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The Development of Ecclesiastical Autonomy for the Free Methodist Church in Canada, (D. Min. dissertation, Asbury Theological Seminary, 1990).

The thesis statement of this reflective history is a declaration that the Free Methodist Church in Canada has been discovering its own identity and its place in Canadian culture and at present is seeking to develop and implement appropriate strategies for effective ministry.

The thesis statement is supported by documentation of reasons why the American Free Methodists were invited to Canada initially in 1874. This documentation notes the appointment of the first Canadian Free Methodist minister in 1876, the formation of the first Annual Conference in 1880 and later the division of East and West Ontario Conferences in 1895.

This reflective history records a growing interaction of the church with Canadian culture. It documents the need for increasing autonomy from the mother Free Methodist Church in the United States in order to communicate in the cultural norms that are distinctly Canadian. This journey to autonomy was noted to have started in 1920 with the Sarnia Convention and the inception of the Canadian Executive Board, the formation of the Canadian Jurisdictional Conference in 1974 until the final step toward a Canadian General Conference in 1990.

Documentation has shown the rise of Canadian national identity culminating in a Canadian Constitution in 1982. This was the same

year that Canadian Free Methodist began the process that ended in autonomy through General Conference status in 1990. Extensive documentation has been included to describe and evaluate the process of attaining Canadian General Conference status.

A noted Canadian historian, Pierre Berton, in Why We Act Like Canadians: A Personal Exploration Of Our National Character has been used to delineate the broad distinctives between the American and Canadian cultures.

Further, the work, Fragmented Gods; The Poverty And Potential of Religion in Canada by sociologist Reginald W. Bibby has been noted in terms of future religious trends in the Canadian culture. By reviewing the insights of both these works and the mission of the Free Methodist Church in Canada, strategies for future presence and ministry have been suggested.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF ECCLESIASTICAL AUTONOMY
FOR THE FREE METHODIST CHURCH IN CANADA

A DISSERTATION
PRESENTED TO
THE FACULTY
ASBURY THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF MINISTRY

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Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

A. THE PROBLEM AND ITS SETTING:

1. The Context For This Study

The quest for autonomy and ministry contextualization is not new to Methodism in Canada. In 1833 the Methodist Episcopal Church in Upper Canada was granted "General Conference" status by its mother church, the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States.¹ Later, in 1874, the Wesleyan Methodists² and the New Connexion Methodists³ gained autonomy from their English counterparts and became The Methodist Church, Canada. Nine years later (1883) these Canadian Methodists united with the Methodist Episcopalals, the Bible Christians⁴ and the Primitive Methodists⁵ to become the largest Protestant Church in Canada at that time. The

¹ Egerton Ryerson, Canadian Methodism; Its Epochs and Characteristics (Toronto: William Briggs, 1881). This volume details the journey towards autonomy by the early Canadian Methodist Episcopal Church from its American counterpart, 1780-1840.

² Hugh Johnston, "Historical Sketch of the Wesleyan Methodist Church in Upper Canada and Lower Canada," Centennial of Canadian Methodism, ed. E. H. Dewart (Toronto: William Briggs, 1891), 55-93.

³ William Williams, "Historical Sketch of the Methodist New Connexion Church in Canada," Centennial of Canadian Methodism, ed., E. H. Dewart (Toronto, William Briggs, 1891), 95-126.

⁴ George Webber, "Bible Christian Church," Centennial of Canadian Methodism, ed., E. H. Dewart (Toronto: William Briggs, 1891), 203-227.

⁵ J. Cooper Antliff, "Historical Sketch of the Primitive Methodist Church in Canada," Centennial of Canadian Methodism, ed. E. H. Dewart (Toronto: William Briggs, 1891), 181-204.

new church was called the Methodist Church of Canada.⁶

However, some of these Methodists had misgivings about the unions of 1874 and 1883.⁷ Many of these rallied around the Rev. Charles H. Sage, who was appointed by the American Free Methodists to Canada in 1876.⁸ By 1880 the Free Methodist Church in Canada reported a total membership of three hundred and twenty four.⁹ The year 1880 was the same year when Bishop Benjamin Titus Roberts officially organized the Canada Conference at Galt, Ontario.¹⁰ This Conference was an extension of the American Free Methodist Church.¹¹

By 1895 the total membership had increased significantly enough to divide the Canada Conference into two Annual Conferences - East and West Ontario Conferences.¹² The Canada

⁶ George H. Cornish, ed. Cyclopaedia of Methodism In Canada, Vol. 11 (Toronto: Methodist Book and Publishing House, 1903), 15-16.

⁷ R. Wayne Kleinsteuber, More Than A Memory The Renewal Of Methodism In Canada (Canada: Light and Life Press 1984), 81-82.

⁸ Ibid. It is Kleinsteuber's view that Free Methodism in Canada had its inception as a result of a re-grouping by Canadian Methodists unhappy with unions of 1874 and 1883. This is also the position of Neil Austin Everett Semple, "The Impact of Urbanization of the Methodist Church in Central Canada, 1864-1884" (Ph D. dissertation, University of Toronto, 1979), 61-62.

⁹ Charles H. Sage, Autobiography of Rev. Charles H. Sage (Chicago: Free Methodist Publishing House, 1908), 104.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ R. Wayne Kleinsteuber, Coming Of Age The Making Of A Canadian Free Methodist Church (Canada: Light and Life Press, 1980), 14.

¹² John Wilkins Sigsworth, The Battle Was The Lord's A History of The Free Methodist Church in Canada (Oshawa: Sage Publishers, 1960), 158.

West Conference was formed in 1905 coinciding with the formation of the new Canadian Provinces, Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta.¹³

All this time, the issue of autonomy for the Free Methodist Church in Canada was near the surface. Ministry contextualization issues emerged such as: Canadian theological education and training and the formation of a Canadian theological college, Canadian Church promotional literature, cross communication between the Canadian Conferences and the monetary assessments upon the Canadian Conferences by the American Church. This latter issue became acute as the funds were used largely to meet American expansionary needs as well as the world missions program.¹⁴

These feelings culminated in an All-Canada Convention, held October 13-17, 1920 in Sarnia, Ontario. At this event a Canadian Executive Board was established to co-ordinate Canadian ministry objectives and to manage Canadian funds for Canadian evangelization and church planting as well as share with the American Church in the world missions program of the Free Methodist Church.¹⁵

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ R. Wayne Kleinsteuber, Coming Of Age, 42.

¹⁵ John Wilkins Sigsworth, The Battle Was The Lord's, 217-218. A detailed printed report of the Sarnia Convention, October 13-18, 1920 is found in A. Sims, Free Methodism In Canada (Toronto: A Sims Publisher, 1920). Since Sims' publication another report has been written. This surveys all the Canadian Board significant actions from 1920-1974. Lorne C. Ball, Executive Board History Of The Free Methodist Church in Canada 1920-1974 (Stirling: Stirling Stationary, 1985).

Also, as a result of the All-Canada Convention, two Canadian theological institutions were formed: Lorne Park College, Port Credit, Ontario, and later Aldersgate College, Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan.¹⁶ Lorne Park College was sold in 1966 and the monies invested to form the Lorne Park College Foundation, which later became the Canadian Education Commission. This foundation was established in order to grant scholarships to Canadian students in both undergraduate and graduate level programs at approved academic institutions.¹⁷

Also, the Canadian Free Methodist Herald was initiated as the communication link between the Canadian Conferences. It supports the subtitle of "the Canadian Methodist monthly."¹⁸ Further, a minister's pension plan was drawn up for Canadian Free Methodist ministers in accordance with Canadian law.¹⁹

It needs to be noted, that from its inception, the Canadian Executive Board was dealing with the issues of national identity and autonomy. The possibility of the Free Methodist Church in Canada becoming a General Conference was always in the background.²⁰

In 1927 the Free Methodist Church in Canada Act was given

¹⁶ Ibid, 225-234.

¹⁷ Kleinstauber, op. cit., 31-32.

¹⁸ Ibid, 44.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid, 42.

royal assent by the Canadian Parliament. This Act gave the Canadian Executive Board jurisdiction over legal and civil matters such as property rights, pension plans, and official recognition of the rights and duties of Free Methodist clergy in Canada.²¹

Another impetus to the search for Canadian identity and autonomy was the union of the Free Methodist Church in Canada and the Holiness Movement Church of Canada in 1959.²² The Holiness Movement Church was a separation from the Methodist Church of Canada in 1895. This occurred when the Rev. Ralph C. Horner, an Ottawa Valley evangelist, was deposed from the Methodist Church. The Holiness Movement Church was essentially "Methodist" in doctrine and discipline. It was also a product of a uniquely Canadian revival movement.²³ This union necessitated an amended Free Methodist Church Act of Parliament, July, 1959.²⁴

Another step towards an autonomous General Conference was granted by the 1974 General Conference of North America when the

²¹ Parliament of Canada, An Act To Incorporate The Free Methodist Church In Canada, Assented To 14th April, 1927. (Ottawa: Law Printer to the King's Most Excellent Majesty, 1927).

²² Kleinsteuber, op. cit., 48-49. A special pamphlet detailing delegates, committees and significant actions of the joint union committee was printed. The Joint Committee On Union, Report of the Committee On Union Being A Summary Of The Proceedings Of The Joint Committee Which Met In Kingston, Ontario, Canada, October 7 and 8, 1958. (Winona Lake: Free Methodist Publishing House, 1958).

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Parliament of Canada, An Act To Incorporate The Free Methodist Church in Canada, Assented to 8th July, 1959. (Ottawa: The Queen's Printer and Controller of Stationary, 1959).

Free Methodist Church in Canada was designated as a Canadian Jurisdictional Conference.²⁵ This was the continuance of the Canadian Executive Board status with yearly meetings concerning Canadian Church affairs. However, the Canadian Jurisdictional Conference was divided into standing committees to give the Canadian Church leadership through Commissions of Stewardship and Finance, Moral Issues and Social Action, Evangelism and Church Growth, Home Ministries and Education and Communication.²⁶ For the first time, a Canadian citizen was elected to be the resident Canadian Bishop. This person was Bishop Donald N. Bastian.²⁷

Since 1967, the centennial year of the Canadian Confederation, there has been a rise in national pride and identity. Andrew H. Malcolm, an American journalist who has lived and travelled extensively in Canada, says that in some ways Canadians, "still suffer anguish over (their) national identity."²⁸ However, this rise in national spirit was climaxed when on April 17, 1982, the new Canadian Constitution with a charter of Rights was given royal assent by Queen Elizabeth II and signed on behalf of the Canadian people by Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau.

²⁵ R. Wayne Kleinsteuber, Coming Of Age, 55-56.

²⁶ Canadian Jurisdictional Conference, Minutes Of The First Session of the Canadian Jurisdictional Conference, August 5-7, 1974, Toronto, Ontario (Unpublished).

²⁷ op. cit., 57-59.

²⁸ Andrew H. Malcolm, The Canadians (New York: Times Books, 1985), 56.

Parallel with this rise of Canadian national identity, the question of an autonomous Canadian General Conference was raised with greater frequency at the level of the Annual Conferences.²⁹ In response to this, the Canadian Jurisdictional Conference session of 1986, meeting in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, established a National Task Force on a General Conference, to study this question. This Task Force was composed of the Canadian Bishop, the three Conference superintendents and the Executive Director of the Free Methodist Church in Canada. Added to this number each Annual Conference elected a lay person to this body. The Annual Conferences were requested to gather input for the Task Force from individuals and churches.³⁰

By March, 1988 the National Task Force on a General Conference published the findings of the study.³¹ This report was given to both the 1988 Annual Conferences and the Canadian Jurisdictional Conference. The answer of the Task Force was an

²⁹ A review of the minutes of the Canada East, Canada Great Lakes and Canada West Annual Conferences indicate that this even had a major impact on the General Conference question. It was at each of these Conferences in 1982, similar petitions were drawn up, voted upon, and sent to the Canadian Jurisdictional Conference for action regarding this question.

³⁰ Canadian Jurisdictional Conference, Minutes of the Thirteenth Session of the Canadian Jurisdictional Conference, August 15-19, 1986, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan (Unpublished).

³¹ The National Task Force On A Canadian General Conference Interim Report, Five Questions About A Canadian General Conference. A final report was given to each member and delegate at the three Canadian Annual Conferences, 1988. The National Task Force on a Canadian General Conference, A Proposal For A Canadian General Conference (Toronto, Free Methodist Church in Canada, March, 1988).

affirmative one in regard to the General Conference question. This question was then put to the three Canadian Annual Conferences meeting in 1988 for their referendum. An aggregate of ninety-six point six percent "yes" vote was realized across Canada.³² The Canadian Jurisdictional Conference meeting in Toronto, Ontario, August, 1988, established A General Conference Planning Committee to actually petition the Free Methodist Church in North America for Canadian General Conference status as well as actually vigorously plan for its inception.³³ The context of this study makes it necessary to do two things: First, this study will be the documenting of the process towards a General Conference. Second, this study will reflect upon this process and its implications for the ongoing ministry of the Free Methodist Church in Canada.

2. The Thesis Statement:

The Free Methodist Church in Canada has been discovering its own identity and its place in Canadian culture, seeking to develop and implement an appropriate strategy for effective ministry.

This study will describe and analyze the process by which the Free Methodist Church in Canada has developed its autonomy and will reflect upon strategies for ministry as the denomination enters the twenty-first century.

³² Canadian Jurisdictional Conference, Minutes of the Fifteenth Session of the Canadian Jurisdictional Conference, July 27-30, 1988, Mississauga, Ontario (Unpublished).

³³ Ibid.

3. The Statement Of The Subproblems:

a. The First Subproblem: The first subproblem is to detail the process by which the Free Methodist Church in Canada has come to the status of a General Conference. This study begins at Sarnia, Convention of 1920 and concludes with achievement of the autonomy of General Conference status at the inauguration of the Free Methodist Church of Canada, University of Toronto campus, Mississauga, Ontario, August 5, 1990.³⁴ This is the story of a body of Canadian Methodists seeking to discover its own niche in the plethora of Christian Churches in Canada so as to more effectively communicate the gospel to the Canadian culture.

b. The Second Subproblem: The second subproblem is the reflection upon strategies for ministry that will communicate the Christian gospel with a Methodist flavour to the Canadian culture as the Church moves into the twenty-first century. The nature of Canadian culture will be defined through examination of recent works by Pierre Berton³⁵ and Reginald Bibby.³⁶ This will represent both secular and religious models of Canadian culture.

³⁴ Canadian Jurisdictional Conference Board of Directors, Minutes of the Canadian Jurisdictional Conference Board of Directors, July 29, 1988, Mississauga, Ontario. (Unpublished).

³⁵ Pierre Berton, Why We Act Like Canadians: A Personal Exploration Of Our National Character. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Limited, 1982.

³⁶ Reginald Bibby, Fragmented Gods: The Poverty And Potential of Religion in Canada (Toronto: Irwin Publishing, 1987).

The reassessment of ministry strategies employed by the Free Methodist Church in Canada are necessary due to the change in ecclesiastical structures as discussed in subproblem number one, and, the continued evolution of Canadian culture.

4. The Hypothesis:

The hypothesis is that the quest to develop autonomy by the Free Methodist Church in Canada has been in large part, the result of discovering its own identity and place within Canadian culture.

5. The Limitations:

Mention will be made of the contextualization motifs within Canadian Free Methodism prior to 1974. However, the larger focus will be given to the description and analysis of the process towards General Conference status following 1974. Particular emphasis will centre upon the time period 1982 until 1990. 1982 represents the year of Canada's constitutional independence and the rise of the General Conference question from all three Canadian Annual Conferences. 1990 will be the year of the inaugural event of the new Canadian General Conference.

This study will be pursued from the perspective of Canadian Church history, particularly from the perspective of the Free Methodist Church in Canada. Since the writer has been chair of the National Task Force on a General Conference (1986-1988) and also the Planning Committee for a General Conference (1988-1990), this study will reflect observations from his perspective.

The central concentration of this study will be the emerging desire for a Free Methodist General Conference in Canada, particularly in the sixteen years, 1974-1990. The focus will be most particularly in the years 1982-1989 when the General Conference issue was addressed by the Canadian Jurisdictional Conference. This is the story of a segment of the Free Methodist Church of North America evolving into a General Conference with all the rights and privileges of self actualization, determination and identity.

6. The Definition Of Terms:

a. The Free Methodist Church in Canada is a Canadian Protestant Church which was planted on Canadian soil in 1876 by the North Michigan Conference of the Free Methodist Church in the United States.³⁷ This church is now incorporated in six Canadian provinces as well as being incorporated by acts of the Canadian Parliament of 1927 and 1959.³⁸ Ecclesiastically, the Free Methodist Church in Canada properly is divided into three Annual Conferences: Canada East, Canada Great Lakes and Canada West.³⁹ The Free Methodist Church in Canada headquarters is in Mississauga,

³⁷ Charles H. Sage, Autobiography of Rev. Charles H. Sage, 80.

³⁸ These two acts of the Canadian Parliament have been indicated, page 5 of this document, footnotes.

³⁹ Free Methodist Church of North America, The Book of Discipline, 1985, Part I (Winona Lake: The Free Methodist Publishing House, 1985). 130-131.

Ontario. As well, Free Methodists outside the jurisdiction of the Free Methodist Church in Canada reside in the Province of British Columbia. These, at present, are within the boundaries of the Pacific Northwest Conference.⁴⁰ The British Columbia Districts are referred to as the "Pacific Districts". Because of the involvement of the Pacific Districts of the Pacific Northwest Conference in dialogue with the General Conference committees of the Free Methodist Church in Canada, these Districts are included in this study.

Therefore, for the purpose of this study, the term Free Methodist Church in Canada shall be considered to include the Canada East, Canada Great Lakes and Canada West Conferences and the Pacific Districts (British Columbia) of the Pacific Northwest Conference.

b. Culture:

Culture is used in this study as the Canadian identity, particularly as enunciated by Pierre Berton in his book, Why We Act Like Canadians and Reginald Bibby in Fragmented Gods: The Poverty And Potential Of Religion in Canada. Berton sets the Canadian identity over against that of the American identity: (1) Peace, order and strong government vs. life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness;⁴¹ security vs. civil

⁴⁰ Ibid, 130.

⁴¹ Pierre Berton, Why We Act Like Canadians, 16.

rights;⁴² public subsidies vs. capitalist commercialism;⁴³
 The mosaic of nations vs. the melting pot (rejection of
 homeland and traditional values);⁴⁴ a "cool" nation
 (reserved) vs. a "hot nation (outgoing);⁴⁵ puritanical
 austerity vs. individualistic adventure.⁴⁶

Bibby cites the Canadian government policies of Bilingualism
 and Multiculturalism⁴⁷ as giving primary shape to the
 Canadian cultural identity.

c. **Autonomy:**

The term "autonomy" as used in this study refers to the
 fact that as a General Conference, the Free Methodist Church
 in Canada would have jurisdiction over its own Book of
Discipline. This Discipline gives it the rights and
 privileges of self-direction within the Canadian culture.
 It should be noted that the Free Methodist Church in Canada

⁴² Ibid, 42.

⁴³ Ibid, 58.

⁴⁴ Ibid, 72.

