario would also attend.

### **Naming the distortion**

This proposal shocked me, when I reviewed the agenda for the upcoming town council meeting. It appeared on the town's web page without any prior notification or consultation with town

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councillors or community groups. There was no accompanying staff report—and it was to take place in just eight weeks' time! It was apparent to me that the proposal—absent any participation by the peace churches—significantly distorted Stouffville's earliest history and discounted Stouffville's real settlers' contributions to the fabric of Canadian identity. Though this Swiss Mennonite immigration story was not my Dutch Mennonite family's direct experience, I had already adopted the story of Stouffville's beginnings, grafting my own story into it, and its story

into mine. After all, we carry the same name; have read the same martyr book, confession of faith, and catechism for generations; and had helped each other mutually since the first Swiss Mennonites left for North America with significant logistical and financial aid from their Dutch co-religionists.

I informed the mayor, the MP, and the local media that I would speak to the issue at council and bring representatives from the churches, including other clergy. (This was one of the few times that I have highlighted my credentials as an ordained Mennonite minister.) Our point would be very simple: a commemoration event to recognize Stouffville's history in the first decades of the 1800s should recognize that ours was an overwhelmingly pacifist story, a history of the first conscientious objectors to war in Canada's (pre-)history.

Our resistance to the local commemoration was neither politically partisan nor historically uninformed. Our claim that the original local settler story was being erased and rewritten was well-documented and had strong legitimacy: "We believe . . . that Stouffville's pacifist origins are worthy to be remembered, ex-

plored and celebrated” during the two-hundredth-anniversary celebration of the War of 1812.<sup>4</sup> I reminded the mayor and MP that our town crest is crowned by a peace dove, which recalls the commitments of our first settler groups, Canada’s three historic peace churches.

### **A tense face-off**

It was a tense face-off between the mayor and the member of Parliament, on the one side, and some fifty peace church representatives, on the other. The latter were young and old, and most were descendants of original settlers. Seeing many of his “friends and acquaintances in the chamber,” the mayor stated that he was “saddened” that the opposition to the military parade had reached this point. In comments from the chair, he suggested that one [me!] or two individuals had become active instigators of this community disunity.

The next day Pieter Niemeyer, pastor of Rouge Valley Mennonite Church and resident of Stouffville, wrote an open letter to the mayor and councillors:

*I am following up on the previous council meeting. There is a significant concern that I have in terms of some of the things that were said.*

*We had a number of our youth in attendance, to model community engagement. What surprised me were your comments, Mr. Mayor, in which you essentially scolded the delegation for our engagement on this issue. You stated that you were “sad that it had to come to this.” What could this possibly mean? We followed all the appropriate procedures to express our concern regarding this proposal. It is our right to do so. Such a comment communicated that somehow we needed to be ashamed of ourselves for some reason. Your sadness, quite frankly, is bewildering to me. The underlying message communicated by you, Mr. Mayor, to the youth present, and all of us for that matter, is that you do not welcome us to exercise our democratic right.*

*What makes me sad is that this event appears to have been pre-planned and arranged without any consultation*

or say of town people and was expected to be rubber stamped by town council for [the member of Parliament,] Mr. Calandra.

We are not museum pieces, nor relics of a by-gone era.  
We are living, breathing, connected people of this town.

Sincerely,  
Pastor Pieter Niemeyer<sup>5</sup>

The MP admitted that until recently he had known almost nothing about Mennonites, but the long-time mayor, a local lumber salesman, certainly did. Despite the fact that upwards of fifty peace church adherents attended the first council meeting, the mayor and MP remained convinced that one or two individuals were behind the protest. The MP repeated that claim to the Mennonite media later that month.<sup>6</sup>

### National attention

The local paper, which only publishes on Thursday and Saturday, placed a pre-publication draft article online after the Tuesday meeting. Within hours, Carys Mills, a reporter for Canada's

**The *Globe and Mail* reporter saw the larger significance of this story: "The pushback in Stouffville is part of a movement to tell another side of the war's story: those who didn't fight and were proud of it."**

national paper, *The Globe and Mail*, was alerted to the story and contacted me.