⁴⁵ Ibid, 84-85.

⁴⁶ Ibid, 94, 99.

⁴⁷ Reginald W. Bibby, Fragmented Gods, 182. Bilingualism is
 the recognition of two founding people within Canada and two
 dominant linguistic groups - English and French. Hence, two
 official languages. Multiculturalism is an official response to
 the Canadian reality of different cultural groups living amidst the
 English and French majorities. Unlike the American "melting pot"
 Canadian multiculturalism can be rightly called a "mosaic."

General Conference would adhere to the world-wide constitution of Free Methodist Churches that regulates the doctrine and membership requirements for Free Methodists.⁴⁸ Other than this limitation, the Free Methodist Church in Canada would be a Canadian entity that is self-governing. That is what is meant by the word, "autonomy."

B. THE DATA, THEIR TREATMENT AND THEIR INTERPRETATION:

1. The Data:

a. The Primary Data:

Since the large focus of this study will be upon the establishment of the Canadian Jurisdictional Conference in 1974 and the subsequent completion of gaining total autonomy via General Conference status in 1989, the primary data will come from documentary evidence surrounding these actions.

The primary documents are as follows:

(i) "A Proposal For A General Conference In Canada, 1971." This document is an unpublished paper that strikes the need to total autonomy, even prior to the Canadian Jurisdictional Conference of 1974.

(ii) The Resolutions sent to Canadian Jurisdictional Conference from the three Canadian Annual Conferences, regarding the need for a General Conference. These can be located in the three Canadian Annual Conference Minutes of 1982.

⁴⁸ Free Methodist Church of North America, Book of Discipline, 1985, Part I, 38-41.

(iii) Resolution of the Canadian Jurisdictional Conference, 1984 requesting the Free Methodist Church of North America Board of Administration and the General Conference to grant complete jurisdiction over all financial matters to the Canadian Free Methodist Church.

(iv) The minutes of the Canadian Jurisdictional Conference of 1986 setting forth the parameters had composition for a National Task Force on a General Conference in order to study the issue and make recommendations to the Canadian Jurisdictional Conference to give leadership regarding the question.

(v) The minutes of the National Task Force meetings conducted between 1986-1988.

(vi) The two publications that were distributed in the Canadian Free Methodist constituency in order to give reasons for a General Conference and describe the composition, workings and costing of the General Conference proposal.

(vii) The minutes of the 1988 Canadian Jurisdictional Conference which gave account of the aggregate vote of the three Annual Conferences in answering the General Conference question. These minutes will further detail the election of the General Conference Planning Committee and its job description, (1) to adapt The Book of Discipline for Canadian use; (2) to plan for the General Conference inauguration event in 1990; (3) to formulate a strategy for ministry in terms of the new General Conference status.

(viii) The minutes of the General Conference Planning Committee.

(ix) The letters of agreement between the Free Methodist Church in North America and the Free Methodist Church in Canada regarding co-operation in areas of Christian Education and World Missions.

(x) The Canadian General Conference resolution presented to the Free Methodist Church of North America Board of Administration, October, 1988.

(xi) The minutes of the General Conference of North America, meeting in Seattle, Washington, 1989 where the final resolution for a Canadian General Conference will be presented.

b. The Secondary Data:

Any background data for the central focus of this study is considered secondary data. This would include any relevant history (to this study) of Methodism or of the Free Methodist Church in Canada, data regarding Canadian cultural distinctives and church growth materials where materials are applicable.⁴⁹

2. The Criteria Governing The Admissibility Of The Data:

The criteria are as follows:

- a. that the data must pertain to the Free Methodist Church in Canada.
- b. that the bulk of the data must pertain to the actual

⁴⁹ Extensive footnoting has been done in Section A-I regarding these various data.

strategy and steps taken by Canadian Free Methodists to achieve General Conference status, particularly between the years 1974 and 1989.

c. that the data must relate to the Free Methodist Church in Canada in regard to contemporary ministry strategies and to Canadian culture.

3. The Research And Interpretation Methodologies:

The research methodology in this study will be a form of reflective historiography.⁵⁰ There will be movement from the traditional narrative mode which will recitate chronological facts in the formation of a General Conference for the Free Methodist Church in Canada. However, interacting with this common form of history writing, will be illustrative narrative that demonstrates accomplishments on the road to autonomy and capacities for future development in this application to Canadian national identity. A follow-up narrative form of history writing will be the organization of the data in order to show the reader that from the inception of the Canadian Free Methodist Church there has been a dynamic process occurring that has led to the goal of a General Conference in Canada. A final form of historical narrative will be needed to interact with the traditional narrative, the illustrative narrative and generic narrative historiography forms - namely the critical narrative

⁵⁰ The various aspects of reflective historical narration are delineated well by Jörn Rösen in "Historical Narration: Foundation, Types, Reason," History and Theory Studies In The Philosophy of History. Beiheft 26; Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 1987, 87-97.

will be utilized to project the mission and strategies of the Free Methodist Church in Canada as it enters the twenty-first century.

Pierre Berton in his book, Why We Act Like Canadians and Reginald Bibby in his book, Fragmented Gods, have provided a contemporary paradigm of Canadian culture and Canadian religious sub-culture. These works of Berton and Bibby will be used as models for reflection on the ministry experience of the Free Methodist Church in Canada.

The central focus of this study will concentrate on the journey taken by the Free Methodist Church in Canada toward full General Conference status. Canadian Free Methodists intended that this development might result in their being able to relate the Christian gospel more effectively to their culture.

The reflection on Canadian Free Methodist recent history in light of the models presented by Berton and Bibby will allow for an evaluation of present Canadian Free Methodist ministry practices and may result in proposals for enhancing that ministry.

4. The Location Of Research Resources:

The research resources are located in the following centres:

a. The Free Methodist Church in Canada Headquarters, Mississauga, Ontario. All the primary source documents are found here. As well, secondary data from the Headquarters Library on Canadian Methodist and Free Methodist works will be used.

b. The Free Methodist Church in North America Archives, World Headquarters, Winona Lake, Indiana, now moved to Indianapolis, Indiana. Documents regarding the Sarnia Convention, 1920 will be secured there.

c. United Church of Canada Archives, Toronto, Ontario. This is one of the finest sources for manuscript and book documentation regarding Canadian Methodistica. This includes both primary and secondary sources.

d. Asbury Theological Seminary, Fisher Library, Asbury Theological Seminary, Wilmore, Kentucky. This library is a good resource for secondary sources for the study.

e. The three Canadian Free Methodist Conference Offices:

- + Canada East Conference Office,
Belleville, Ontario
- + Canada Great Lakes Conference Office,
Brantford, Ontario
- + Canada West Conference Office,
Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan

Petitions from these Annual Conferences to the Canadian Jurisdictional Conference can be served from each of the Annual Conference minutes. These are entered as primary documents.

f. Personal Files: Since the writer has been the chair of the National Task Force on a General Conference and is presently the chair of the General Conference Planning Committee, he has extensive notes and minutes of the proceedings. These are primary sources.

C. THE QUALIFICATIONS OF THE RESEARCHER:

The researcher has been a member of the Canada East Conference, Free Methodist Church in Canada since 1966. Presently, he is an ordained elder in that Conference. He has pastored three Free Methodist Churches: namely, Whitby, Smiths Falls and Toronto, Kingsview, Ontario. He presently serves as the Conference Superintendent. The writer's involvements go beyond the Canadian borders as vice-chair of the Education Commission, Board of Administration, Free Methodist Church of North America. Further, he is a member of the Executive Committee of the same Board of Administration. He has been elected three times to the General Conference of North America, 1979, 1985, 1989.

During the Canadian Jurisdictional Conference of 1986 it was due to a proposal from the Education Commission of the Free Methodist Church in Canada that the General Conference question was raised and the National Task Force on a General Conference was established. The writer is the chair of that commission and helped to frame the proposal for a National Task Force.

Subsequently, in 1986 the researcher was elected chair of the National Task Force on a General Conference until the final report to the Canadian Annual Conferences and the Canadian Jurisdictional Conference of 1988. The result of the aggregate vote of the three Annual Conferences in 1988 was 96.6% in favour of the General Conference.

At the Canadian Jurisdictional Conference of 1988 a General

Conference Planning Committee was established. Again the writer was elected to chair this body.

It seems that because of the researcher's involvements with the Free Methodist Church in North America and in Canada as well as chair involvements with the instruments that have brought about the Canadian General Conference, he is qualified to research such a project.

D. THE OUTLINE OF THE PROPOSED STUDY:

In this chapter one, the problem and its context has been enumerated. The thesis of this work has been stated. A discussion of the various data, relating to the Free Methodist Church in Canada and the quest for autonomy, has ensued. The proposed interpretation and treatment of that data has been laid out. The qualifications of the person doing the research have been documented.

Chapter two will review the history of the question at hand. This work will reach back to the beginnings of Canadian Methodism and show the interaction of the message of the early Methodists with their surrounding frontier culture. The development of mainline Methodism will be shown to evolve from that of a frontier revivalist sect to that of late nineteenth century urban church that placed great emphasis on order and reason. It was in this period when revivalism was dying within the Methodist Church of Canada, that the Free Methodists were invited to Canada. The newer revivalistic Free Methodist will be shown to fill a

religious vacuum left by the Canadian Methodists. The birth of the Free Methodist Church in Canada in 1875 will be reviewed along with the creation of the Canada Conference in 1880 and the division of that Conference into East and West Ontario Conferences in 1895.

The Sarnia Convention of 1920 will be shown to be the awakening of the issue as to whether or not the Free Methodist Church in Canada would "simply be a branch plant" of the Free Methodist Church of North America. It was here that the Canadian Executive Board was born and a certain degree of autonomy was won. Later, in 1974 the Canadian Jurisdictional Conference came into being which was essentially a Canadian Executive Board with a resident Canadian Bishop.

This chapter will review significant literature about the history of the Free Methodist Church of North America from different perspectives from either side of the Canadian - American border.

Chapter three will review the evolution of Canada from that of a colony to a dominion to the status of a full nationhood with its own constitution. This will be shown to have marked parallels with the evolution of the Free Methodist Church in Canada. From 1982 onwards the various expressions of need for a General Conference in Canada will be explored. This chapter will detail the National Task Force On A Canadian General Conference established in 1986. The various components of an autonomous church, such as a site for headquarters, an all Canadian

education policy and its implementation plus discussions with the British Columbia, Canada Pacific Districts will be documented. The preparation of Free Methodists in Canada for the moment of decision will be reviewed along with the results of the favourable vote in 1988 to become a Canadian General Conference.

Chapter four will be a detailing of Canadian responses to the vote of 1988. A review of the preparations for the petition allowing a Canadian General Conference, to the 1989 General Conference of the Free Methodist Church of North America, will be given. The negotiated agreements of the shared programmes regarding Christian Education and World Missions will be detailed. The "event" when the Canadian Church was allowed General Conference status at the 1989 General Conference of the Free Methodist Church of North America in Seattle, Washington will be documented. Three major components prior to the inauguration of the Canadian General Conference in 1990 will be written. These include: the General Conference Planning Committee, the Task Force on Evangelism and Church Growth and the Task Force on Higher Education.

Chapter five will be one of reflections on vision and strategies for ministry in Canada by an autonomous church in charge of its own destiny. Two significant Canadian works will be expressed. The book by Canadian author and historian, Pierre Berton, entitled, A Personal Exploration Of Our National Character: Why We Act Like Canadians, will be used to define the distinct and broad characteristics of Canadian and American

cultures. The second significant Canadian work is the analysis of the state of religion in Canada at the approach of the twenty-first century. This is the book, Fragmented Gods: The Poverty And Potential Of Religion In Canada, by Reginald W. Bibby.

Strategies for ministry and growth within the Free Methodist Church in Canada, with input from both Berton and Bibby will be detailed.

A selected bibliography, detailing both primary and secondary sources for this work, will be given to the reader.

The appendixes will contain the two documents that were the Reports of the Task Force On A Canadian General Conference. These are, Five Questions About A Canadian General Conference⁵¹ and A Proposal For A Canadian General Conference⁵².

⁵¹ Free Methodist Church in Canada, Interim Report Of The National Task Force On A Canadian General Conference, (Mississauga: The Free Methodist Church in Canada, 1988).

⁵² Free Methodist Church in Canada, A Proposal For A Canadian General Conference. (Mississauga: The Free Methodist Church in Canada, 1988).

Chapter II

CANADIAN METHODISM AND THE ORIGINS OF THE FREE METHODIST CHURCH

It is the position of this dissertation that the Free Methodist Church in Canada is in the process of discovering its identity and place within Canadian culture, and is seeking to develop and implement appropriate strategies for effective ministry.

This chapter will review the nature and evolution of Canadian Methodism and the readiness for the beginnings of Free Methodism in Canada.

A. CANADIAN METHODISM, ITS MESSAGE AND EVOLUTION:

From the earliest days the various branches of Canadian Methodism interacted with issues emerging from a Canadian frontier society. This brought to the fore the issues of autonomy and contextualization. Dr. Egerton Ryerson¹ evidenced the fact that the very nature of the Methodist message created conflict over the issues of justice and equal rights. This conflict emerged between Ryerson, a leader of the Canadian Methodists and Bishop John Strachan, leader of the Church of

¹ Egerton Ryerson, Canadian Methodism: It's Epochs and Characteristics (Toronto: William Briggs, 1881). This volume details the journey towards autonomy by the early Canadian Methodist Episcopal Church from its American counterpart, 1780-1840.

England in Canada in the 1830's. This tension carried over from Strachan to the elitest government establishment in Upper Canada and the Methodists.² Ryerson described the effects of Methodism:

The Methodist preachers preached throughout the land that "God is no respecter of persons" and that "Jesus Christ is the Saviour of all men, especially of them that believe", and they made the wilderness resound, from one extremity of Canada to the other, with the doctrines and song ---

"Lord, I believe were sinners more
Than sands upon the ocean shore,
Thou has for all a ransom paid,
For all a full atonement made."

With this doctrine the whole country ... became leavened at an early period, whether connected with Methodism in Church fellowship or not, and espoused the course of equal rights and privileges before the law by all classes of citizens ... The doctrine of universal equality before the law was the natural result of the doctrine of universal equality before God in both creation and redemption ...³

Feelings of autonomy had quickly surfaced in Upper Canadian

² The Church of England in Canada under Bishop John Strachan was attempting to assert itself as "the established Church" in Upper Canada allowing only the Anglican, Roman Catholic and Presbyterian ministers the rights of marriage and burial. Further, as "the established church" the Anglicans would be entitled to "Crown Lands". The government of Upper Canada was largely composed of Anglicans. Many members of the Upper Canada Legislature were related. These were known as "the Family Compact". Due to resistance of the Methodists and others, the Anglican claims were abandoned in the 1840's. For further information review S. D. Clark, Church and Sect in Canada (Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1948), 103-132.

³ Ibid, p. 133.

Methodism following the War of 1812-1814 with the United States. As well, the fact of confrontation with the particular issues of Canadian culture, propelled the Canada Conference of 1827 to petition the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church meeting in Pittsburgh in 1828, for General Conference status.⁴ This request was granted.⁵

Later, in 1874, the Wesleyan Methodists⁶ and the New Connexion Methodists⁷ gained autonomy from their English counterparts and came into a larger union nine years later (1883). These Canadian Methodists united with the continuing Methodist Episcopalals,⁸ the Bible Christians⁹ and the Primitive Methodists¹⁰ to become the largest Protestant Church in Canada at that time. The new Church was called the Methodist Church of

⁴ Ibid, p. 262.

⁵ Later, these Canadian Methodist Episcopalals and the English Wesleyan Methodists consummated a union in Toronto in 1833. Later, in 1834, a group of ministers and laypersons seceded from this union and constituted the continuing Methodist Episcopal Church in Canada.

⁶ Hugh Johnston, "Historical Sketch of the Wesleyan Methodist Church in Upper Canada and Lower Canada," Centennial of Canadian Methodism, ed E. H. Dewart (Toronto: William Briggs, 1891), 55-93.

⁷ William Williams, "Historical Sketch of the Methodist New Connexion Church in Canada," Centennial of Canadian Methodism, ed. E. H. Dewart (Toronto: William Briggs, 1891), 95-126.

⁸ S. G. Stone, "Historical Sketch of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Canada," Centennial of Canadian Methodism, ed. D. H. Dewart (Toronto: William Briggs, 1891), 149-179.

⁹ George Webber, "Bible Christian Church," Centennial of Canadian Methodism, ed E. H. Dewart (Toronto: William Briggs, 1891), 203-227.

¹⁰ J. Cooper Antliff, "Historical Sketch of the Primitive Methodist Church in Canada," Centennial of Canadian Methodism, ed E. H. Dewart (Toronto: William Briggs, 1891), 181-204.

Canada.¹¹ In terms of fractured world Methodism and the Canadian Methodist mergers, Canada was termed to be "the proto-leader of union."¹²

The early revivalist Methodists started with different presuppositions. The dispute between Bishop John Strachan and the Rev. Egerton Ryerson went deeper than the issues of autonomy and equal rights. These men were both servants of the same God. They read the same Bible. They both were loyal to the same British sovereign. However, they differed on issues such as the relationship between God and persons and the nature of salvation.¹³

Strachan's presuppositions represented religion as "highly rational and systematic and appealed to the values of order and reason."¹⁴ In 1807, he explained to his students, "the Sun, the Moon, and the Stars, the inhabitants of the land and water so wonderfully suited to their different stations and habits of life, loudly proclaim a first cause of infinite power and

¹¹ George H. Cornish, ed., Cyclopaedia of Methodism in Canada, Vol. II (Toronto: Methodist Book and Publishing House, 1903), 15-16. In 1883 the total membership of the Methodist Church of Canada was 169,803 and 1,643 ministers, 3,158 churches and 175,052 Sunday School scholars. Total membership climbed to 197,479 members in 1886 and in 1890 was at 233,868.

¹² W.J. Townsend, The Story of Methodist Union, (London, Milner and Company Limited, 1903), 63-83.

¹³ William Westfall, Two Worlds The Protestant Culture of Nineteenth Century Ontario (Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1989), 27.

¹⁴ Ibid, 30.

wisdom."¹⁵ Therefore this dictum of order needed to be applied to a society, which if left alone, would become a place where mob instincts would attempt to satisfy the people's passion for pleasure and happiness.¹⁶ These natural instincts were considered the result of Adam's fall.

The task of the Church was to work hand in hand with the state to create and sustain a hierarchical order as in nature. Strachan's "religious beliefs become cultural assumptions."¹⁷

A love of order not only led to salvation but it also helped to create a proper type of society, which in turn helped the Church perform its mission. A religious population was also a loyal population, since people imbued with religion led reasonable and circumspect lives. Christianity, therefore, was the cornerstone of social order.

Since the character of God was exemplified by a hierarchy of natural order, so social order by rank was of God. "Each person had to accept their station within the social hierarchy for society to promote the general happiness and prosperity for all."¹⁸ Henceforth this was the justification for the superiority of all things British and Anglican and the rule of the elitist "Family Compact" in Upper Canada.

¹⁵ John Strachan, The Christian Religion Recommended In A Letter To His Pupils. (Montreal: Nahum Mower, 1807), 16.

¹⁶ Ibid, Westfall, 32.

¹⁷ Ibid, 34.

¹⁸ Ibid.

Egerton Ryerson, in contrast, was a revivalist Methodist whose message emphasized emotions and feelings. In order for one to be saved one must directly experience the forgiving and assuring grace of God.¹⁹

Christianity, in the Methodist view, was not an abstract system of rational precepts. At the centre of this interpretation was the need for a powerful and immediate encounter with the living God. If people were to be saved, their feelings must be aroused. A broken and a contrite spirit opened the door through which a sinner could be changed and commissioned to help redeem a fallen society. The Methodist paper, The Christian Guardian, proclaimed,

... the religious world can talk well upon the speculative points of divinity, even reason accurately and quite logically on the attributes of God But who delights to dwell on Christian experience? Let us strike at the infidelity of the heart, and if we gain conquest there, our work is chiefly done.²⁰

In order to create the atmosphere for the broken and contrite spirit, revivals and camp meetings were utilized. The preacher's task was not so much to inform the congregation, but to "preach Christ crucified" and to preach for a verdict. This verdict was the immediate conversion of people to Christ. The

¹⁹ Ibid, 30.

²⁰ The Christian Guardian, "Experimental Religion," November 26, 1834. 9.

revival event contained images of power and immediacy:²¹

The words of the preacher were like "fire" and "lightning": God come down like a storm or in "showers of grace": sinners were "broken" or fell "like a bullock at the slaughter." Revivals were noted for their shouting and the physical convulsions that accompanied conversion.

This religion of experience was suited to the needs of an early frontier community. Yet, Methodism retrained some of the religious offices of the Anglican Church.²² This became the structure in which religious experience could be expressed. Methodism soon became the largest Protestant Church in Canada.

By the 1840's and 1850's the Methodists were beginning to assume important positions in Canadian society. They also began to re-assess the place of emotion in their church:²³

Methodist preachers were now asked to dress in a more becoming and conventional manner, restrain their gestures, tone down their emotional oratory, and refrain from using quaint forms of language.

²¹ Ibid, Westfall, 41. For further descriptions of early Ontario Methodist revivalism see The Christian Guardian, "The Great Utility of Camp Meetings in Promoting Revivals of Religion". October 31, 1832, 201: George F. Playter, The History of Methodism in Canada (Toronto: Anson Green, 1862): Arthur E. Kewley, Mass Evangelism in Upper Canada Before 1830 (Th.D. Thesis, Victoria College, Toronto, 1960).

²² The orders of Morning and Evening Prayer, Baptism, Holy Communion, Marriage, Burial of the Dead, Ordination were given to the Christmas Conference, Baltimore, Maryland, 1784 by John Wesley. This book was called The Sunday Service. It contained abridged forms from The Book of Common Prayer.

²³ Ibid, 67.

Revivalism as a tool of evangelism and church planting was decidedly cooling in Canadian Methodism in the 1840's and 1850's. By the time of the Canadian Confederation in 1867, camp meeting and revival emphasis gave way to the local church. "The established congregation had come into its own with a practical stress upon the week by week growth of the Christian."²⁴ The more moderate revivals that were held came under "strict clerical control"²⁵ and outbreaks of emotion were restrained. Methodists in Upper Canada took on moderate-thoughtful forms of worship which went hand in hand with an evolving moderate middle class culture.²⁶ As a result salvation by faith was no longer viewed as an intense and overwhelming event but was a gradual response to Christian environment²⁷ and education. The "new" Methodism of the 1860's and 1870's was represented by a rapidly growing organization. New Gothic churches were built.²⁸ Educational

²⁴ Arthur E. Kewley, Mass Evangelism in Upper Canada Before 1830 (Th. D. Thesis, Victoria College, Toronto, 1960), 14.

²⁵ Ibid, Westfall, 71.

²⁶ Ibid, 73.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ For further reading see William Westfall, The Protestant Culture Of Nineteenth Century Ontario (Kingston: McGill - Queen's University Press, 1989), Chapter Five, "Epics in Stone." The most impressive Gothic structure built was Metropolitan Methodist Church, Toronto. This was dedicated in 1872.

institutions were established.²⁹ Circuits were expanded and the national church utilized more connexional control. The British Wesleyan Methodist Church was the most dominant branch of Canadian Methodism and gave leadership to these trends as well as the church unions of 1874 and 1883.³⁰

It was because of the intellectual leadership of Nathaniel Burwash³¹ that Canadian Methodism attempted to penetrate Canadian culture by "the Christianization of society through education and moral reform."³² This was initiated by Burwash's leadership in moving Victoria College from Cobourg to become an affiliated institution with the University of Toronto in 1892. This did not happen without serious controversy within the Methodist Church.

²⁹ Albert College was founded in 1857 in Belleville, Ontario for the education of Methodist Episcopal Ministers. Victoria College was founded in 1836 in Cobourg, Ontario for the education of Wesleyan Methodist Ministers. Later in 1892 Victoria College became a member college of the University of Toronto.

³⁰ The Rev. William Morley Punshon came to be president of the Wesleyan Methodist Conference in Canada at the urging of Egerton Ryerson in 1868. Punshon was a leader in promoting the Gothic style in Canada. "Gothic was the most fitting architecture for Methodism in Canada because here (unlike England) Methodists did not have to live in the shadow of the Anglican establishment." (Ibid, Westfall, 143).

³¹ Nathaniel Burwash graduated from Victoria College, Cobourg in 1859. He was ordained in 1864. In 1871 became professor of systematic theology. Later in 1873 he became dean of the Faculty of Theology. In 1887 he became the chancellor of Victoria.

³² Marguerite Van Die, An Evangelical Mind Nathaniel Burwash And The Methodist Tradition In Canada, 1839-1918. (Kingston: McGill-Queens University Press, 1989), 181. Burwash saw this gradual Christian penetration of Canadian Society in line with John Wesley's experimental religion and a contemporary form of the aims of the old revivalism.

Alexander Sutherland, secretary of missions proposed "one strong national Methodist University ... rather than accept federation with a "godless" university."³³ However the Burwash plan prevailed. Thus Victoria College, its faculty and students were set on a course to prove that there could be harmony between reason and religion.³⁴ This happened at the end of the nineteenth and in the early twentieth centuries when scientific and higher critical thought were assailing the foundations of Biblical authority.³⁵ Burwash's intellectual leadership was an attempt to synthesize the new criticism with traditional Wesleyan thought. It was Burwash who shaped the minds of a generation of Canadian Methodist lay persons and ministers. He was named as the chairman of the committee on doctrine to draft a joint basis of church union in 1904.³⁶

The Methodism that had appealed to the frontier population in early nineteenth century Canada had shifted its emphasis in order to appeal to the upper-middle-class urban person by the early twentieth century. During the Methodist Ecumenical Conference³⁷ held in Toronto in 1911, Dr. William

³³ Ibid, 120.

³⁴ Ibid, 182.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid, 157. The result was the doctrinal basis of union of the United Church of Canada of 1925.

³⁷ This body of world-wide Methodists is now known as the World Methodist Council.

Briggs³⁸ presented a glowing report of the growth of Canadian Methodism and that in Toronto alone Canadian Methodism had established forty-one churches worth two and a half million dollars.³⁹ During a time of response an American delegate made some points:⁴⁰

Did not Dr. Briggs tell us the other day that there were two and a half million dollars in Methodist churches in this city? How many of the hard-working toilers, such as listened to John Wesley, do these churches house? ... If John Wesley were here he would be broken-hearted to find that men gather and spend their time in the great Ecumenical conference talking of everything but the great fact that the men who are doing the work of the world are passing us by on the other side ...

The implication was that "Canadian Methodism, at least in Toronto, had become too closely identified with upper-middle-class respectability."⁴¹

However, through the leadership of persons like Nathaniel Burwash, shifts were happening in theological understanding regarding the nature of the church, personal salvation and the

³⁸ Dr. William Briggs was former pastor of Metropolitan Methodist Church and was elected to the office of Book Steward of The Methodist Church of Canada. Under his leadership by 1900 the Methodist Church had the largest publishing business in Canada.

³⁹ H. K. Carroll and James Chapman (ed.) Proceedings Of The Fourth Ecumenical Methodist Conference, Held in Metropolitan Methodist Church, Toronto, Canada, October 4-17, 1911 (Cincinnati: Jennings and Graham, 1912), 16-19.

⁴⁰ Ibid, 301.

⁴¹ Ibid, Van Die, An Evangelical Mind Nathaniel Burwash and the Methodist Tradition in Canada, 1839-1918, 183.

place of revivals. This along with post-millennial optimism coupled with an evolutionary view of history, shaped the direction of the Methodist Church of Canada. It had moved in nearly a century from a revivalist sect to the type of church that Bishop John Strachan would have espoused, placing great emphasis on order and reason. The most pronounced feature of mainline Canadian Methodism from 1867 onwards was that it had begun to mirror the surrounding culture.⁴²

Rather than transforming society as it had done in John Wesley's time, Methodism was now seen to be in danger of being radically changed by its cultural environment.

During this same time frame, especially during the periods preceding the unions of 1874 and 1883, there was a developing uneasiness in the rank and file as to where Canadian Methodism was heading. The time was ripe for a revivalist form of Methodism to once again appeal to Canadians.

B. THE INCEPTION OF THE FREE METHODIST CHURCH IN CANADA:

Canada was nine years old in 1876 as a nation with a federal government and was divided into five provinces. The population numbered just over four million people. One million were French Canadians, one hundred thousand were native Indians, over two hundred and fifty thousand were continental Europeans and the rest were English, Scottish or Irish.⁴³

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Encyclopaedia Britannica, 94th Ed., "Canada," (New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1898), Vol IV, 767-768.

September 27 - October 2, 1876 were the dates of the first North Michigan Conference held at St. John's Michigan.⁴⁴ Bishop Benjamin Titus Roberts⁴⁵ was presiding. When the appointments were read, the final appointment was, "Canada, C. H. Sage."⁴⁶ Following the Conference session, this first Free Methodist minister appointed to Canada, questioned the Bishop on the wisdom of the appointment: "You have educated and talented men in the east, why did you not send one of them instead of such an ignorant man as I am?"⁴⁷ Bishop Roberts' response was, "Brother Sage, we have got the educated and talented men, but they have not got the missionary fire. You will have to go."⁴⁸

It should be noted that Bishop Roberts did not send Charles H. Sage to Canada without knowledge of Free Methodist activity. Following the union of the English Wesleyan Methodists and the New Connexion Church in Canada in 1874,⁴⁹ merger discussions were begun with the other members of Canada's Methodist family of that

⁴⁴ John Wilkins Sigsworth, The Battle Was The Lord's, 64.

⁴⁵ Benjamin Titus Roberts was the founding Bishop of the Free Methodist Church following his expulsion from the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States, 1860.

⁴⁶ Charles H. Sage, Autobiography of Charles H. Sage, 80.

⁴⁷ Ibid, 81.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ This union was consummated at Metropolitan Church, Toronto, September 16, 1874 and was known as "the Canada Methodist Church."

day.⁵⁰ As previously noted, there were Canadian Methodist church members that were increasingly becoming distressed over what they perceived to be formality and worldliness penetrating all the Canadian Methodist Churches.⁵¹

Robert Loveless was a class leader in Zion Primitive Methodist Church, Scarborough Township, York County, Ontario.⁵² He and his family were very concerned about the direction of Methodism in Canada. Robert Loveless' sister, Mrs. Alice Milne was the post mistress for the area. A copy of Bishop B. T. Roberts' Earnest Christian magazine was regularly coming through the post. Mr. Loveless soon became a subscriber.⁵³ This led to Bishop Roberts accepting a preaching invitation from Robert Loveless, fall, 1873 and winter, 1874.⁵⁴ From these preaching missions two Free Methodist societies were formed, namely Stouffville and Ellesmere.⁵⁵

Other invitations came to the infant Free Methodist in the

⁵⁰ The Canada Methodist Church merger was the forerunner of the eventual union of all existing Methodist Churches, except the Free Methodist Church, in Belleville, Ontario, September 1883.

⁵¹ John Wilkins Sigsworth, The Battle Was The Lord's, 61.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Ibid. The only published indication of B. T. Roberts' Canadian tour is found in the The Free Methodist, February 26, 1874: "Our beloved General Superintendent, who was passing through Buffalo on his way to some newly opened door of usefulness in Canada, opened the meeting on the evening of Thursday, February 5, 1874."

⁵⁵ Ibid.

United States from dissatisfied Canadian Methodists, both from individuals and whole congregations. These came from places like Galt, Hannon, Thedford, Bracebridge, Tillsonburg and Barrie in Ontario.⁵⁶

Charles H. Sage came into this situation directly from his appointment at the 1876 North Michigan Conference. He correctly assumed that there were similarities in the religious climate of both Canada and the United States. Religious denominations in both countries were voluntary associations which were equal before, and yet independent of civil authority.⁵⁷ This was in contradiction to the European state church model. Religious life on the North American continent was more activist and less contemplative.⁵⁸ Like primitive American Methodism, Canada Free Methodism was introduced in a revivalist-activist manner.

We expect to be aggressive by the help of God; we expect to sustain the present work and push out into new territory. Our Conference embraces the Dominion, and the work already spreads over an area of eleven hundred miles. We have no place for lounging, whining preachers, nor for travelling chairmen who need a nice comfortable place fitted up for them to retire into, and a study to fit them up for their arduous labours, but we have need for men baptized with the Holy Ghost and fire, with the love of souls at heart to such an extent that their constant prayer is, "Give

⁵⁶ R. Wayne Kleinsteuber, More Than A Memory, 83-84.

⁵⁷ Joseph D. Ban and Paul R. Dekar, ed., In The Great Tradition Essays On Pluralism, Voluntarism and Revivalism. (Pennsylvania: Judson Press, 1982), 34-35.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

me souls or I die" - men that know just enough to obey and follow God, and have never learned a retreat, and don't know when they are whipped.⁵⁹

However, C. H. Sage grossly underestimated Canadian nationalism. In order to publicize his preaching campaign in the Toronto, Ontario area, Charles Sage used placards to invite people to hear "a live Yankee preach."⁶⁰ Nine years before the inception of the Free Methodist Church in Canada, the territories of British North America had united to become the Dominion of Canada. Sage did not know that a major reason for the formation of this new nation was to foil any attempt to annex territories north of the forty-ninth parallel by the victorious Yankee armies returning from the Civil War.⁶¹ In later reflection, Sage admitted, "I could not have done a worse thing."⁶²

The work of consolidating dissident Canadian Methodists and gaining new converts was in progress. By 1880 there were thirteen circuits, four elders, three Conference probationers, six local preachers, and a membership of three hundred and nineteen.⁶³ Bishop B. T. Roberts travelled to Galt, Ontario and organized the first Free Methodist Conference in Canada, October 21-23, 1880. Fifteen years later in 1895, two new conferences

⁵⁹ John Wilkins Sigsworth, The Battle Was The Lord's, 77.

⁶⁰ Charles H. Sage, Autobiography of Charles H. Sage, 82.

⁶¹ R. Wayne Kleinsteuber, Coming Of Age, 12.

⁶² Ibid. C. H. Sage, Autobiography Of Charles H. Sage, 82.

⁶³ Albert Sims, Free Methodism In Canada, 6.

were formed - East and West Ontario. The Canadian Church then had a total membership of one thousand two hundred and thirty-two persons from thirty-six circuits.⁶⁴ In 1905, the West Ontario Conference initiated two new districts, the Saskatchewan and Alberta Districts.⁶⁵ This arrangement lasted only one year. In 1906, a new Western Canada Conference was formed with six preachers, nine circuits and one hundred and forty-eight members.⁶⁶ In 1914, this Western Canada Conference divided into separate Saskatchewan and Alberta Conferences.⁶⁷

The early Canadian Free Methodists developed their own identity, particularly in contrast to the mainline Methodist Church of Canada that had been born out of the two unions of 1874 and 1883.

Kleinstauber noted:⁶⁸

How did the Free Methodist Church gain a hearing in an already crowded field ...? it must be noted that the simple message, spontaneous emotional response, and high moral standards that the Free Methodists offered were not at all unfamiliar to English Canadians. When people shouted, danced for joy, and fell into trances, as they did in Sage's Hannon, Ontario, camp meeting in the summer of 1880, their actions did not appear novel or strange to their rural observers.

⁶⁴ John Wilkins Sigsworth, The Battle Was The Lord's, 105.

⁶⁵ Ibid, 158.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Ibid, 171. Note: The Saskatchewan Conference extended to the Province of Manitoba. The Alberta Conference extended to the Canadian Rocky Mountains just inside eastern British Columbia.

⁶⁸ R. Wayne Kleinstauber, Coming Of Age The Making Of A Canadian Free Methodist Church (Canada: Light and Life Press, 1980), 14.

Early Canadian Free Methodism saw the return of primitive revivalist Methodism of the style of the 1820's to 1840's.

John Wilkens Sigsworth described the characteristics of early Canadian Free Methodism:

1. They thought a war was on. "The war was between the cohorts of King Jesus, whose soldiers they were, and the hosts of Prince Beelzebub."⁶⁹
2. "They stood upon the impregnable rock of Holy Writ."⁷⁰
3. "They depended on the dynamic of the Holy Spirit."⁷¹
This was particularly found in their emphasis on entire sanctification or Christian holiness.
4. "They inducted an itinerant ministry."⁷² This was similar to the appointment system adhered to in Canadian Methodism. Two years, three years at the most, was the length of the pastoral appointment.
5. "They catered to the common people."⁷³
6. "They reverted to revivals."⁷⁴ The Bible has spoken about "reviving", and Free Methodism, using the proven Methodist methods, multiplies itself substantially by

⁶⁹ Ibid, 19.

⁷⁰ Ibid, 21.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Ibid, 24.

⁷³ Ibid, 26.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

- the periodic revival or "protracted meeting."⁷⁵
7. "They requested a testimony."⁷⁶ Canadian Methodist members simply had to profess "a desire to flee from the wrath to come." Free Methodist members were expected to answer directly, "Have you the assurance of sins forgiven?"⁷⁷ The answer to this question was followed by a personal testimony.
 8. "They kept the Class Meeting."⁷⁸
 9. "They copied the camp meeting."⁷⁹ These early Canadian Free Methodists were serious. The advertising for the 1913 Sarnia District Camp read: "This is not a public nor camp of rest, but a meeting solely for the salvation of sinners and sanctification of believers."⁸⁰
 10. "They continued the Quarterly Meeting."⁸¹ This was a weekend circuit in society meeting where there would be a Friday night rally presided over by the District Chairman. Official Board would be conducted on

⁷⁵ Ibid, 27.

⁷⁶ Ibid, 28.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Ibid, 29.

⁷⁹ Ibid, 30.

⁸⁰ Ibid, 31.

⁸¹ Ibid, 32.