Whereas the local story was about disunity in the community, she and her editor understood the larger significance of this story:

"The pushback in Stouffville is part of a movement to tell another side of the war's story: those who didn't fight and were proud of it," she reported.<sup>7</sup> In the first twenty-four hours after the *Globe and Mail* story had been printed, the online version received 189 comments. Another 123 comments followed

in the next days—a comparatively high response rate. The story resonated with many people across the country. Almost all the comments were critical of the federal government's war celebration plans and commended the peace church resistance.

This half-page story in the front section of the Saturday edition of Canada's national newspaper triggered further media interest. The following Monday, I was interviewed on the Canadian Broad-

casting Corporation's national flagship radio program, "As It Happens," with a follow-up—and critical—interview three days later with our member of Parliament. An important national conversation had started from these small beginnings, and government representatives were on the defensive for the first time. Not long thereafter, I received a phone call from a Global Television Network reporter. She wanted to juxtapose the next day's visit by Prince Charles to Toronto's historic Fort York with the "Stouffville War"—the Mennonite protest of the War of 1812 commemorations in Stouffville. The *Toronto Star*, Canada's largest newspaper, published a longer op-ed piece I wrote on the issue and Stouffville's unique peace church history.<sup>8</sup> And more than a month after the debate began, another Canadian Broadcasting Corporation reporter interviewed me for a related online article ("Conservatives Draw Fire for War of 1812"), which generated 377 responses (again, a comparatively very high number).<sup>9</sup> Even the host of Saskatchewan's largest AM radio talk show took interest, and had me on the program to talk about Stouffville, Mennonites, and the War of 1812.

The item of greatest concern nationally was never simply the cost of celebrations for an event of marginal interest to most Canadians. It was the event's appropriateness and the manner in which history was being conscripted for the political purposes of the day. Our local member of Parliament was also parliamentary secretary to the minister of Canadian heritage and as such was responsible in part to shape and fund the national commemorations of the War of 1812. His proposal to commemorate Stouffville's military contribution to the War of 1812 with a large military parade highlighted perfectly the government's effort to contrive a narrative, a history—in spite of the facts!—as a framework for its own current agenda on the world stage. This was an open invitation for the Mennonites, Quakers, and Brethren in Christ to tell their story.

### **A kairos moment**

Theologically I found it appropriate to speak of this as a *kairos* moment for our churches, an opportune time for action and intervention. Nonetheless, Minister of Canadian Heritage James Moore commented on the commemorations generally: "It's an

essential role for government to remind Canadians of what unites us,” and the War of 1812 bicentennial is such an “opportunity to teach Canadians their own history.” He specifically indicated support for our MP in Stouffville<sup>10</sup>—his own parliamentary secretary. Because the Freedom of the Town was to be awarded to a military unit connected with the governor general (who knew the Mennonites of Waterloo County well from his previous role as president of the University of Waterloo<sup>11</sup>), I also drafted a letter addressed to him for the moderator of Mennonite Church Canada (who happened to be a descendant of Stouffville settlers); it was endorsed by the denomination’s general board. It asked the governor general to intervene.

In this same context, a new book by Ian McKay and Jamie Swift was getting some significant attention. In *Warrior Nation: Rebranding Canada in an Age of Anxiety*, McKay and Swift gave language to the message that I and many other Canadians were sensing: war was being placed at the centre of the national memory and imagination, and the “crusading soldier” was being honoured as the epitome and essence of our history. This was certainly happening in Stouffville, and according to McKay and

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Swift, at the national level we were seeing the extreme rebranding of a nation. To argue that war can be a legitimate last resort in the face of violence is one kind of claim, but to contend that war is “an indispensable foundation of true Canadianism” is something else and discounts large chapters of Canada’s history. Yet this assertion is what McKay and Swift—and I and many others—were hearing from Stephen Harper’s government.<sup>12</sup>

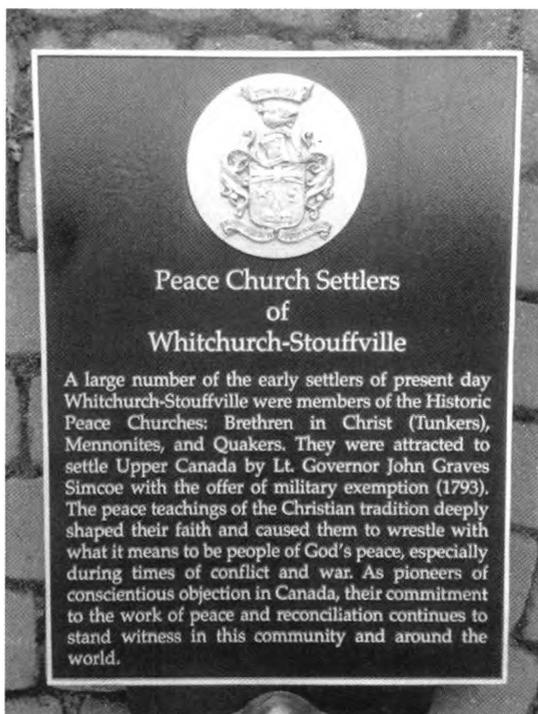
In hindsight, it’s apparent that the little controversy in Stouffville was ideally suited to attract national media attention. Here were faith communities with roots that predated the War of 1812, who are bearers of an alternative narrative, and who have a long history of contributing to Canadian life. The editor of one local paper wrote, “What was supposed to be a small-town moment of pageantry and remembrance has become a national news story.”<sup>13</sup> The associate editor of the town’s other

newspaper wrote: "It is not often that Stouffville gets the attention of the national media, but May was not your typical month in town politics."<sup>14</sup>

Despite the controversy, Whitchurch-Stouffville town council voted to endorse the military parade and the Freedom of the Town event without the involvement of the peace churches. While the event was approved by town council, it was not unanimously endorsed, as is the requirement in many Canadian municipalities for such recognitions. Explicit or not, it was a myth-making, identity-shaping civic exercise manufactured by the member of Parliament, and to a lesser degree, by the mayor and town councillors.

### The testimony of the real radicals

The Stouffville-area Mennonites and Brethren and Christ have a strong memory of conscientious objection, from both World



War I and World War II. A number of World War II conscientious objectors and members of their families are still living and are members of local congregations. This was the Canadian story that I could adopt and represent, precisely because of the related Mennonite conscientious objection story of my own grandfather.

Importantly, conscientious objectors (including surviving spouses or siblings) were present at each of our delegations to town council (three in total) and at the silent

military parade protest. One year later and after much hard work, we convinced town council to allow us to erect a peace plaque in

the centre of town, with the town crest, honouring our town's founding families as pioneers of conscientious objection in Canada. Council was divided, and some voiced strong opinions against it, but the proposal passed.

I had experienced the older members in our Stouffville-area Mennonite congregations as excellent representatives of their generation's understanding of peacemaking. Their lives and witness in the community have for decades been consistent with both a deep commitment to biblical nonviolence and a desire to make a positive contribution to a more just world locally and around the globe. In Whitchurch-Stouffville, this generation started the Mennonite community thrift store, a large residence for seniors, and a day camp and overnight camp for city children. Their ancestors here may have been the "quiet in the land,"<sup>15</sup> but these seniors are well-integrated members of the larger community, known for their values and their positive contributions to community life. One councillor who sympathized with our presentation noted at the town council meeting of May 1, 2012, that "it is of paramount importance that we honour and respect those who founded and built our community, and whose descendants still are a driving force in so many of the charitable organizations in our community."