Saturday to review the quarter's business, recommend probationary members and license exhorters and local preachers. The Sunday morning service take the form of the Lord's Supper or a Love Feast. Sunday evening would conclude with an evangelistic service.⁸²

11. "They developed the District Meeting."⁸³ This was like the Quarterly Meeting in format, except several churches in a District would participate. The Saturday format would be a session of the District Conference. This meeting, among Canadian Free Methodists, had even more pronounced use than among the American Free Methodists or their mainline Canadian Methodist counterparts.⁸⁴
12. "They practised prayer and fasting."⁸⁵
13. "They cultivated congregational music."⁸⁶
14. "They employed visitation evangelism."⁸⁷
15. "They overcame the obstacle of inadequacy."⁸⁸ The meeting-house could be someone's home, the town hall or the school house.

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Ibid, 32.

⁸⁴ Ibid. 33. Whereas most Methodists observed one or two District meetings each year, Canadian Free Methodists had four.

⁸⁵ Ibid, 34.

⁸⁶ Ibid, 36.

⁸⁷ Ibid, 37.

⁸⁸ Ibid, 39.

16. "They went to college at home."⁸⁹ The early Canadian preachers were on the frontier where they were unable to attend school. For "Methodist" preachers, however, study was imperative. Therefore they followed a home study course.⁹⁰
17. "They enlisted lay leadership."⁹¹
18. "They allowed ladies to carry arms."⁹² This statement means the women were used extensively in the ministry. He notes that the following churches were planted by female preachers: Armadale, Belhaven, Severn Bridge, Barkway, Lansdowne, Port Credit, Ebenezer, Middlemiss, Walsingham, Brantford, Keith and Thorncliffe.⁹³
19. "They demanded the discipline of a separated life."⁹⁴ This was the strict enforcement of John Wesley's general rules.⁹⁵
20. "They worked with the young."⁹⁶ Sunday Schools and special evangelistic youth meetings were employed.

⁸⁹ Ibid, 40.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ Ibid, 41.

⁹² Ibid, 42.

⁹³ Ibid, 44.

⁹⁴ Ibid, 45.

⁹⁵ Ibid. This was in contrast to the Methodist Church of Canada which was generally relaxing the enforcement of Wesley's general rules.

⁹⁶ Ibid, 46.

21. "They sanctioned salvation schools."⁹⁷ At a very early time Canadian Free Methodists set a goal for a liberal arts college or Bible College in Canada.⁹⁸
22. "They let literature help them."⁹⁹ At first the only periodical that the Canadian Free Methodist Church had was The Earnest Christian. Then, later The Free Methodist was utilized.¹⁰⁰ Also, the Rev. Albert Sims established his own monthly magazine to publicize a more Canadian flavour to Free Methodists. This was a monthly entitled, Gospel Truth.
23. "They remembered the regions beyond."¹⁰¹ In terms of givings and missionary recruits, Canadian Free Methodists from the beginning were deeply involved in foreign missions.
24. "They financed by free-will offerings."¹⁰² Whereas mainline Canadian Methodism was resorting to church socials to raise funds. Free Methodist was preaching the tithing and free-will giving method.¹⁰³

⁹⁷ Ibid, 49.

⁹⁸ Ibid, In 1887 the Rev. Albert Sims wrote in The Free Methodist of the need for "a salvation school for Canada." His reasons were: (1) it would provide more preachers; (2) provide an alternative to the secular university; (3) encourage more Canadians to gain a Bible and liberal arts education.

⁹⁹ Ibid, 50.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ Ibid, 51.

¹⁰² Ibid, 52.

¹⁰³ Ibid, 54.

25. "They denied themselves for the welfare of the work."¹⁰⁴
26. "They endured hardness as good soldiers."¹⁰⁵
27. "They suffered persecution for righteousness."¹⁰⁶

C. SUMMARY:

This chapter has argued, following Ryerson, that when the Methodist message is wholistically proclaimed there will be interaction with the surrounding culture in terms of evangelism and justice issues.

Conflict between the early Canadian Methodists and the Upper Canadian Anglican establishment was described. This showed the difference in the theological and liturgical presuppositions of these two movements. The Methodist Church of Canada and its theological and sociological evolution in the cycle of revivalism to a stance of order and reason. It was shown that there became a ready "market" for a simpler, more disciplined revivalistic form of Methodism by the 1870's. This was particularly occasioned by the Church unions of 1874 and 1883. The Free Methodist Church stepped into this vacuum.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid. For example, in 1897 a Mr. Hiram Gilroy of St. Joseph Island, Ontario pledged ten dollars toward the building of a new church. He earned the pledge by picking stones from a farmer's field from sunrise to sunset for seventy-five cents a day.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid, 56.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid, 57. John W. Sigsworth documents both secular and ecclesiastical opposition to these early Free Methodists in Canada. This underscores the statement made by Robert H. Hamilton in the first issue of The Canadian Free Methodist Herald, November 1, 1922, 2. when he declared, "The Free Methodist Church (in Canada) was born in adversity."

The story of early Canadian Free Methodism was reviewed. This included the development of the Canada Conference of 1880; also the division into two Annual Conferences - East and West Ontario in 1895.

Chapter III

THE FREE METHODIST CHURCH IN CANADA, 1920 - 1974:

Parallel to establishing a clear-cut identity within the Canadian Methodist family, the infant Free Methodist Church began to interact within the framework of Canadian culture. Very early in his ministry C. H. Sage discovered that he was "unacquainted with the people and customs of Canada, especially their natural prejudices against the Yankees."¹ The need for contextualization was always present in practical and official ways:²

We are faced when dealing with government or railway officials and representatives of Canadian churches with the statement, "Oh you are an American church!" And this naturally presents a sentimentally frigid atmosphere.

As time moved on, ministry contextualization issues emerged such as: Canadian theological education, training and the formation of a Canadian theological college, Canadian Church promotional literature, and cross communication between the Canadian conferences. A most acute issue was the monetary assessments made to the Canadian Conferences by the American Church. These Canadian funds were used to meet American church planting needs as well as the world missions program.³

¹ Charles H. Sage, "Correspondence From Canada." The Free Methodist, November 10, 1880, 1.

² Robert H. Hamilton, "A Canadian Paper," The Canadian Free Methodist Herald, November 1, 1922, 1.

³ R. Wayne Kleinsteuber, Coming Of Age, 42.

A. THE SARNIA CONVENTION:

By 1920 the Free Methodist Church in Canada was divided into four Annual Conferences, ninety-one circuits and a total membership of two thousand, two hundred and seven.⁴

For several years there was growing conviction that the Canadian Free Methodist Church needed to project a unified identity. Up to this point the Free Methodist presence in Canada was only individual Conferences as components of the North American Church.⁵ Albert Sims, in commenting about the need for an all-Canada assembly, said,⁶

... time had come for us to take more advanced ground for the propagation of the distinctive truths we love so well, and for the unifying and more permanent establishment of our work in this rapidly growing country.

The Sarnia Convention commenced at the local Free Methodist Church at 2:45 p.m., Wednesday, October 13, 1920.⁷ The delegates were by Conference:

East Ontario (now Canada East) - Albert Sims, C. V. Fairbairn, George Fuller, Sr., D. Eugene Smith, Emerson Snyder

West Ontario (now Canada Great Lakes) - J. M. Eagle, David

⁴ Albert Sims, Free Methodism In Canada. (Toronto: A Sims Publisher, 1920), 7.

⁵ R. Wayne Kleinsteuber, Coming Of Age, 41.

⁶ Ibid, Albert Sims, Free Methodism In Canada, 13.

⁷ Ibid, 14.

Allan, W. J. Cowherd, W. E. DeMille, George Lees.

Saskatchewan (now Canada West) - R. H. Hamilton, W. H. Brown, F. M. Wees.

Alberta (now Canada West) - H. B. Luck, Nellie Whittaker, F. C. Wilson. Since the Alberta Conference had not elected official delegates to the Convention, these were granted honorary status.⁸

The Rev. Albert Sims⁹ was elected Convention chairman and the Rev. J. M. Eagle was elected convention secretary. Nineteen petitions were received from the contributing conferences. The Convention organized into five committees: Education, Evangelism, Finance, General Policies and Public Worship. The plenary sessions met at 2:00-4:00 p.m. each day leaving time for committee work and a public evangelistic service each evening.¹⁰

The following were resolutions adopted at the Sarnia Convention in order to care for and expand the ministries of the Free Methodist Church in Canada:

1. That a Canadian Executive Board be elected with one

⁸ Note: A biographical sketch of each delegate is provided in Lorne C. Ball's Executive Board History Of The Free Methodist Church In Canada, 1920-1974, 4-6.

⁹ The Rev. Albert Sims was an elder in the Primitive Methodist Church in Canada. In 1879 he joined the North Michigan Conference of the Free Methodist Church. He was appointed to Woodstock, Ontario. He was a charter member of the Canada Conference of 1880. He was the editor and publisher of a monthly periodical, Gospel Truth. Later he became District Elder in the East Ontario Conference.

¹⁰ Albert Sims, Free Methodism In Canada, 14-15.

ministerial and one lay person from each Annual Conference. This Board would meet each year and have care over Education, Evangelism and Finances in Canada.¹¹

2. That a Canadian school be established for contextual training of both lay persons and clergy.¹²
3. That the Free Methodist General Conference of North America be petitioned to allow the Canadian Executive Board to elect its own treasurer and retain all funds in Canada except those designated for Bishops' salaries, General Conference expenses and foreign missions.¹³
4. That an all-Canada evangelistic team would be sent across Canada under the auspices of the Canadian Executive Board.¹⁴
5. That a branch of Free Methodist publishing house be established in either Toronto or Winnipeg.¹⁵
6. That a custodian for Free Methodist Church in Canada historical records be appointed.¹⁶
7. That a Canadian Act to incorporate the Free Methodist Church

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid, 21.

¹³ Ibid, 27. This was a deep frustration for the Free Methodists in Canada according to the resolution adopted by the Conference: "Since" our people...have already sent...thousands of dollars out of their country...whereas a vast tract...is yet untouched...and many of our towns and cities are not entered because of a lack of funds."

¹⁴ Ibid, 21.

¹⁵ Ibid, 22-23.

¹⁶ Ibid, 22.

in Canada be drafted and obtained through the Parliament of Canada.¹⁷

It is of note that the delegates to the Convention involved themselves in a Canadian - American political issue. A resolution was adopted that commended the American editor of The Free Methodist for his fair treatment of the Ireland question.¹⁸ The context for this was that Sein Feinism (now a wing of the Irish Republican Army) had gained sympathy across the United States.¹⁹ That sympathy conversely expressed anger towards Great Britain's handling of this question. The Canadian Free Methodist sympathies were with the British government as Canada was a member of the British Commonwealth of nations.

B. THE MEANING OF CHURCH UNION, 1925:

Note was made in chapter two about the Methodist Church of Canada proceeding towards Church Union. Reference was made to the fact that Nathaniel Burwash was the chairman of the committee on doctrine to form the basis of union of the United Church of Canada. On June 10, 1925 the Methodist Church of Canada, two-

¹⁷ Ibid, 26.

¹⁸ Ibid, 22.

¹⁹ The resolution makes note of the fact that the American position was so favourable to Sein Feinism that legislation had been introduced in the American Congress toward national intervention and that one presidential candidate had declared himself in sympathy with the Irish separatists.

thirds of the Presbyterian Church in Canada and the Congregational Union in Canada united to become the United Church of Canada. The inaugural event for the new denomination was held in the Mutual Street Arena, Toronto, Ontario on that date.

Since the Methodist Church of Canada no longer existed, many Canadian Free Methodists saw that theirs was the responsibility to become the major voice of continuing Methodism in Canada. This was expressed in The Canadian Free Methodist Herald, June 1, 1925:²⁰

Shall Methodism be sustained? Why should it be? Because God raised up Methodism and gave it a distinctive mission, viz: "to spread scriptural holiness over all these lands"... Because the world is being deluged with a flood of formalism, ritualism, tongueism, pseudo-healing cults and other erroneous movements, sound truths need to be proclaimed to the hungry masses.
Shall Methodism be sustained in Canada? The answer lies with the Free Methodist Church in particular. Are we ready to assume the new responsibility ...?

C. THE CANADIAN EXECUTIVE BOARD:

The first Canadian Provisional Executive Board²¹ was organized Saturday, October 16, 1920 at Sarnia. The Conference

²⁰ Robert H. Hamilton, "Shall Methodism Be Sustained In Canada?" The Canadian Free Methodist Herald, June 1, 1925, Vol. 3. No. 8. 1-2.

²¹ This "provisional" Executive Board was elected at the conclusion of the Sarnia Convention. At that time there was no provision in the Book of Discipline nor approval from headquarters in the United States. Hence it was known as "provisional." After General Conference approval, the word "provisional" was eliminated.

representatives were as follows²²

East Ontario - A. Sims, D. E. Smith

West Ontario - J. M. Eagle, George A. Lees

Saskatchewan - R. H. Hamilton, W. J. Brown

Albert - H. B. Luck, F. C. Wilson²³

Albert Sims was elected president, J. M. Eagle as secretary and George Lees as treasurer.

The Executive Committee of the Free Methodist Church of North America meeting in Chicago, November 11-15, 1920 approved the petition to enact a Canadian Executive Board.

This was agreed to provided that until the General Conference of North America had ratified the approval of the Executive Committee that, "whatever action they (the Provisional Canadian Executive Board) take regarding the relation of the Canadian work to the general church shall be advisory only."²⁴

The General Conference of the Free Methodist Church on North America meeting at Corruna, Michigan in 1923 approved the request of the Sarnia Convention for a Canadian Executive Board and the financial arrangements requested by the Canadians.²⁵

Significant actions of the Canadian Executive Board that

²² Ibid, Sims, Free Methodism In Canada 27-28.

²³ The Alberta Conference chose not to be part of the Canadian Executive Board from 1921-1948.

²⁴ Ibid, 28.

²⁵ Lorne C. Ball, Executive Board History of the Free Methodist Church in Canada 1920-1974, 7.

have been taken are as follows:

a. The Parliament of Canada Charter:

The Free Methodist Church in Canada had been incorporated in the Provinces where they were established under separate Provincial charters prior to 1927.²⁶ As a part of uniting the parts of the Canadian Church and expanding to all Canada, initial legal assistance to enact a Federal charter was begun in 1922. This "Dominion Act of Incorporation" was given Royal assent April 14, 1927.²⁷

b. Contextual Education:

In 1922 the Canadian Executive Board recommended that the East and West Ontario Conferences proceed to establish a School for the training of laity and clergy.²⁸ In 1924, Lorne Park Seminary (later College) was organized at Port Credit, Ontario.²⁹ Later, the Executive Board gave financial assistance to the formation of the Moose Jaw Bible College (now Aldersgate College).³⁰

²⁶ These charters were in force in the Provinces of Quebec, Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta.

²⁷ Parliament of Canada, An Act To Incorporate The Free Methodist Church in Canada, Assented to 14th April, 1927. (Ottawa: Law Printer to the King's Most Excellent Majesty, 1927).

²⁸ Ibid, Lorne C. Ball, Executive Board History of the Free Methodist Church in Canada, 1920-1974, 9.

²⁹ Ibid. The College was closed in 1966 and the monies became the assets of the Lorne Park College Foundation, now Canadian Education Commission, which was organized for granting scholarships to Canadian lay and ministerial students.

³⁰ Ibid.

c. A Canadian Periodical:

The 1922 session of the Canadian Executive Board launched The Canadian Free Methodist Herald as communication tool for unity across the Canadian Church. The Rev. R. H. Hamilton was named as the first editor.³¹ This paper carries the subtitle: "Canada's Methodist monthly."

d. Aggressive Evangelism and Home Missions:

One of the major roles of the Canadian Executive Board was to assist in evangelistic missions, church plantings and home ministries in Canada. A General Conference Evangelist for Canada was secured.³² Special grants were distributed for church plantings.³³ Indian and French ministries were adopted.³⁴ In 1970 representatives of the Canadian Executive Board were appointed to represent the Free Methodist Church in Canada at an ecumenical Canadian Congress Evangelism held in Ottawa.³⁵

e. Ministers' Pension Support:

In 1925, the Canadian Executive Board took action to establish a Ministers' Pension Fund.³⁶ The pension plan was reviewed and updated several times. By 1962, all Canadian

³¹ Ibid, 8.

³² Ibid, 9-11.

³³ Ibid. A special listing of seven church plantings across Canada, 1919-1964 is noted, 9-10.

³⁴ Ibid, 10-11.

³⁵ Ibid, 11.

³⁶ Ibid, 11.

missionaries were enrolled in the plan.³⁷

D. UNION WITH THE HOLINESS MOVEMENT CHURCH OF CANADA:

During the early 1950's, informal discussion occurred between leaders of the Holiness Movement Church of Canada³⁸ and the Free Methodist Church in Canada. In order to initiate and give structure to the merger, the Canadian Executive Board appointed Dr. R. Barclay Warren to represent the Free Methodist Church in Canada at the Holiness Movement General Conference held in Winnipeg, Manitoba in 1957.³⁹ The Holiness Movement Church General Conference delegates went on record favouring a merger with the Canadian Free Methodists. Then, in 1958 the Holiness Movement annual conferences approved the action of the General Conference.⁴⁰

An initial merger committee was established October 10, 1957, in Winona Lake, Indiana with the Free Methodist Board of Bishops and the North American Board of Administration.⁴¹

³⁷ Ibid, 12.

³⁸ The Holiness Movement Church of Canada was begun about 1894 in the Ottawa Valley under the leadership of a Methodist minister, the Rev. Ralph C. Horner. This church was the first breakaway following the Methodist Church of Canada union of 1883. It represented another attempt to recover revivalism and the disciplined holiness message in Canada.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ The Joint Committee On Union, Report of the Committee On Union Being a Summary of the Proceedings of the Joint Committee which met in Kingston, Ontario, Canada, October 7 and 8, 1958, (Winona Lake Free Methodist Publishing House, 1958), 6-7.

The most significant work was done by a Joint Committee on Union which met at the Colborne Street Free Methodist Church in Kingston, Ontario. Five committees were established:⁴²

a. Property Transfer Committee:

Holiness Movement - R. Boston, Harry Hawley, H. A. Campbell
Free Methodist - C. A. Watson, R. L. Casement, C. W.
Reynolds

b. Ministerial Retirement, Budgeting Matters, Education and Publications Committee:

Holiness Movement - E. H. Childerhose, Harold Lees,
R. L. Mainse
Free Methodist - J. A. Robb, A. S. Hill, Ray Harrington,
George Fuller

c. Ordination, Ministerial Status, Compound Conference Administration, Affiliated Ministers and Churches, Status of The Irish Church, Continuity of Identity and Doctrinal Freedom Committee:

Holiness Movement - W. J. Stonehouse, J. R. Woodland,
L. F. Warren, W. A. McMillan
Free Methodist - R. L. Marston, C. V. Fairbairn,
J. P. Taylor, R. B. Warren

d. Missions and Women's Missionary Groups Committee:

Holiness Movement - Holiness Movement Missions Board with
M. A. Campbell and R. L. Mainse

⁴² Ibid, 8.

Free Methodist - W. S. Kendall, Hugh A. White,
George Fuller, B. S. Lamson

e. Youth, Sunday School and Youth Camp Administration
Committee:

Holiness Movement - W. C. A. McFarlane, Asa Smith,
A. Wilkins

Free Methodist - J. S. Mitchell, W. J. Parmerter, C. W. Kay

The recommendations were sent to the Free Methodist Church of North America Board of Administration, October 13-15, 1958 at Winona Lake, Indiana. The actions taken in Kingston were adopted unanimously without amendment.⁴³ Thus the union was consummated between the two denominations.

The union of the two Canadian denominations made necessary a new Parliament of Canada Incorporation. The Canadian Executive Board and Dr. C. A. Watson, secretary of the Free Methodist Church General Conference drafted a new Constitution and bylaws.⁴⁴ These were presented to a joint meeting of the Holiness Movement and Free Methodist Church Executive Boards, December 3, 1958 at the Fifth Avenue Holiness Movement Church, Ottawa, Ontario.⁴⁵

In drafting the new Act of Parliament and Bylaws, it was

⁴³ Ibid, 14.

⁴⁴ Lorne C. Ball, Executive Board History of the Free Methodist Church in Canada, 1920-1974, 13.

⁴⁵ The Joint Committee On Union, Report of the Committee on Union, Being A Summary of the Proceedings of the Joint Committee which met in Kingston, Ontario, Canada, October 7-8, 1958, 14-15.

kept in mind that the Canadian Church was proceeding towards General Conference status so that, "when that day should come the basic machinery would be in place."⁴⁶

E. SETTING THE STAGE FOR A CANADIAN GENERAL CONFERENCE-
A CANADIAN JURISDICTIONAL CONFERENCE:

During the nineteen-fifties Canadians began to take renewed interest in their own national identity. In 1957, Conservative John G. Diefenbaker won the national election by calling for "unhyphenated Canadianism."⁴⁷ In 1964, the Liberal government under Lester B. Pearson legislated a new Canadian flag and national anthem.⁴⁸ Then, to usher in the decade of the seventies, Canadians elected Pierre Elliott Trudeau who has had a major role in helping Canadians to shape their distinct nationhood.⁴⁹

During the forty-fifth session of the Canadian Executive Board, held at Aldersgate College, Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan, October 17-18, 1971, a recommendation that had been drafted by two laymen, Selwyn P. Belsher and Alvin Hill of the East Ontario Conference, was adopted:⁵⁰

⁴⁶ Ibid, Lorne C. Ball, Executive Board History Of The Free Methodist Church in Canada.

⁴⁷ R. Wayne Kleinsteuber, Coming of Age, 55.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ The Canadian Free Methodist Herald, "Canadian Executive Board holds 45th session" and "Interesting Year Ahead for Herald," October 1971, 1.

Moved that we, the East Ontario Conference of the Canadian Free Methodist Church, recommend to the Canadian Executive Board that a committee task force be created to prepare a formal study and discussion regarding the feasibility of organizing a distinct Canadian Free Methodist Church General Conference

The Committee charged to study the feasibility of organizing a Canadian General Conference, brought a report. A Study Proposal For A Canadian General Conference, to a specially called meeting of the Canadian Executive Board, May 6, 1972 held in Toronto. This report is both comprehensive and specific in the objectives of a Canadian General Conference.⁵¹

1. To develop a strong church extension and evangelism program across Canada.
2. To utilize and develop Canadian church leaders so as to better challenge and enlist our manpower potential.
3. To further develop our missionary program by fully supporting Canadian missionaries within the framework of the Free Methodist Church of North America.
4. To be fully responsible for our Canadian home missions among the Canadian Indian and develop work among the French Canadian and the Eskimo.
5. To develop church literature and educational material, exploring every possible means of "Canadianizing" these materials.
6. To develop a Canadian means of communicating our outreach program.

⁵¹ Executive Board of the Free Methodist Church in Canada, A Study Proposal For A Canadian General Conference, 4-5.

7. To establish a department to develop a Canadian stewardship emphasis in promoting annuities, wills, investment plans.
8. To establish a Canadian general treasurer to handle all funds other than local and conference funds raised by the Free Methodist Church in Canada.
9. To give leadership on the Canadian church scene through fellowship and merger with similar Wesleyan Armenian communions.
10. To develop, promote and direct a church program which will minister to the entire church family utilizing the Christian education services of the Free Methodist of North America.

This Canadian Executive Board report contains a strongly worded statement as to the needed action:⁵²

The Free Methodist Church in Canada has lived for over 100 years under the hovering wings of the maternal church. Canada will much better develop its own leaders as it accepts its full responsibility for its own destiny. The Canadian church will be a much stronger partner in the world community of Free Methodist Churches as it becomes truly indigenous.

R. Wayne Kleinsteuber records that:⁵³

... a visiting Bishop, Myron F. Boyd, objected to any Canadian secession from the North American General Conference. He urged the Board's directors to meet with all the

⁵² Ibid, 4.

⁵³ R. Wayne Kleinsteuber, Coming Of Age, 56. This is the only documented act of American "intervention" in the Canadian journey toward autonomy. No documentation can be found as to the "Canadian" response to Myron Boyd. From this writer's study and observation the American Free Methodist church leaders have always agreed to Canadian requests in a gracious manner.

American Bishops, to allow the latter input into any modifications in the existing relationship.

What emerged was a Canadian Jurisdictional Conference relationship with the final authority still with the General Conference of the Free Methodist Church of North America. The largest concession that the Canadians were given was the election of a resident Bishop for Canada. This relationship was granted at the General Conference of the Free Methodist Church of North America, June 28, 1974.⁵⁴ Later in that General Conference, Donald Noel Bastian, a native of Saskatchewan and Senior Minister at the Greenville College Church, Greenville, Illinois was elected as the first resident Canadian Bishop.⁵⁵

However, the question of complete autonomy still begged an answer. The Canadian Jurisdictional Conference relationship was seen to be only "a step toward the formation of General Conference of Canada."⁵⁶

F. VIEWS FROM ACROSS THE CANADIAN - AMERICAN BORDER:

This is a review of expressions regarding the significance and mission of the Free Methodist Church in Canada through significant literature from both sides of the boarder.

⁵⁴ Ibid, 57.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Board of Administration, Free Methodist Church of North America, Minutes, May 1973, p. 21.

AMERICAN FREE METHODIST HISTORIOGRAPHY:

A perusal of Free Methodist journals namely, The Earnest Christian⁵⁷ and The Free Methodist was performed, centring around key dates in the early history of the Canadian Church. These dates are 1874, when B. T. Roberts first visited Canada, 1880 and the formation of the Canada Conference; 1895 with the division of the Canada Conference to East and West Ontario; 1920 and the Sarnia Convention.

Neither The Earnest Christian nor The Free Methodist communicate anything of major import regarding the first three key Canadian dates.⁵⁸ It is interesting that the 1895 creation of two new Canadian annual conferences was not noted by The Free Methodist until July of 1896.⁵⁹ The Sarnia Convention of 1920 was not set down by "American" writers. Albert Sims placed a notice "To Canadians" under "correspondence" in an issue of The Free Methodist in November, 1920. This contained a sketch of the

⁵⁷ The Earnest Christian was Bishop B. T. Roberts own publication whereas The Free Methodist was the official publication of the Free Methodist Church of North America.

⁵⁸ Note has been made of the three (3) line communication in The Free Methodist of February 26, 1874. It was interesting for this writer to note that major import was given to the doctrine and experience of holiness, the Methodist Episcopal Church, the issues of tobacco, life insurance and "Pentecost Bands". It is also noted that the American Conferences were given additional news coverage whereas Canadian news was in the form of written correspondence from Canada.

⁵⁹ The Free Methodist, July 23, 1896, 13.

Sarnia proceedings.⁶⁰ Later that same month a two line brief was written which indicated that Canada was allowed by the Executive Committee to raise moneys for "home mission" projects.⁶¹

Significant biographies and histories have been written about Free Methodist leaders and the church by American authors. Charles H. Sage wrote his autobiography⁶² as a church leader and planter in the early years of Free Methodism in North America. For the Canadian Free Methodist Church, the chapters devoted to his revivalist efforts in Ontario is a primary source of historical information.

Bishop Wilson T. Hogue produced a two volume History Of The Free Methodist Church⁶³ in 1918. Volume II follows a chronological history of the various developments as the Free Methodist Church expanded throughout North America. A very helpful chapter on Canada is included.⁶⁴ The efforts of Charles H. Sage and Albert Sims are highlighted. Also, Hogue details the extent to which women were involved in the pioneer efforts in Canada.

⁶⁰ The Free Methodist, "Albert Sims Correspondence," November 16, 1920, 732.

⁶¹ The Free Methodist, "Actions Of The Executive Committee," November 23, 1920, 744.

⁶² Ibid, Charles H. Sage, Autobiography Of Rev. Charles H. Sage.

⁶³ Wilson T. Hogue, History Of The Free Methodist Church Of North America, Vols. I and II (Chicago: The Free Methodist Publishing House, 1918).

⁶⁴ Ibid, 152-168.

In 1957 Clarence H. Zahnizer published his Earnest Christian Life And Works of Benjamin Titus Roberts.⁶⁵ This work has drawn heavily on unpublished sources such as letters and diaries of B. T. Roberts. It is disappointing to note that no mention was made of B. T. Roberts' 1874 and 1880 Canadian trips⁶⁶ even though Roberts' England tour of 1888 was given much exposure.⁶⁷

1960 was the centennial year of the founding of The Free Methodist Church in North America. Three centennial histories were written.

Richard R. Blews, in The Master Workman,⁶⁸ has presented biographical sketches of the bishops of the Free Methodist Church during its first century. The Canadian Church was not mentioned in either the biography of B. T. Roberts or Burton R. Jones (who presided over the division of East and West Ontario Conferences, 1895).

Byron S. Lamson, a past General Missionary Secretary of the Free Methodist Church, published a volume which notes the

⁶⁵ Clarence Howard Zahnizer, Earnest Christian Life And Works Of Benjamin Titus Roberts (Circleville, Ohio: Advocate Publishing House, 1957).

⁶⁶ It needs to be noted that the B. T. Roberts' diary shows entries for February 5, 6, 9, 11, 1874 in Canada. Roberts said that Toronto "is old, and does not appear to be very thriving...(but is) more orderly than ever I saw in an American city." Unpublished Correspondence, from Free Methodist Historical Center to John W. Sigsworth, October 7, 1974. This contains pertinent excerpts from B. T. Robert's diary.

⁶⁷ Ibid, Zahnizer, 327-336.

⁶⁸ Richard R. Blews, Master Workmen. (Winona Lake: Light and Life Press, 1960).

missionary endeavours around the world. This book is Venture! The Frontiers of Free Methodism.⁶⁹ Canada is only noted in terms of Lorne Park College⁷⁰ and Moose Jaw Bible College⁷¹ as well as home missions in Northern Ontario, Quebec and the Native Indian ministries.⁷² It was interesting to note that a biographical treatment of John Wesley Haley, founder of the Free Methodist Mission in Central Africa, did not refer to his Canadian origins.⁷³

Bishop Leslie R. Marston wrote his epic work, From Age To Age A Living Witness A Historical Interpretation of Free Methodism' First Century. This was a history to discover the enduring principles of the movement⁷⁴ and project these into a future ministry vision for the whole church. No discussion about Canada is presented, except mission endeavours noted in Northern Ontario and Saskatchewan.⁷⁵

Although both Sage and Hogue present pertinent facts about

⁶⁹ Byron S. Lamson, Venture! The Frontiers Of Free Methodism (Winona Lake: Light and Life Press, 1960).

⁷⁰ Ibid, 37.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Ibid, 139.

⁷³ Ibid, 162-169.

⁷⁴ Bishop Leslie Marston listed these as doctrinal integrity, Christian experience, freedom of the Spirit in worship, disciplined living and loving outreach.

⁷⁵ Leslie R. Marston, From Age To Age A Living Witness A Historical Interpretation Of Free Methodism's First Century. (Winona Lake: Light and Life Press, 1960), 465.

the beginnings of Free Methodism in Canada, it was observed that the Canadian Church gets very little "press" from earlier American Free Methodist writers. From the American perspective, it seems that Canada is perceived to be an extension of the American church. However, since the late 1950's this Canadian exposure has accelerated by the writing of the Canadian Bishops, C. V. Fairbairn and Donald N. Bastian in The Free Methodist and its successor the Light and Life.

CANADIAN FREE METHODIST HISTORIOGRAPHY:

The Rev. Albert Sims, a pioneer Canadian leader and chairman of the Sarnia Convention, 1920, was a prolific writer.⁷⁶ His first volume, Bible Salvation And Popular Religion Contrasted⁷⁷ was authored in 1886. Although the Methodist Church of Canada was not named it is clearly an apologetic for Free Methodism and its return to Scriptural Christianity in Canada. Sims's only history was written in 1920. It was this short volume that highlighted events at the Sarnia Convention of 1920. This was entitled, Free Methodism In Canada.⁷⁸ It stated the aspirations of Canadian Free Methodists.

⁷⁶ Albert Sims published a monthly four page paper entitled, Gospel Truth. As well he authored Bible study helps and packets to assist in "winning souls."

⁷⁷ Albert Sims, Bible Salvation And Popular Religion Contrasted. (Otterville, Ontario: A. Sims Publisher, 1886).

⁷⁸ Ibid, Albert Sims, Free Methodism In Canada.

In 1922 the Canadian Free Methodist Herald⁷⁹ was launched which was to give the Canadian news and viewpoints to the Canadian church. This is a major repository of Canadian Church history and development as well as the major communication device for the Church. This paper focused on national issues.

Bishop Charles V. Fairbairn, the first Canadian Free Methodist Bishop authored an autobiography entitled, I Call To Remembrance.⁸⁰ This book is the story of C. V. Fairbairn's break with the Methodist Church of Canada over the issue of holiness preaching. It details his revival leadership in the Kingston district and later his evangelistic labours across the entire Free Methodist Church. For Canadian Church history it is quite useful in describing the conflict within the Methodist Church prior to church union in 1925. The "second wave" of revivals in the Kingston area among Free Methodists in the 1920's is detailed.

From the Sarnia Convention of 1920 a pool of Canadian historical documents had been collected by the Rev. Alice Walls.⁸¹ Later the Canadian Executive Board commissioned John

⁷⁹ Robert H. Hamilton was the first editor. He was also a member of the Sarnia Convention, 1920. It was his view that Canadian Free Methodism was the major voice of continuing Methodism in Canada.

⁸⁰ Charles V. Fairbairn, I Call To Remembrance (Winona Lake: Light and Life Press, 1960).

⁸¹ Alice Walls had been appointed by the Canadian Executive Board to be the "national" custodian of Canadian Church historical documents.

Wilkens Sigsworth to interpret and edit this material into a Canadian Church history. The Sigsworth's book, The Battle Was The Lord's: A History Of The Free Methodist Church In Canada,⁸² was published in 1960 to commemorate the one hundredth anniversary of the Free Methodist Church of North America. It is a primary source of the Canadian Free Methodist story. John Sigsworth does not necessarily see the future of the Free Methodist Church in Canada as being tied to the autonomy of a General Conference. For Sigsworth renewal of the Canadian Church will only come through revivals like those conducted by C. H. Sage, Albert Sims and Charles V. Fairbairn.

To commemorate the one hundredth anniversary of the Free Methodist Church in Canada, the 1980 Canadian Jurisdictional Conference commissioned R. Wayne Kleinsteuber to write Coming of Age: The Making of a Canadian Free Methodist Church.⁸³ For the first time Free Methodism was put in the context of Canadian Methodism. This is the story of the journey towards autonomy and stopping short of that goal at the level of a resident Bishop and Jurisdictional Conference. Later in 1984, R. Wayne Kleinsteuber was again commissioned by the Canadian Jurisdictional Conference to produce another volume. This was to commemorate the two hundredth anniversary of the organization of the first Methodist

⁸² Ibid, John Wilkens Sigsworth, The Battle Was The Lord's: A History Of The Free Methodist Church In Canada.

⁸³ Ibid, R. Wayne Kleinsteuber, Coming of Age: The Making of a Canadian Free Methodist Church.

Conference in North America.⁸⁴ The title of this book is a reference to Goldwin French's⁸⁵ comment that Methodism is "but a fading memory in the country".⁸⁶ Hence the title, More Than A Memory: The Renewal Of Methodism In Canada. This was apologetic for the thesis that the Free Methodist Church in Canada is Canada's continuing Methodist Church.⁸⁷

John Wilkens Sigsworth's history of Canadian Free Methodism sees the Church as a result of an American revival thrust into Canada. By implication the future of the Canadian Church will depend on keeping constant the disciplined and revivalistic momentum of primitive Methodism. However, R. Wayne Kleinsteuber sees the Canadian Free Methodist Church as a result of regrouping of concerned Methodists at the time of the 1874 and 1883 unions. This view indicates that the growth of early Canadian Free Methodism was not simply due to revivalism and evangelism but also re-grouping of Methodist dissidents. The position also implies that Free methodism is the major voice of continuing Methodism in Canada.

⁸⁴ The "Christmas" Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Baltimore, Maryland, 1784.

⁸⁵ Dr. Goldwin French was president of Victoria College, University of Toronto.

⁸⁶ Ibid, R. Wayne Kleinsteuber, More Than A Memory: The Renewal Of Methodism In Canada. Introduction, XIII. This quote comes from an essay by Dr. Goldwin French, "The People Called Methodists in Canada."

⁸⁷ This position has not been universally acclaimed particularly by "Methodist sympathizers" in the United Church of Canada and persons in other "Methodist Holiness" traditions.

The Rev. Lorne C. Ball has written a volume detailing significant actions of the Canadian Executive Board from the Sarnia Convention of 1920 to the creation of the Canadian Jurisdictional Conference. The volume is Executive Board History of the Free Methodist Church in Canada, 1920-1974.⁸⁸ and was published in 1985. It traces the influences through the years towards Canadian autonomy, beginning at the Sarnia Convention. Ball also points out that "the Charter of 1927 and the new one 1959 gave the Free Methodist Church in Canada full power to set up and hold its own General Conference anytime it may become necessary or advisable."⁸⁹

G. SUMMARY:

It was the Sarnia Convention of 1920 that really put the Free Methodist Church in Canada on the road to a General Conference. The Sarnia Convention gave birth to the Canadian Executive Board and later, the Canadian Jurisdictional Conference of 1974. The Canadian Jurisdictional Conference was an enlarged Canadian Executive Board presided over by a resident Canadian Bishop.

Note has been made of the American and Canadian views of the Free Methodist Church in Canada. The Americans have tended to view the Canadian Church as an extension of the American Church

⁸⁸ Ibid, Lorne C. Ball, Executive Board History Of The Free Methodist Church in Canada, 1920-1074.

⁸⁹ Ibid, 13.

market. The Canadian writers see two different ways to achieve destiny in their church. The "revivalism only" position would not see a great need for a General Conference in Canada. However, those who hold the view that Free Methodism is the leading voice of Canada's "continuing" Methodist emphasis would express a need for an autonomous Canadian Church. The autonomy of a General Conference structure would allow greater freedom to evangelise, come to full formation as a church and interact more fully with Canadian cultural issues.

Chapter IV

THE NATIONAL TASK FORCE

This chapter will detail the cautious progressive development of Canadian national autonomy parallel to the rise of national identity of the Free Methodist Church in Canada. The resolution toward General Conference status, from the three Canadian Annual Conferences will be reviewed. An account of the National Task Force On a General Conference will be given.