This twofold expression—resolute nonviolence and love for the needy around the globe—was captured in the May 22, 2012, Global Television Network interview in Stouffville. I brought the reporter and the cameraman to the back room of the Mennonite Central Committee Care and Share Thrift Store and asked one of the older women who was quilting what she thought of the very public controversy in Stouffville. Aware of the upcoming military parade, she replied simply but confidently that she is a pacifist, and for her, killing is simply wrong. Off camera I told the reporter: "These are our real radicals, working quietly behind the scenes week after week, year after year, raising funds for relief work in war-torn areas around the globe." The other older women (and one conscientious objector) at the quilting frame reminded me of my grandmother Helena and captured a spirituality of love of God and love for neighbour in practices of concrete service and humility. Not surprisingly, many in this older cohort were uncomfortable with the idea of being present while tanks rolled along

Main Street, and they refrained from participating in an explicit peace protest.

### **A more activist approach to peacemaking**

The leadership for the peace church protest quickly and naturally fell into place. I was the theologian who has written on Mennonite peace ethics and has been active ecumenically in work on issues of peace and justice, with a strong interest in our history. Pieter Niemeyer, in addition to being a local Mennonite pastor, was also a reservist with Christian Peacemaker Teams and has a longer history of peace activism nationally and internationally. Rene DeVries, a layman, had been involved in peace activism since his youth in his native Netherlands (curiously, all three of us have Dutch roots); and the new Brethren in Christ pastor, Steve Authier, was very keen to become more intentional about his Christian peace witness, and allowed the Freedom of the Town event to ignite his desire for a more active peace witness. The Friends, though small in numbers, were also committed from the beginning. But none of this witness would have been possible without our respective adopted church communities, who for generations had been living the tradition locally, with convincing integrity.

Admittedly, this was a more active approach to peacemaking than what had characterized previous generations. Our leadership team comprised activist Christians in their forties and fifties, who—in their experience, training, offices (as pastors and theologians), and practice—represent what is now a dominant Mennonite/Anabaptist model of peacemaking. This includes an understanding that Christians are called (a) to get at the roots of evil and war and to address the systemic conditions that create injustice and violence; and (b) to participate actively in the reconciliation of social catastrophes globally and locally.<sup>16</sup> The mayor's surprise at the strong response by the peace churches was therefore understandable: passive nonresistance, once the hallmark of Mennonite and Brethren in Christ churches, had evolved. Already during World War II, Mennonite conscientious objectors in Canada whose fathers and grandfathers had been conscientious objectors in Russia wanted to be more than just the quiet in the land; they wanted to make a constructive contribution to larger

society. And by the second half of the twentieth century, Mennonites in Canada had developed a more confident Christian peace activism.

On the morning of Saturday, June 16, 2012, Stouffville had a large military parade (but without CF-18 fly-overs and without the lieutenant governor in attendance). About fifty members of our churches gathered near the original settlement site on Main

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Street in Stouffville for a counter-demonstration. We—young and old—were wearing white T-shirts and Mennonite Central Committee buttons that said “to remember is to work for peace.”<sup>17</sup> McKay and Swift remind us that “memory itself is contested terrain,” and we were contesting the memory of our town that was being glorified in the military ceremony. Instead, alongside the military ceremony we observed “[our] own official commemoration of local history in relation to

The War of 1812.”<sup>18</sup> We firmly but peacefully contested the terrain of memory and bore witness to a living tradition of nonresistance and peacemaking. This was the real contribution of Whitchurch-Stouffville’s earliest residents—Canada’s pioneers of peace and conscientious objection—to the War of 1812. Indeed, it is a history worthy to be remembered, explored, celebrated, and leveraged—in an age of anxiety.

### **Lessons learned**

I learned some important lessons along the way.

**First, there is no justification for demonizing those with whom we contend.** The still unredeemed “principalities and powers” are at work in all of us. Given our own complicity, a penitential stance, not triumphalism, is the appropriate posture. Though the peace church representatives disagreed sharply with the agenda of a few politicians who wielded power that year and had huge budgets at their disposal, we chose to be guided by the theological virtues of compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, patience, and above all, love. This is the armour that biblical tradition recommends for the battle, for engaging the world with the good news of peace. It is too easy to demonize an individual, an office,

a political party; it does not help the cause and is usually self-blinding. For me, this was a lesson gleaned from the witness of previous generations.