A. CANADA, AN EVOLVING NATIONAL IDENTITY:

Beginning in 1534 Jacques Cartier, French explorer and navigator, led three expeditions to Quebec and the Gulf of the St. Lawrence region. This enabled France to govern the interior of North America for some time. Cartier is credited with naming Canada.¹ Two Indian youths were directing Cartier to the Huron village of Stadacona.² They informed him of the route that led to "Canada". "Canada" simply meant in Huron -Iroquois language, "Kanata - a village or settlement."³

During the eighteenth century, France lost most of its North American colonies to Great Britain. By 1763 with the

¹ Marcel Trudel, "Jacques Cartier", The Canadian Encyclopedia, ed. James H. Marsh (Edmonton: Hurtig Publisher, 1988), 368.

² This is now the site of Quebec City.

³ W. Kaye Lamb, "Canada," The Canadian Encyclopedia, ed. James H. Marsh (Edmonton: Hurtig Publishers, 1988), 322.

Treaty of Paris the whole northern Atlantic seaboard, with the exception of the Saint-Pierre and Miquelon Islands, came under British rule.

In 1774 the American War Of Independence erupted and by 1783 the original thirteen British colonies were independent of British control and the United States of America had become a fledgling nation.

Those citizens of the former thirteen colonies who remained loyal to the British Crown, were called United Empire Loyalists. 1783 and following were the years of a large influx of Loyalists to Eastern Canada. In 1784 two separate colonies were established - New Brunswick and Nova Scotia.⁴ Further, in 1791 the central colony of Canada was divided into Upper Canada (Ontario) and Lower Canada (Quebec).⁵ These colonies were governed by an executive council and Governor appointed by the British government.

Later, in the 1830's, both Upper and Lower Canada experienced local insurrections because of the absence of representative government. In 1838 Lord Durham was sent to Canada by the British government to investigate. The Durham Report "marked the watershed between the first and second British empires, as British holdings including Canada, began to change

⁴ W. H. McConnell, "Constitutional History," The Canadian Encyclopedia, ed. James H. Marsh (Edmonton: Hurtig Publishers, 1988), 503.

⁵ Ibid.

status from colonies to self-governing nations."⁶ By 1850 each of the "Canadian" colonies had its own elected legislature. The British still had control over trade, judicial matters and foreign affairs.

During the early 1860's, under the leadership of George Brown and John A. MacDonald, moves were made to confederate these colonies into one nation. This process began in 1864 at the Charlottetown Conference. Later, two other union conferences were held at Quebec City and London, England. This brought forth the British Act of Parliament, "the British North American Act."⁷ This act provided for two chambers in the federal parliament. The House of Commons or lower house was elected on the basis of population. The Senate or upper house was to be the guardian of regional interests with twenty-four senators, each appointed by the Prime Minister, from the Maritime Provinces,⁸ Quebec, and Ontario. Later in 1915, twenty-four senators were provided for the Western provinces⁹ and six senator seats were given to Newfoundland in 1949.

The British North America Act delineated between federal,

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ The Maritime Provinces are New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island. Note under the British North America Act, the colonies became known as "provinces."

⁹ The Western provinces are Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia.

provincial and municipal jurisdiction. At this time, Canada was given jurisdiction over trade and defence. However, foreign affairs was to be handled on a consultive basis through the British Colonial Office.¹⁰

The British North America Act was signed into law, July 1, 1867 by Queen Victoria.¹¹

Following World War 1, though Canada was automatically included in the British signature at Versailles, Canada insisted on a separate signature at the Treaty of Versailles and individual membership in the League of Nations.¹² Desmond Morton makes the point that the Great War was a milestone in the developing Canadian national identity:¹³

... almost every facet of Canadian life, from the length of skirts to the value of money, had been transformed by the war years. ...Overseas, Canada's soldiers had struggled to achieve, and had won, a considerable degree of autonomy from British control.

In 1926 the Balfour Report to the Imperial Conference of the British Empire recommended that the former British colonies were to be seen as self-governing Dominions. They were autonomous and equal communities within the newly formed British

¹⁰ Ibid, 504.

¹¹ Ibid, 503.

¹² Ibid, 504.

¹³ Desmond Morton, "World War II," The Canadian Encyclopedia, ed. James H. Marsh (Edmonton, Hurtig Publishers, 1988), 2343.

Commonwealth.¹⁴ Later, in 1931, the Statute of Westminster declared that the British Parliament could no longer legislate for a Dominion unless requested to do so.¹⁵ "The Crown, formerly indivisible, now became divided."¹⁶

At this point, in terms of unilateral independence, Canada was not quite there. The nation still needed its own Constitution. However, from this survey of Canada's gradual evolution to complete independence is quite distinct from its American counterpart. Pierre Berton declared that this is a picture of Canadian character - the respect for authority, and the yearning for peace, order and good, strong government as opposed to a highly individualized and even permissive society of the United States.¹⁷

No guns, no revolutions. Can any other nation in all the Americas make that statement? We did not separate violently from Europe but cut our ties cautiously in the Canadian manner - so cautiously, so imperceptibly that none of us is quite sure when we actually achieved our independence. It is fashionable to poke fun at this Canadian caution. We have no Boston tea parties, no Valley Forges, no Bull Runs to celebrate in song and story; but then we have fewer graves to tend.

¹⁴ Ibid, W. H. McConnell, p. 504.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid. This means that the King or Queen was constitutional monarch of the whole British Empire or Commonwealth prior to 1931. Following 1931 he or she was the King or Queen of the United Kingdom and the King or Queen of Canada, etc. as individual Dominions.

¹⁷ Pierre Berton, Why We Act Like Canadians, (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Limited, 1982), 36.

The significance of World War II in Canadian history is considerable. Canada was forced to move from an agriculturally based society to that of a modern industrial nation.¹⁸ Canada's involvement as a major participant with the Allies increased the world perception that she was a power in her own right. That which had been "shakily established in 1919"¹⁹ in terms of identity, "was beyond doubt after 1945."²⁰

Following World War II, the theme of national development and national identity increased. In 1949 the British colony of Newfoundland joined the Canadian Confederation, becoming Canada's tenth province.²¹

The Diefenbaker years²² were highlighted by the opening of wheat markets to Communist China and the Canadian Bill of Rights which extended the franchise to Canada's Native Peoples as well as provided a framework for social justice. Another enhancement of the Canadian identity was the "northern vision" which increased the governmental and public desire to increased

¹⁸ C. P. Stacey, "World War II," The Canadian Encyclopedia, ed. James H. Marsh (Edmonton: Hurtig Publishers, 1988), 2346.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ W. F. Summers, "Newfoundland," The Canadian Encyclopedia, ed. James H. Marsh (Edmonton: Hurtig Publishers, 1988), 1491.

²² This was the period, 1957-1962 when John G. Diefenbaker was Prime Minister of the first Conservative administration in twenty-two years.

economic development and Canadian identity in the Far North.²³

In 1925 and again in 1946 Canadian Prime Minister Mackenzie King attempted to have parliament legislate a distinctly Canadian flag.²⁴ Prime Minister Lester B. Pearson used "the flag issue" as one of his election planks. He was elected as Prime Minister in 1963. Pearson was determined the new design would be devoid of any colonial associations. The red maple leaf on white background, bounded by two red bars became Canada's distinct flag on February 15, 1965.²⁵

In order to respond to the aspirations and frustrations of Quebec, as well as Canada's growing mosaic of ethnic communities, the Pearson government created a Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism (1963-1972).²⁶ The Royal Commission established that Canada is a nation of two founding peoples - French and English. This resulted in the Official Languages Act of 1969 which laid the foundation for functional bilingualism

²³ Patricia Williams, "Diefenbaker, John George," The Canadian Encyclopedia, ed. James H. Marsh (Edmonton: Hurtig Publishers, 1988), 594.

²⁴ From 1867 at Confederation, Canada had used the British designed "Red Ensign." This was a red flag with the "Union Jack" in the upper left corner and Canadian coat of arms in the lower right corner.

²⁵ John Ross Matheson, "Flag Debate," The Canadian Encyclopedia, ed. James H. Marsh (Edmonton: Hurtig Publishers Ltd., 1988), 789.

²⁶ G. Laing, "Bilingualism and Biculturalism, Royal Commission," The Canadian Encyclopedia, ed. James H. Marsh (Edmonton: Hurtig Publishers Ltd., 1988), 216.

throughout the country.²⁷ The Royal Commission also laid the foundations for increased acceptance of cultural diversity.²⁸ Reginald W. Bibby summarizes these keystone policies in giving further shape to Canadian identity:²⁹

... the two pivotal government policies guiding inter-group relations in Canada are bilingualism and multiculturalism. Bilingualism represents the recognition that two dominant linguistic groups exist within the country. With the passing of the official Languages Act, the ideal of two official languages has been enshrined. Multiculturalism represents the official response to the Canadian reality of a larger number of cultural groups living amidst a majority of people with British or French backgrounds. It is essentially a pluralistic solution taking on a "mosaic" form, stressing mutual respect and acceptance of cultural differences. This policy stands in contrast to the assimilationist, "melting pot", ideal that is frequently associated with the United States.

Lester Pearson's government also left a legacy of the Canada Pension Plan and a universal medicare system. This represented "the high point of the Canadian Welfare State that generations of social thinkers had dreamed about."³⁰

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Ibid. This study went beyond the two founding cultures to the reality of "multiculturalism." This has growing effects on immigration policy and the settlement of various ethnic communities in Canada.

²⁹ Reginald Bibby, Fragmented Gods: The Poverty And Potential Of Religion In Canada (Toronto: Irwin Publishing, 1987), 182.

³⁰ Robert Bothwell, "Pearson, Lester Bowles," The Canadian Encyclopedia, ed. James H. Marsh (Edmonton: Hurtig Publishers, 1988), 1635.

From the days of Quebec's passing under British control and the Quebec Act of 1774, the French "nation" has struggled for its survival and at times its independence from the rest of Canada. The mood of independence reached a high water mark under the leadership of Quebec's Premier, Rene Levesque who proposed an independent but special relationship with Canada. This was called "sovereignty-association."

In May 1980, the Parti Quebecois government of Rene Levesque put the question of independence through "sovereignty association" to the people of Quebec. The separatist cause was defeated.³¹ In the wake of this referendum, Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau gave strong leadership for the final act of Canadian autonomy. That is, to bring back to Canada, the British North America Act from the British parliament.³² This updated and adapted British North America Act was to have a special amending formula for future change via the federal and provincial jurisdictions.³³ Further, Trudeau proposed an entrenched Charter of Rights and Freedoms.³⁴ There followed a battle of epic proportion between federal and provincial governments. Finally, after several compromises, such as the

³¹ Reg Whitaker, "Trudeau, Pierre Elliott," The Canadian Encyclopedia, ed. James H. Marsh (Edmonton: Hurtig Publishers, 1988), 2198.

³² Ibid, 2197.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Ibid.

inclusion of minority, language, education and individual rights, the Canada Act was proclaimed law, April 17, 1982.³⁵

The last twenty years have seen Canada develop its own national policies and symbols at a faster rate than prior history in order to achieve total autonomy. This has allowed Canada to take her place among the independent and democratic nations of the World.

The climax of this process was the patriation of the Canadian constitution (the Canada Act), 1982.

B. THE FREE METHODIST CHURCH IN CANADA - AN EVOLVING IDENTITY:

Chapter two has dealt with the inception of the Free Methodist Church in Canada and the beginnings of the journey to autonomy at the Sarnia Convention in 1920.

Free Methodists in Canada are creatures of their own culture. In the past twenty years Free Methodists have increased their pace towards the complete autonomy of a General Conference. This spirit was present in the early nineteen seventies when the Canadian Executive Board published the findings of a study about the benefits of a Canadian General Conference.³⁶ These actions were made in the context of the Diefenbaker and Pearson eras. This move toward autonomy came to a climax during the summer of

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Executive Board of the Free Methodist Church in Canada. A Study Proposal For A Canada General Conference (Published by the Free Methodist Church in Canada, 1971).

1982 following the patriation of the Canadian constitution and the signing of the Canada Act.

The following resolution was initiated at the Canada East Annual Conference and was presented to the other two Canadian Conferences:³⁷

Resolution relative to a Canada General Conference

1. WHEREAS, Canada has come of age and on April 17, 1982 our Constitution was brought home; and,
2. WHEREAS, the Canada East Conference is sitting for the 87th year, and we feel we too are coming of age; and,
3. WHEREAS, 55% of our United Ministries for Christ funds are sent to our general headquarters in Winona Lake, Indiana, which in several incidents pays for duplicated ministries including some administration, and a concern is expressed for a larger portion of these funds to be directed to overseas missions; and,
4. WHEREAS, the Federal Government's regulations relative to charity giving are becoming more demanding, particularly in sending monies outside of the country; and,
5. WHEREAS, the responsibility for church planting evangelism, and church growth would be more effectively implemented throughout the Canadian Church; and,
6. WHEREAS, a made in Canada training program for pastors and missionaries for service in Canada and abroad can be more efficiently implemented in a manner relevant to the Canadian culture; and,

³⁷ Canada East Annual Conference, Free Methodist Church in Canada, Minutes, July, 1982, 9.

7. WHEREAS, union with sister Canadian holiness bodies could be better facilitated under the proposed Canadian General Conference; and,

8. WHEREAS, the Act of Incorporation provides for a smooth transition to a Canada General Conference;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that we adopt in principle the concept of organizing a General Conference in Canada and refer the exploration of the same to the Canadian Jurisdictional Conference and request a progress report for the 1983 Annual Conference.

The Canada East Conference responded to the resolution by sixty-nine votes to twenty-seven opposed.³⁸ The Canada Great Lakes Conference voted unanimously fifty-three in favour.³⁹ The Canada West Conference responded with a vote of thirty-eight in favour and three negative.⁴⁰

The Canada East Conference presented a further motion to the Canadian Jurisdictional Conference.⁴¹

... that our denomination give leadership in creating an all-Canadian "Methodist" Conference or assembly whereby leaders from the various Methodist branches in Canada could come together for the express purpose of discussing closer cooperation and eventual union. This ought to be implemented prior to 1984 and C.J.C. consider registering the (Methodist) with the government.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Canada Great Lakes Annual Conference, Free Methodist Church in Canada, Minutes, July 1982, 2.

⁴⁰ Canada West Annual Conference, Free Methodist Church in Canada, Minutes, July, 1982, 2.

⁴¹ Canada East Annual Conference, Free Methodist Church in Canada, Minutes, July, 1982, 41.

The Canadian Jurisdictional Conference meeting in Toronto, August 19-21, 1982 recommended that the two foregoing motions be studied by the Canadian Jurisdictional Conference Board of Directors.⁴²

The year 1982 was highlighted by activities of a Task Force on Higher Education that had been positioned by the Canadian Jurisdictional Conference Board of Directors, March 31-April 1, 1981.⁴³

The Task Force formulated key questions pertaining to autonomy in the categories of liberal arts and theological education.⁴⁴ These questions were:⁴⁵

1. How important is Canadianization?
 - a) From the standpoint of the Free Methodist Church in relation to the family of Christian Churches in Canada?
 - b) From the standpoint of church growth and expansion?
2. How important is the seminary/theological college route?
3. Is there a large enough constituency for the liberal arts-seminary/theological college approach?
 - a) From the standpoint of eventual union of all "Methodist" oriented churches in Canada?
 - b) From the standpoint of constituency interest?

⁴² Canadian Jurisdictional Conference, Free Methodist Church in Canada, Minutes, August, 1982, 14-15.

⁴³ Canadian Jurisdictional Conference Board of Directors, Free Methodist Church in Canada, Minutes, March 31-April 1, 1981, 3-4.

⁴⁴ This Task Force on Higher Education preceded the National Task Force On A Canadian General Conference. The members of the committee included Bishop Donald N. Bastian, Executive Secretary, Claude A. Horton; Superintendents Robert J. Buchanan, Wilfred D. Kinney, Gary R. Walsh. Leon Winslow and Claude A. Horton represented Aldersgate College and Lorne Park College Foundation, respectively.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

4. Can we get John Wesley Seminary recognition and funding for a Canadian Seminary project?
5. To get started, what Canadian Seminaries /Theological Colleges could be affiliated with?
 - a) From the standpoint of Methodist theology and ethos?
 - b) From the standpoint of willingness to accommodate the Free Methodist Church in Canada?
6. If an accredited Seminary/Theological College program was established in Canada, where would the students receive their undergraduate degree?
7. What is the role of Aldersgate College in these plans?
 - a) From the standpoint of helping students "find themselves?"
 - b) From the standpoint of affiliation with a University accredited undergraduate program?
8. What is the financial package for this venture?

The Task Force on Higher Education agreed upon two basic principles pertaining to ministerial education.⁴⁶ First, that the Canadian Church endorse and pursue the seminary/theological college approach to the education of Canadian Free Methodist ministers. Second, this education as much as possible be within the context of Canadian culture.

The Task Force also agreed to request that Lorne Park College Board of Trustees fund theological students to Canadian graduate institutions for two years in order to ascertain the strengths and weaknesses of such affiliation.⁴⁷

⁴⁶ Ibid, 10.

⁴⁷ Ibid. These institutions were, Canadian Theological College, Regina, Saskatchewan; Ontario Theological Seminary, Toronto, Ontario; Wycliffe College, Toronto, Ontario.

Later, the report of the Task Force on Higher Education to the December, 1982 Canadian Jurisdictional Conference Board of Directors noted a dark cloud over the whole process:⁴⁸

However, there are still partial or no answers to many of the above questions. Since November, 1981, the uncertainty of the future discretions of Aldersgate College has put much of our activity on "hold" until the concerns pertaining to that institution are resolved. That direction is in the hands of the Aldersgate College Board of Trustees. Aldersgate College is a key component in the future of Canadian Free Methodist theological education.

In light of the continued activities of the Task Force on Higher Education, the Canadian Jurisdictional Conference Board of Directors did not act on the General Conference question in the period 1982-1983. However, there was a reflection time observed in the Board of Directors, December 14, 1982. The pros and cons were noted:⁴⁹

PROS

1. Redirect money now going to U.S.A.
2. More focused ministry
3. More of Bishop's time
4. Would see services we need, and would buy them
5. Autonomy tends to nurture

CONS

1. Lose value that come from American Church
2. May generate negative attitudes from American Church
3. May become more provincial
4. Might be deprived of services
5. Our post secondary education may not be ready to fly alone

⁴⁸ Canadian Jurisdictional Conference, Board of Directors, Free Methodist Church in Canada, Minutes, December 14, 1982, 5.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

The theme of a Canadian General Conference was major in Bishop Donald N. Bastian's episcopal address to the 1983 Canadian Jurisdictional Conference, held in Toronto. He noted:⁵⁰

Last summer all three Canadian conferences passed a resolution asking the C.J.C. to begin to move toward the establishment of the Canadian church as a General Conference. The motions were spontaneous and widely supported. The C.J.C. must therefore take this as a mandate.