**Second, we need each other.** Never was I as aware of my need for the larger church as during that short period when we were in the spotlight locally and nationally. The need was for co-workers, for perspective, for prayer, for feedback, for background historical work, for political and media advice, for support and encouragement. Our church outreach committee gave the green light, and leaders in the other local Mennonite, Brethren in Christ, and Quaker communities were quick to support and participate. A Mennonite historian could—within forty-eight hours and in time for our first presentation—point us to some crucial historical sources (court cases) in the Archives of Ontario, of local individuals fined in 1812 and 1813 for refusing to allow their property to be used for military purposes.

The Mennonite Central Committee website on the War of 1812 was up and running with important resources and information. Peace church plaques in Niagara by Mennonites, Quakers, and Brethren in Christ were posted in physical sites and virtually on the web, laying the foundation for our cooperation in Stouffville. I could connect the *Globe and Mail* reporter to Carol Penner, then pastor of Vineland First Mennonite (Canada's first Mennonite Church, located on the War of 1812 frontlines), to help demonstrate that our witness was embodied in a larger community with a long and consistent testimony. Dick Benner, editor of the *Canadian Mennonite*, asked helpful questions, and entered into the lions' den with us, conducting professional interviews of the MP, the mayor, and the director of the local museum.

Many times we did not know whether we were on the right track, whether our approach was too politicized, whether we were going too far or not far enough, whether we were moving too fast or too slow. We were unsure about the shape and consequences of our witness, whether at town council, with the secular media, or at the military parade. How often did I second-guess myself! But at each juncture, it was the local and broader church that helped discern and give support and encouragement. The witness would have been impossible without this entire network of peace

churches behind us at the crucial moments. Moreover, I had just recently completed writing significant portions of my own Mennonite story, which provided me with the identity and conviction

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out of which to act.<sup>19</sup> Because of that work, I knew who I was.

A call I could articulate for our churches was simply to continue to faithfully build community and networks, do our scholarly homework, and be faithful in our worship and in bearing good fruit with initiatives like those happening through Mennonite Central Committee. And then when the kairos time comes, when the right door opens—where and when we least expect it—the resources, support, expertise, reputation, and people are

at hand. Expect the unexpected: “*Gott kann!*” Theologically, it is good to assume that where the Spirit is at work, God opens doors for participation and provides the resources for that work. That was our experience in Stouffville. The Apostle Peter writes, “Always be ready to give an account for the hope that is within you” (1 Pet. 3:15). But we need each other; it can’t be done alone. In our experience, this lesson was confirmed time and again and gave us encouragement.

In a curious twist from our navigation of the labyrinth of the events of those days, our federal riding of Markham-Stouffville is now represented in Ottawa by Jane Philpott, a “new” Mennonite from our congregation, who was given a powerful cabinet posting and simultaneously asked to chair the Cabinet ad hoc Committee on Refugees (during the 2015–16 Syrian refugee crisis). She is joined by the new Leader of the Government in the Senate, who is of Russian Mennonite descent (he is a grandson of a minister who was part of the 1920s immigration to Canada), consciously and deeply rooted in that group’s larger story and especially in the work of Mennonite Central Committee.<sup>20</sup> On the other side politically, Don Plett, the opposition whip in the Senate, is from a Kleine Gemeinde congregation in Manitoba (from the 1870s immigration),<sup>21</sup> and the ancestors of Premier of Saskatchewan Brad Wall came from a daughter colony of the Chortitza Colony (also 1870s immigration)!<sup>22</sup> Each of these leaders has had signifi-

cant opportunity to draw on important strands of this unique, larger story, and to animate their actions with an Anabaptist faith experience.