...My question is, "Why should it be brought about?" There can be only one reason: Only if becoming a General Conference will increase our sense of responsibility to preach a full gospel to our own Canadian people and at the same time to more fully shoulder responsibility for missionary efforts overseas, it is justified. We have only the time and energy to make those structural changes which will increase the vitality of the church at home and abroad. The strong vote in favour of this move last summer indicates that strength of our desire. But with desire, we must be prepared for change. What sort of a structure will we forge in Canada to assure adequate representation of our Conferences in a General Conference? Are present conference boundaries best for supervision and growth? Do we need to form more or fewer annual conferences? Where are our greatest prospects for church planting and how do we organize to take advantage of the harvest? We have had several exercises to increase our flexibility in recent years. We must be prepared for more if we move to a General Conference.

The Education and Communications Committee for the Canadian Jurisdictional Conference responded to Bishop Donald Bastian's

⁵⁰ Canadian Jurisdictional Conference, Free Methodist Church in Canada, "Bishop's Address," August, 1983, 6.

1983 episcopal address with the following resolutions:⁵¹

Pursuant to the vote of the three annual Conferences of 1982 regarding the possibility of establishing a Canadian General Conference, we recommend the following timetable as a guide.

PROPOSED TIMETABLE

- A. PHASE I A meeting of the Bishop and the three superintendents should convene to evaluate the mission of the Free Methodist Church in Canada including our relationship and possible merger with other bodies of like mind. Other possible relationships within the North American Free Methodist Church should be explored.
- B. PHASE II If, after the above study, the above members believe a Canadian General Conference is advisable, a structure model should be drawn up showing the relationship of a Canadian General Conference with the annual conferences and with the present General Church including the General Missionary Board. This model should be prepared by the directors. If, after reviewing this model the C.J.C. approves of further study, this plan should be ratified, or revised.
- C. PHASE III If approval for PHASE II is forthcoming from the C.J.C. a brochure and a questionnaire should be prepared to obtain grass roots feedback from the members of the Canadian Church.
- D. PHASE IV If a positive feedback is received from the members of the Canadian Church, a meeting of the C.J.C. and the appropriate members of annual Conference committees should meet in concert to discuss further the timetable to be followed in establishing a Canadian General Conference.

A progress report should be presented to the 1984 C.J.C. before the 1985 General Conference.

⁵¹ Canadian Jurisdictional Conference, Free Methodist Church in Canada, Minutes, August 18, 1983, 14.

The year 1983 was also fruitful for the Canadianization of the Free Methodist Church in Canada. On June 29, 1983 the Board of Trustees of the Free Methodist Church in Canada, authorized the purchase of a new Headquarters building at 4315 Village Centre Court, Mississauga, Ontario. This would become a physical symbol of a new Canadian Free Methodist Church. The Church began operation in the new Headquarters, August 2, 1983.⁵²

Bishop Donald N. Bastian's episcopal address to the Canadian Jurisdictional Conference of 1984 contained a resolution for the body to deliberate. This resolution was the strongest yet from the Bishop's hand.⁵³

RECOMMENDATION

Re: A Canadian General Conference

WHEREAS, The Free Methodist Church in Canada now meets all the requirements either actually or potentially to become a General Conference (para 250.2.a-g; and,

WHEREAS, the Canadian Act of Incorporation authorizing the existence of the Free Methodist Church in Canada as a separate corporation -- an action approved by an earlier North American General Conference -- already acknowledges the right of the said body to become a General Conference at its own discretion; and,

WHEREAS, the leaders of the Canadian church do not wish to deflect their major energies from the task of church planting and church growth to the detail work of planning for a General Conference unless they are sure the move will be broadly supported by the Canadian people; and

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Canadian Jurisdictional Conference, Free Methodist Church in Canada, Minutes, August 24, 1984, 12.

WHEREAS, distances in Canada and the temperament of the people require that any movement toward becoming a General Conference be done in stages, giving broad participation to Canadian Free Methodists in the decision; and,

WHEREAS, broad face to face debate on the subject in Canada must coordinate with the meetings of the annual conferences as Canadian ratification of any proposal must also; therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, that this General Conference now approve that the Free Methodist Church in Canada become a General Conference if and when requirements of Para 250.2.a-g are met to the satisfaction of the executive committee of the Board of Administration of the Free Methodist Church of North America.

Two motions were approved in this session. The first motion ordered that the resolution must receive a two-thirds majority vote in order to be considered for further action by the Canadian Jurisdictional Conference.⁵⁴ This motion, and hence the proposal, received a unanimous ballot of nineteen votes.⁵⁵ A second motion was adopted:⁵⁶

C.J.C. go on record in asking the Board of Directors of C.J.C. to pursue with diligence our becoming a General Conference. This to be brought to completion as soon as technically possible in harmony with paragraph 250.2.a-g of the Book of Discipline.

The Task Force on Canadian Higher Education that had been inaugurated in 1982, discovered that due to a leadership crisis

⁵⁴ Ibid, 8.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

at Aldersgate College,⁵⁷ definite plans could not be laid to implement the "made in Canada" undergraduate and graduate theological education route. The recommendation of the Task Force on Canadian Higher Education through the Education and Communications Committee to the Jurisdictional Conference moved in a different direction:⁵⁸

1. The Board of Directors be empowered to work with the Lorne Park College Foundation⁵⁹ "to design and launch an All Canada Educational Program."

2. The new All Canada Educational Program be implemented by January 1, 1985

This completed the work of the Task Force on a Canadian Higher Education that had begun in 1982. The action is significant in that lay and ministerial Free Methodist students from all across Canada were eligible for the grant/loan scholarship. It is also significant that the "All Canada Education Program" was later named the "Canadian Education

⁵⁷ President Leon Winslow resigned as President at Aldersgate College, summer, 1982. Later, in 1984 David Scott was inaugurated as the new President. Then, in 1985 President Scott resigned; Gerald Merrill became acting President, 1986; Norman Swanson, interim President, 1987; Robert Schoaff was inaugurated as President in 1988. In 1989 Mr. Schoaff resigned. At present Joseph F. James is President-elect.

⁵⁸ Canadian Jurisdictional Conference, Free Methodist Church in Canada, Minutes, August 25, 1984, 18.

⁵⁹ Ibid. Note: The Lorne Park College Foundation represented the proceeds of the liquidated assets of Lorne Park College in 1966. These funds were used to assist lay and ministerial students in the two eastern Canadian Conferences, Canada East and Canada Great Lakes. This 1984 action made the students of Canada West Conference eligible as well for student grant/loans.

Commission" which is answerable to the Canadian Jurisdictional Conference through the Education and Communications Committee.

A third major component in the Canadianization process of the Free Methodist Church in Canada was a request sent to the 1985 General Conference of the Free Methodist Church of North America. This was a resolution to allow Canadians complete autonomy over all budgets and funds in the Canadian Church:⁶⁰

WHEREAS, the General Conference of the Free Methodist Church of North America in 1982 authorized the Canadian Executive Board to retain funds in Canada except for assessed amounts forwarded to the American headquarters for bishop's salaries, General Conference expense and entertainment, and monies raised for foreign missions; and,

WHEREAS, Revenue Canada, the taxation branch of the Federal Government of Canada, requires that any charitable organization based in Canada must "maintain direction, control and supervision over the application of its funds" being sent outside Canada and they must be disbursed according to guidelines set down by Revenue Canada; and,

WHEREAS, Canadian Free Methodists have shown some confusion over feeling accountable financially to two organizations, one based in Mississauga, Ontario and the other in Winona Lake, Indiana which appear to have different priorities and different formulas for the disbursement of funds; and

WHEREAS, the Free Methodist Church in Canada, from the Canadian perspective, is a separate entity in its mode of operation and should be able to present budgets to its people reflecting this fact; and,

WHEREAS, giving patterns over the past twenty years showing levels of yearly increase and percentages disbursed to the American church have been relatively stable and provide a solid baseline for future calculations;

⁶⁰ Ibid.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the General Conference authorize the Canadian church to draw up its own budget and devise its own procedures for presenting this budget to its people and collecting its funds. It is our intention that the funds forwarded to World Headquarters will continue to increase each year.

It must also be noted that the Canadian Jurisdictional Conference of 1984 adopted a joint resolution drafted by Bishop Donald N. Bastian and the Education and Communications Committee:⁶¹

WHEREAS, The Free Methodist Church in Canada now meets all the requirements either actually or potentially to become a General Conference (Para.250.2.a-g); and,

WHEREAS, the Canadian Act of Incorporation authorizing the existence of the Free Methodist Church in Canada as a separate corporation--as action approved by an earlier North American General Conference--already acknowledges the right of the said body to become a General Conference at its own discretion; and,

WHEREAS, the leaders of the Canadian church do not wish to deflect their major energies from the task of church planting and church growth to the detail work of planning for a General Conference unless they are sure the move will be broadly supported by the Canadian people; and,

WHEREAS, distances in Canada and the temperament of the people require that any movement toward becoming a General Conference be done in stages, giving broad participation to Canadian Free Methodists in the decision; and,

WHEREAS, broad face to face debate on the subject in Canada must coordinate with the meeting of the annual conferences as Canadian ratification of any proposal must also; therefore,

⁶¹ Ibid.

BE IT RESOLVED, that this General Conference now approve that the Free Methodist Church in Canada become a General Conference if and when requirements of Para 250.2.a-g are met to the satisfaction of the executive committee of the Board of Administration of the Free Methodist Church of North America, at the option of the Canadian Jurisdictional Conference.

Two resolutions were sent from the Canadian Jurisdictional Conference to the thirtieth General Conference of the Free Methodist Church of North America. The first was regarding the total autonomy of the Free Methodist Church in Canada over its financial affairs and, the second, the approval to become a General Conference at the satisfaction of the executive committee, Board of Administration, Free Methodist Church of North America. Both resolutions were passed by the 1985 North American General Conference.⁶²

The 1984-1985 Canadian Jurisdictional Conference year was quite climatic in regards to the Canadian leadership team. Two Annual Conference Superintendencies and the post of Executive Secretary of the Free Methodist Church in Canada became vacant. The Rev. Wilfred D. Kinney, Superintendent, Canada West Conference resigned.⁶³ The Rev. Gary R. Walsh, Superintendent, Canada Great Lakes accepted an appointment as senior minister at the Pearce Memorial Church on the campus of Roberts Wesleyan

⁶² Free Methodist Church of North America: Thirtieth General Conference, Minutes, 50-51.

⁶³ The Rev. Joseph F. James was elected as the new Canada West Superintendent.

College, North Chili, New York.⁶⁴ The Rev. Claude A. Horton, Executive Secretary, Free Methodist Church in Canada resigned for health reasons.⁶⁵

Those sudden leadership vacancies and changes dampened the General Conference discussion at the Canadian Jurisdictional Conference of 1985. However, another aspect of a developing national church was recommended. This time concern was expressed over the need to encompass the whole province of British Columbia and the Yukon Territory.⁶⁶

The following resolution was unanimously approved:⁶⁷

WHEREAS, the Canadian Jurisdictional Conference has been totally encompassing of all Canadian provinces; and,

WHEREAS, the Canada Pacific District of the Pacific Northwest Conference (British Columbia and the Yukon Territory), two of Canada's great and important areas, have been a part of the Pacific Northwest Conference; and,

WHEREAS, there are now twelve churches as well as a senior citizens home, Wesley Manor, and a campground, Pine Grove Christian Camp in the Canada Pacific District of the Pacific Northwest Conference; and

⁶⁴ The Rev. Glen M. Buffam was elected as the new Canada Great Lakes Superintendent.

⁶⁵ The Rev. Horton died, January, 1985. The Rev. Paul G. Johnston succeeded him as the new Executive Secretary, later to be called Executive Director.

⁶⁶ The Free Methodist churches in the Province of British Columbia and Yukon Territory, with the exception of the Golden, British Columbia Church, are within the jurisdiction of the Pacific Northwest Conference, headquartered in Seattle, Washington.

⁶⁷ Canadian Jurisdictional Conference, Free Methodist Church in Canada, Minutes, August 14-16, 1985, 9-10.

WHEREAS, the Canada Pacific District at their 1985 Annual meeting took action to engage with the Canadian Jurisdictional Conference in a joint feasibility study as to the possibility of becoming a part of the Free Methodist Church in Canada; and,

WHEREAS, we the Canadian Jurisdictional Conference are very desirous of their becoming an active participant in the Free Methodist Church in Canada,

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, that we establish a special study committee comprised of the Canadian Jurisdictional Conference Board of Directors and two elected lay and two elected ministerial representatives from the Canada Pacific District of the Pacific Northwest Conference to consider the possibility of the Canada Pacific District being an active part of the Canadian Jurisdictional Conference.

The years 1982-1985 were concentrated times for the Canadian Jurisdictional Conference in regard to the General Conference and its related issues. The Task Force on Higher Education, which was begun in 1982, grappled with the issues of a "made in Canada" education policy. This question is still ongoing. Yet, from the efforts of the Task Force, emerged an all-Canada scholarship program under the Canadian Education Commission.

Another component to serve an autonomous national church was the purchase of a new Headquarters building, June, 1983 in the city of Mississauga, Ontario.

The third issue in the process toward autonomy was the 1984 resolution which was sent to the 1985 North American General Conference regarding autonomy over all money matters in the Canadian Church. This request was granted.

Twinned with the resolution for financial autonomy was the

request that the North American General Conference of 1985 approve in principle that the Free Methodist Church in Canada become a General Conference provided that the executive committee of the Board of Administration of the Free Methodist Church of North America gave approval. This request was granted.

A final area for consideration in the Canadianization process was the initiation of discussions with the Canada Pacific District of the Pacific Northwest Conference. The Free Methodist churches in this District are in British Columbia and the Yukon Territory. Any such union is vital to the existence of an all-Canadian Church. This move was begun in 1985.

These moves toward autonomy were frustrated by the loss of the three key Canadian leaders, Claude A. Horton, Wilfred D. Kinney and Gary R. Walsh. However, hard work and persistence, particularly that of Bishop Donald N. Bastian, on the General Conference question, kept the Canadian Jurisdictional Conference moving in this direction.

C. THE NATIONAL TASK FORCE ON A CANADIAN GENERAL CONFERENCE:

A major portion of Bishop Donald Bastian's 1986 address to the Annual Conferences was given over to the issues of the General Conference.⁶⁸ His arguments for a Canadian General

⁶⁸ Hitherto, Bishop Bastian's episcopal addresses have been quoted. These were given to the members of the Canadian Jurisdictional Conference. This address was given to the members and delegates of three Annual Conferences.

Conference were four in number.⁶⁹

1. that the Jurisdictional Conference status is only "halfway between what it was before 1974 ... and what it set out in 1974 to become."⁷⁰
2. that a General Conference would give Canadians autonomy in choosing their own Bishop. Whereas, now the "Canadian delegates are a very small minority"⁷¹ in relation to world-wide Free Methodist delegates who could choose a Canadian leader.
3. that the present Canadian Jurisdictional Conference has only nineteen members. There needs to be a much larger representative body "in order to develop a larger sense of ownership among our Canadian people for the mission of the Canadian Church."⁷²
4. that a General Conference will enable the Canadian Church to concentrate "our energies on a largely unfinished task in Canada building the unity of the Canadian Church."⁷³ This focus would be enhanced by eliminating one level of administration and involvement, namely, that of the American Church.

⁶⁹ The Free Methodist Church in Canada, The 1986 Report: "In Search of Excellence, Report to the Annual Conferences of 1986," 7-8.

⁷⁰ Ibid, 7.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Ibid, 8.

⁷³ Ibid.

Then Bishop Bastian quoted from the Peters and Waterman book, In Search of Excellence (from which he derived the title of his Bishop's address):⁷⁴

With regard to a General Conference, we need to pay heed to the first characteristic of the well-managed business cited in the book, In Search of Excellence. That characteristic is "a bias for action". This does not mean we should not study the question thoroughly. It means only that our most imaginative leaders in three conferences should begin to think of the possibilities and should let their aggressive impulses drift in this direction.

It needs to be noted that these same arguments for a General Conference in Canada were repeated in the Bishop's episcopal address to the Canadian Jurisdictional Conference, meeting in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, August 15-19, 1986.⁷⁵

In response to the 1985 North American General Conference permission to the Canadian Church to move to General Conference status and the Bishop's addresses to the Annual Conferences and the Canadian Jurisdictional Conference of 1986, the Education and Communications Committee⁷⁶ brought the following resolution to the Canadian Jurisdictional Conference:⁷⁷

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Canadian Jurisdictional Conference, Free Methodist Church in Canada, Minutes - Bishop's address, August 1986, 5-6.

⁷⁶ The Canadian Jurisdictional Conference minutes show that from 1982 (when the General Conference question became a yearly discussion), that this question was always referred to the Education and Communications Committee for reflection and recommendation.

⁷⁷ Ibid, 9.

WHEREAS, the administrative structure and pattern of the Canadian Jurisdictional Conference has remained virtually unchanged since its inception, 12 years ago; and,

WHEREAS, there have been significant changes and developments within our nation and church during this same period of time; and,

WHEREAS, these changes have created a need to evaluate and study the Jurisdictional model in an attempt to broaden representation and to discover possible refinements that would increase the effectiveness with which the Canadian Free Methodist Church fulfils her national mission; and,

WHEREAS, one such refinement could result in the Canadian Jurisdictional Conference becoming the Canadian General Conference; and,

WHEREAS, major changes within the Church occur smoothly and productively from a base of consensus; and,

WHEREAS, the building of consensus across the Canadian Church would necessitate study and dialogue at the "grass roots,"

We therefore make the following recommendations:

1. That the Administration Committee of the three Canadian Conferences each appoint an Annual Conference, GENERAL CONFERENCE STUDY COMMITTEE (G. C. S. C.) at their next meeting.
2. That the Annual Conference G.C.S.C.'s be composed of the Conference Superintendent (Chairman), members of the C.J.C. from that Conference, and additional members as appointed by the Conference Administrative Committee.
3. That a C.J.C. General Conference Study Committee be formed composed of the three Conference Superintendents, the Canadian Bishop, one lay member appointed by each of the three

Conference Administrative Committees and the Executive Director of the C.J.C. as an honorary member and that they meet prior to the Annual Conferences no later than January 1, 1989.

4. That the Chairman of the Education and Communications Committee of the C.J.C. be the Chairman of the C.J.C. G.C.S.C.
5. That each Annual Conference G.C.S.C. examine the following concerns and give their perceptions in writing. The Officers of the Free Methodist Church in Canada will be available as resource persons to these Committees for information and counsel.
 - 5.1 How would a Canadian General Conference impact the fulfilment of the mission of the Free Methodist Church in Canada?
 - 5.2 How would a Canadian General Conference impact the following;
 - + Services and programs presently provided by the General Church (e.g. Christian Education, Curriculum, Press, etc.)
 - + Higher Education
 - + Missions (ie, relationship to overseas conferences)
 - + Nature of the General Superintendency [Bishop(s)]
 - + Co-operation and/or merger with denominations of Wesleyan persuasion
 - 5.3 What are the financial implications of being a General Conference in Canada?
 - 5.4 What other issues would impact upon the Free Methodist Church in Canada in considering a Canadian General Conference?
6. That a written copy of Committee responses (at least initial) be

forwarded to the Chairman of the C.J.C. G.C.S.C. by July 1987, (one month prior to the 1987 meeting of the C.J.C.).