***A third lesson: know what and whom you are giving witness to, and then speak wisely.*** The peace church witness cannot be an ideology, an ism—even pacifism—over against other isms, and the church cannot pit one political party against another. If the church formally links itself to an ideology or party, it soon loses its ability as a faith community to make its unique contribution towards peace. The MP sought from the start to isolate our witness by characterizing it as partisan politics. If we were to speak credibly as churches and get any traction with our protest (and get attention from the media), we could not be—or be perceived to be—partisan. In this case, the ordination credentials of key leaders were important for the media and for one or two municipal politicians, though we did not use overtly religious language in the church’s engagement with politicians or the media.

The presence of World War II conscientious objectors—at first a curiosity for local politicians—became increasingly important and was eventually honoured publically with a peace festival a year later. The conscientious objectors gave our protest roots and credibility. Ultimately, we, the politicians, and the media knew that our church’s most powerful communications tool was not an ideology but the embodiment of a particular expression of the Christian tradition. This authenticity is what gives Mennonites an outsized influence when they address issues of war and peace, as has been documented for Mennonites in Russia in the 1920s and at other times. The peace church representatives at the Stouffville town council meetings and at the military parade numbered fifty or sixty people—in itself not a large number. But again it became clear that a small, multigenerational faith community with a particular, credible embodiment of Christian love can communicate loudly and effectively, and get respect far beyond its own circles.

### **A legacy, a charism**

In and through the Stouffville events, many Mennonites were reminded through our church press not to despise or neglect or be embarrassed about the special heritage and calling of the historic

peace churches. We have a particular and important legacy, gift, or charism. In the evangelical circles at Tyndale Seminary in Toronto where I work, and in the ecumenical circles at the Canadian Council of Churches where I represented Mennonite Church Canada for seven years, all are aware and expect that when other churches are ready to throw in the towel and reluctantly bless military solutions to conflict, the historic peace churches will remind all of the undeniable gospel mandate to love the enemy. They know that that is our gift, which we have inherited, which our communities have nurtured and explored and tried to articulate and embody, in many different times and places, sometimes successfully, sometimes not. And they expect us to stand up and speak. It is our spiritual gift that we bring to table, which enriches the entire wider body of Christ. The others have their gifts as well, from which Mennonites surely can and must learn. Yet at the right time and place, it can become appropriate to point to this inheritance: to the pioneers of conscientious objection to war who went before us, to the historic peace church contribution to the fabric of Canadian society, and to the peace work done by our denominational peace and justice ministries and by inter-Mennonite relief and justice agencies such as Mennonite Central Committee.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> My contribution to the conversation was: Arnold Neufeldt-Fast, "Christianity and War: The Pacifist View," in *The Responsibility to Protect: Ethical and Theological Reflections*, ed. Semegnish Asfaw et al. (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 2005). 31–36.

<sup>2</sup> Portions of this article were first written for presentation at the 2013 Peace and Justice Association meetings at Wilfrid Laurier University, Waterloo, ON, October 18, 2013. A chronology of the events recounted here, with links to more complete documentation, can be found at <https://www.scribd.com/document/98603123/Peace-Church-Witness-Stouffville-Chronology-and-Links>.

<sup>3</sup> Ian McKay and Jamie Swift, *Warrior Nation: Rebranding Canada in an Age of Anxiety* (Toronto: Between the Lines, 2012), xii.

<sup>4</sup> Arnold Neufeldt-Fast, Letter to Mayor and Town Council of Stouffville, April 30, 2012; full text at <https://www.scribd.com/document/91794237/Freedom-of-the-City-Event-Stouffville>.

<sup>5</sup> E-mail message to the mayor and the member of Parliament, with copy to the author, May 2, 2012.

<sup>6</sup> Dick Benner, "Editorial: Wrestling with the 'Powers,'" *Canadian Mennonite* 16, no. 11 (May 23, 2012), <http://www.canadianmennonite.org/articles/wrestling-powers>.

<sup>7</sup> Carys Mills, "Bicentennial Celebrations an 'Affront' to Ontario Town's Pacifist

Roots," *Globe and Mail*, May 5, 2012, <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/politics/war-of-1812-celebrations-an-affront-to-ontario-towns-pacifist-roots/article4104936/>.

<sup>8</sup> Arnold Neufeldt-Fast, "War of 1812: More Than a Soldiers' Story: Military-Themed Celebrations Ignore Canada's Early Pacifists," *Toronto Star*, June 9, 2012, [https://www.thestar.com/opinion/editorialopinion/2012/06/09/war\\_of\\_1812\\_was\\_more\\_than\\_a\\_soldiers\\_story.html](https://www.thestar.com/opinion/editorialopinion/2012/06/09/war_of_1812_was_more_than_a_soldiers_story.html).

<sup>9</sup> Meagan Fitzpatrick, "Conservatives Draw Fire for War of 1812," CBC Inside Politics Blog, June 15, 2012, <http://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/conservatives-draw-fire-for-war-of-1812-spending-1.1265851#socialcomments>.

<sup>10</sup> Cited in Mills, "Bicentennial Celebrations an 'Affront' to Ontario Town's Pacifist Roots."

<sup>11</sup> Conrad Grebel University College is a Mennonite liberal arts college affiliated with the University of Waterloo.

<sup>12</sup> McKay and Swift, *Warrior Nation*, 270.

<sup>13</sup> Jim Mason, "Editorial: Freedom Event Taken off Rails," *Sun-Tribune*, May 17, 2012, 6.

<sup>14</sup> Ben Embiricos, "Talk of the Town: Parade Debate Tests Community," *Stouffville Free Press* 7, no. 7 (June 2012), 11.

<sup>15</sup> Although early Anabaptism spread in the sixteenth-century in part because of the process of urbanization, persecuted Swiss and South German Anabaptists eventually retreated to agricultural life in safer rural areas and became known for centuries as the "Stillen im Lande" (peaceful country folk). See Lco Driedger, "Urbanization," *Global Anabaptist Mennonite Encyclopedia Online*, <http://gameo.org/index.php?title=Urbanization&oldid=134552>. The Dutch-Prussian-Russian branch of Anabaptism remained more urban.

<sup>16</sup> Esther Epp-Tiessen, *Mennonite Central Committee in Canada: A History* (Winnipeg: CMU Press), 2013.

<sup>17</sup> See <https://mcccanada.ca/learn/what/peace/peace-buttons>.

<sup>18</sup> Mason, "Large Crowd Welcomes Military Parade."

<sup>19</sup> Arnold Neufeldt-Fast, *Walking the Labyrinth* (Winnipeg: CMU Press, forthcoming).

<sup>20</sup> Dick Benner, "'I Am Proud of My Roots': New Senator Peter Harder Talks about How His Mennonite Background Shaped His Life in Politics and Public Service," *Canadian Mennonite* 20, no. 9 (April 20, 2016), <http://www.canadianmennonite.org/stories/%E2%80%98i-am-proud-my-roots%E2%80%99>.

<sup>21</sup> For more information, see Henry Fast and Terry Smith, "Evangelical Mennonite Conference (Kleine Gemeinde)," *Global Anabaptist Mennonite Encyclopedia Online*, March 2012, [http://gameo.org/index.php?title=Evangelical\\_Mennonite\\_Conference\\_\(Kleine\\_Gemeinde\)&oldid=141110](http://gameo.org/index.php?title=Evangelical_Mennonite_Conference_(Kleine_Gemeinde)&oldid=141110).

<sup>22</sup> Cornelius Bergmann and Cornelius Krahn, "Chortitza Mennonite Settlement (Zaporizhia Oblast, Ukraine)," *Global Anabaptist Mennonite Encyclopedia Online*. 195, [http://gameo.org/index.php?title=Chortitza\\_Mennonite\\_Settlement\\_\(Zaporizhia\\_Oblast,\\_Ukraine\)&oldid=134984](http://gameo.org/index.php?title=Chortitza_Mennonite_Settlement_(Zaporizhia_Oblast,_Ukraine)&oldid=134984).

## About the author

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