7. That the work of the Annual Conference G.C.S.C.'s be considered complete when the study is finished (not later than the date of the 1988 meeting of the C.J.C.) and at such time the Conference G.C.S.C.'s will cease to function.
8. That the C.J.C. G.C.S.C. analyze the responses from the Annual Conference G.C.S.C.'s and bring initial recommendations to the 1987 session of the C.J.C.
9. That this Study Proposal be communicated immediately by the Executive Director to the constituency of the Free Methodist Church in Canada through informative meeting, The Free Methodist Herald, fact sheets, bulletin inserts, etc.
10. That the names of the members of the annual Conference G.C.S.C.'s be published immediately upon their appointment and that the constituency be encouraged to dialogue with these members concerning a Canadian General Conference.

This resolution was adopted by the Canadian Jurisdictional Conference by a vote of seventeen affirmative and two negative.⁷⁸

The three Annual Conference Boards of Administration elected lay representatives and the initial meeting for the "General Conference Study Committee" or National Task Force On A Canadian General Conference⁷⁹ was set for December 16, 1986. The personnel composition of the "National Task Force On A Canadian

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ The term "General Conference Study Committee" gave way to the term "National Task Force On A Canadian General Conference." This second title was suggested by the Chairman and by common consent this was the name that was used. There is no formal action in the minutes on this change.

General Conference" were:⁸⁰

Chairman - Robert J. Buchanan

Secretary - Paul G. Johnston

Representatives by Conference;

Canada West Conference:

- Joseph F. James, Superintendent, Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan
- Alfred Robinson, lay, Weyburn, Saskatchewan

Canada Great Lakes Conference:

- Glen M. Buffam, Superintendent, Brantford, Ontario
- Dale Humphrey, lay, Sarnia, Ontario

Canada East Conference:

- Robert J. Buchanan, Superintendent, Belleville, Ontario -
- Glenn Snook, lay, Harrowsmith, Ontario

Canada Pacific District:

- Vernon Frudd, District Leader (Honourary),
Vancouver, British Columbia

Free Methodist Church in Canada:

- Donald N. Bastian, Bishop (Ex Officio),
Mississauga, Ontario
- Paul G. Johnston, Executive Director (Honourary),
Mississauga, Ontario⁸¹

The goals of the National Task Force On A Canadian General

⁸⁰ The Free Methodist Church in Canada, National Task Force On A Canadian General Conference, Minutes, December 16, 1986, 1.

⁸¹ Note: "Ex Officio" refers to the fact that Bishop Bastian is a member "at large" with both voice and vote. "Honourary" is a distinction that gives a member of the Task Force a voice but no vote.

Conference were outlined by the Chairman: This was to be:⁸²

1. A study process to give the Free Methodist Church in Canada facts on the pros and cons regarding the General Conference status.
2. A process that will bring the Canadian Free Methodists together.
3. A study process that will develop a new ministry vision for Canada.

In accord with the mandate given to the Task Force by the 1986 Canadian Jurisdictional Conference, the Task Force divided itself into sub-committees that were charged with various components of the General Conference questions:⁸³

1. Administrative Committee:

Bishop Donald N. Bastian, chairman

Alfred Robinson

Other Bishops (resource)

Task:

a. Administrative Structures

b. General Superintendency

c. Membership Makeup of a Canadian General Conference

2. Services Committee:

Paul G. Johnston, chairman

Glenn Snook

Joseph F. James

Selwyn P. Belsher (resource)

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Ibid, 3.

Task:

- a. Costing
- b. Higher Education
- c. World Missions
- d. Services Purchased from Winona Lake (American Church)

3. Fraternal Relations Committee:

Robert J. Buchanan, chairman

Glen M. Buffam

Dale Humphrey

Canada Pacific District Delegate (resource)

Task:

- a. Fraternal Relations
- b. Relations with Canada Pacific District
- c. Possible Mergers with other Canadian "Methodist" bodies
- d. Relations with the Free Methodist World Fellowship

In terms of the other dimension of the process, namely, the Annual Conference General Conference Study Committees, each of the three Conferences came into operation, early fall, 1986. These were composed in the following manner.⁸⁴

Canada East: Composition was the Canadian Jurisdictional Conference delegates plus the Executive Committee of the Conference Board of Administration. This was a total of fifteen persons.

Canada Great Lakes: Composition was the Canadian Jurisdictional Conference delegates plus the Executive

⁸⁴ Ibid, 2.

Committee of the Conference Administrative Committee. This was a total of eight persons.

Canada West: Composition was the Canadian Jurisdictional Conference delegates plus one lay and one ministerial representative from each of the Districts not represented. This was a total of ten persons.

A time-line for the National Task Force was adopted with the proviso that it could be revised when needed:⁸⁵

1986: - December 16, 1986 - Initial meeting

1987:- February 11, 1987; March 1, 1987; March-May 1987 meetings, Annual Conference General Conference Study Committees;

- May 20, 1987 - Task Force reflects on inputs from Annual Conferences;

- June 5, 1987 - Edit interim report for the Annual Conferences and the Canadian Jurisdictional Conference;

- June - July - Annual Conferences;

- July 29, 1987 - Canadian Jurisdictional Conference meets;

- October 2-3, 1987 - Task Force agrees on "Letters of

⁸⁵ Free Methodist Church in Canada, National Task Force On A Canadian General Conference, Minutes, December 16, 1986, 3-4 and Minutes, October 2, 1987, 4-5.

- Agreement"⁸⁶ with the Departments of World Missions and Christian Education;
- October 28-29, 1987 - Bishop, Executive Director and Task Force Chairman go to Winona Lake, Indiana to put "Letters of Agreement" together
 - 1988 - February 10-11, 1988 - Crafting a "White Paper" for Canadian General Conference to be used at the "open forum" Annual Conference sessions;
 - February 1-12, 1988 - Canadian Jurisdictional Conference Board of Directors;
 - March - May, 1988 - "Open Forum - Town Hall" Meetings in all Conferences;
 - June 1, 1988 - All Annual Conference "feedback" to Mississauga Headquarters;
 - June 10-11, 1988, - Draft of final "white paper" to be presented to all 1988 Annual conference sessions;
 - July, 1988 - Three Annual Conferences vote on the General Conference proposal;
 - July 27-30, 1988 - Canadian Jurisdictional Conference votes to affirm the vote of the Canadian Annual Conferences and if positive, recommends action to the 1989 General

⁸⁶ These "Letters of Agreement" regarding involvement in the World Missions program and services from the Christian Education Department Free Methodist Church of North America, are found in the appendix section of the work.

Conference, Free Methodist Church of North
America

- July, 1989 - Canadian Annual Conferences elect
Canadian General Conference Delegates;
- August, 1989 - Thirty-first North American General
Conference, Seattle, Washington

1990: - August, 1990 - Inaugural Canadian General Conference
Session

Two interim reports were released prior to the 1988 Annual
Conferences. The first was published, March 1988 and is
entitled, "Five Questions About A Canadian General Conference."⁸⁷
The second was released at the time of the 1988 Annual
Conferences. It is entitled, "A Proposal For A Canadian General
Conference."⁸⁸

The Task Force followed two major principles in order to go
about planning the administrative model of a Canadian General
Conference and the subsequent "Canadianized" Book of Discipline.
The first principle was that of adaptation:⁸⁹

⁸⁷ Free Methodist Church in Canada, Interim Report Of The
National Task Force On A Canadian General Conference.
(Mississauga: The Free Methodist Church in Canada, 1988).

⁸⁸ Free Methodist Church in Canada, A Proposal For A Canadian
General Conference (Mississauga: The Free Methodist Church in
Canada, 1988). This document is essentially the same as the
report, Five Questions About A Canadian General Conference, except
it is updated and includes copies of "the letters of agreement"
with Winona Lake and the final resolution to be voted on by the
three Annual Conferences.

⁸⁹ Ibid, Five Questions About A Canadian General Conference.

the constitution of the Free Methodist Church set forth in paragraphs 100-228 of the 1985 Discipline will be adopted en toto. This is required and will link the Canadian Church constitutionally with all other Free Methodist Bodies. Then the remainder of the Discipline will be re worked to make it relevant to the Canadian situation

The second principle was fraternity: This was to honour the special relationship that the Canadian and American Churches had enjoyed through the years. The Canadian Bishop would like to be allowed as an honorary member of the American Board of Bishops and permitted to meet with the Board of Bishops "at least once a year." The Canadian Bishop would be made available for one overseas assignment between General Conferences.⁹⁰ There would also be linkage between the General Conferences (Canadian and American) in that there would be "free exchange of resource persons."⁹¹ The major fraternal component was that of formal linkage. This has already been mentioned.⁹²

In conversations with the former and present Director of World Missions, Winona Lake, Indiana, we were assured that it would be mutually beneficial to have Canadian missionaries processed through the American office. If this arrangement can be finalized, we will request that we have one member sitting on the Commission on Missions of the American Church. We will also request that one member of the Canadian Church be seated on the Commission of Christian Education because we will continue to use materials from Free Methodist Publishing House, Winona Lake, Indiana. Preliminary

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ Ibid, 7.

⁹² Ibid, 6-7.

discussions have been favourable. If and when a Canadian General Conference is formed, we will seek arrangements through official Letters of Agreement.

The Canadian General Conference model included one travelling elder to be elected at each General Conference session, to serve as Bishop.⁹³ Also, one person who would serve as Executive Director who would have honorary status in the new General Conference. The General Conference governing body would be composed of seventy delegates (35 ministerial and 35 lay). The number of delegates from each Conference would be based proportionally on full adult membership.⁹⁴

The following represents the model including the Canada Pacific District:⁹⁵

	<u>Members</u>	<u>% of Free Methodist Church in Canada Members</u>	<u>Canadian General Conference Delegates</u>	<u>Canadian Jurisdictional Conference Delegates</u>
Canada East	2814	51.0%	36	10
Canada Great Lakes	1364	24.7%	16	4
Canada West	940	17.1%	12	4
Canada Pacific	<u>397</u>	<u>7.2%</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>-</u>
	5515	100.0%	70	18

⁹³ Ibid, 7.

⁹⁴ Ibid, 8.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

The following model is without the Canada Pacific District.⁹⁶

	<u>Members</u>	<u>% of Free Methodist Church in Canada Members</u>	<u>Canadian General Conference Delegates</u>	<u>Canadian Jurisdictional Conference Delegates</u>
Canada East	2814	55.0%	38	10
Canada Great Lakes	1364	26.0%	18	4
Canada West	<u>940</u>	<u>18.4%</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>4</u>
	5118	100.0%	70	18

The Canadian General Conference would be divided into four commissions:⁹⁷

Administrative Commission

- Business and Legal Concerns
- Planned Giving Department
- Finance and Budgets
- Group Insurance and Pension Plans
- Mortgages for Churches
- Light and life Press Canada
- Trustees (facilities and properties)
- Staff and Salaries
- Social Service Agencies
- Audio-Visual rental and distribution

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ Ibid, 9-10.

Education Commission

- Christian Education - Age Level Ministries
- Canadian Education Commission
- John Wesley Futures Scholarships
- Free Methodist Futures Scholarships
- Higher Education and the Ministry
- All Canada Ministers Resource Events
- Archives and Historical
- The Free Methodist Herald
- Receive reports from Aldersgate College
- Receive reports from Lorne Park College Foundation

Overseas Commission

- Department of World Missions Promotion
- Canadian Missionaries Payroll
- Promotion of Canadian Global Ministries
- Childcare Ministries Canada
- VISA Canada
- Compassion Canada
- Canada World Missions Co-ordinator
- Receive reports from Women's Missionary Fellowship International

Outreach Commission

- Church Growth and Planting
- French Ministries
- Native Ministries
- Ethnic Ministries

- Moral Issues and Social Action
- Seminars and Conventions Promoting Evangelism
- Receive reports from Light and Life Men Canada

It was to be expected that the Canadian General Conference plan would generate detractors. Since there is no written record of opposition, the writer will refer to such without footnoted sources. From the beginning the issues raised concerning the General Conference plan were four in number.⁹⁸ There was concern that the friendly relations that had developed through the years between the American and Canadian Churches would be severely damaged. Closely linked to this was a fear that the Canadian Church would be a very small entity with limited ministry potential outside the pale of the "mother" Church. A few persons voiced concern over the fact that the Free Methodist Church in Canada would be served by just one Bishop. The issue was that there would be no court of appeal.⁹⁹

A major argument made by those who opposed the Canadian General Conference was that it would cost much more than the Canadian Jurisdiction Conference model. The National Task Force

⁹⁸ It must be registered that no group from any region (Conference or local church) created organized resistance. From the author's reflection, no more than one half dozen strong voices were raised in protest towards a Canadian General Conference.

⁹⁹ This was not a personal reflection about Bishop Donald N. Bastian. It represented a concern that the church would always "appear" to be democratic. This was corrected by the proposal of a Bishop's Cabinet composed of three Conference Superintendents, three lay persons and the Canadian Bishop.

On A Canadian General Conference attempted to show that the reverse was actually the fact.¹⁰⁰

Since this writer was chairman of the "National Task Force On A Canadian General Conference", there are two observations that need to be stated. The first is, that when the task force met initially December 16, 1986, all members were not united as to the need of a Canadian General Conference. The opinions ranged from no need for the General Conference - stay as is, to an enlarged Canadian Jurisdictional Conference, to a full fledged General Conference. Arguments were debated pro and con regarding all three positions. But the Task Force finally melded into a team and gradually the sentiment unanimously swung to that of Canadian autonomy through General Conference model.¹⁰¹

The second observation is that the General Conference quest nearly floundered over the issue of the proportional number of delegates from each Annual Conference. The issue became regional with the Canada East Conference with fifty-five percent of the total membership as compared to the Canada West Conference with only eighteen percent. The original proposition was that no Conference could have more than forty-nine percent of the vote.¹⁰²

¹⁰⁰ Ibid, 11-12. These figures are still being disputed informally. No one will really know until the General Conference begins operation.

¹⁰¹ These are observations that cannot be documented and are not found in any of the minutes of the Task Force.

¹⁰² The Free Methodist Church in Canada, National Task Force On A Canadian General Conference, Minutes, June 6, 1987, 3.

The feedback gleaned from the Canada East Conference, summer and fall, 1987 was that of non acceptance. Those opposing the Canadian General Conference option rallied around the "one person-one vote" theme.

A healthy compromise was reached however:¹⁰³

Whenever any annual Conference has 50% or more of the delegates, a majority vote will be considered to be 5% above the percentage of the delegates of that conference. This percent shall be published at the beginning of every General Conference and shall be required of each vote in that General Conference. This rule shall not prevail in those votes requiring a two-thirds majority.

D. CANADIAN FREE METHODISTS VOTE ON THE PROPOSAL TO BECOME A GENERAL CONFERENCE:

The resolution that was placed before every member and delegate to the three Canadian 1988 Annual Conferences was drafted by the National Task Force:¹⁰⁴

WHEREAS, key leaders of the Canadian Free Methodist Church such as the late C. V. Fairbairn and R. H. Hamilton envisioned a more sharply-focused ministry in Canada as early as 1920 when they met in Sarnia, Ontario, as an All-Canada Convention to discuss the future of the church in Canada; and,

WHEREAS, this vision was advanced in 1974 when key Canadian leaders such as Earl S. Bull, John L. Walrath, Selwyn P. Belsher and Leslie A. Freeman, representatives to the General Board of Administration, requested of the North American General Conference

¹⁰³ Ibid, Five Questions About A General Conference, 9.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid, A Proposal For A Canadian General Conference, 14.

convening in Winona Lake, Indiana, June 24, 1974, that the Free Methodist Church in Canada be authorized as a Jurisdictional Conference with its own bishop who would be a Canadian and would reside in Canada; and,

WHEREAS, the Constitution of the Free Methodist Church in Canada adopted August 25, 1977, makes provision for us to become a General Conference in every respect, anticipating the day when this would be realized; and,

WHEREAS, in order for our ministry in Canada to be effective we must take account of the fact that Canada as a country is experiencing a growing sense of nationhood; and,

WHEREAS, our mission in our own country to propagate the gospel of Jesus Christ, call people to a life of holiness and raise up healthy growing churches must be more sharply focused in Canada; and,

WHEREAS, to accomplish this sharpened focus we must have a national forum and court which meets periodically to discuss goals, define church order and generally unite and inspire our people for aggressive mission to Canada and beyond;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Free Methodist Church in Canada become a General Conference, to be inaugurated not later than 1991 and, after the 1988 Canadian Jurisdictional Conference, refer this decision for ratification to the North American Board of Administration and General Conference meeting in Seattle, Washington, August 3-13, 1989.

This recommendation was received by the Canadian Conferences by an aggregate vote of ninety-six point six percent.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰⁵ Canadian Jurisdictional Conference, Free Methodist Church in Canada, July 29, 1988, 5.

E SUMMARY:

The rate of progress towards Canadian self governance with a Canadian constitution has been demonstrated to parallel that of the Free Methodist Church in Canada in regard to autonomy via General Conference status. Canadians are slow and deliberate as contrasted with their American cousins.

It was noted that the drive towards a General Conference excellerated from the nineteen sixties onward in tandum with the adoption of the Canadian national identity symbols. This culminated in 1982 with the patriation of the Canadian Constitution and the three Annual Conferences petitioning the Canadian Jurisdictional Conference to begin a feasibility study regarding a Canadian General Conference.

The years 1982-1985 mark the time period when the Canadian Jurisdictional Conference began to study the components that are needed for an autonomous church. These aspects of an independent functioning church were addressed before the large issue of the General Conference was studied. These vital components are:

- a. The Task Force on Higher Education was formed, 1982. This Task Force wrestled with the philosophy of "made in Canada" theological education and training. Although these questions still beg answers, the Canadian Education Commission was formed to provide student aid and scholarships all across Canada.
- b. The Canadian Jurisdictional Conference Board of

Trustees purchased a new Headquarters Building in Mississauga, Ontario, 1983.

- c. The request to the North American General Conference, 1985, for approval in principle of the Canadian General Conference was adopted.
- d. The request to the North American General Conference, 1985, complete autonomy over financial affairs was adopted.
- e. The initiation in 1985 for dialogue between the Canadian Jurisdictional Conference and Canada Pacific District was begun and still continues.

During the period 1984-1985 the drive towards a Canadian General Conference was frustrated by key leadership portfolios that became vacant for health and personal reasons. These were the office of Canadian Church Executive Secretary and Conference Superintendencies of Canada Great Lakes and Canada West Conferences. The situation with Presidential Leadership at Aldersgate College has been very changeable. However, particularly through these leadership crises, the persistent hand of Bishop Donald N. Bastian kept the General Conference question alive.

During the Canadian Jurisdictional Conference of 1986 a National Task Force on a Canadian General Conference was set up to study the question. This study and the initiatives of the Task Force were rewarded by a 96.6% aggregate positive vote by the three Annual Conferences, July, 1988.

Chapter V

BECOMING A GENERAL CONFERENCE

This chapter will portray the response of both the Canadian Jurisdictional Conference, July, 1988, and the thirty-first General Conference of the Free Methodist Church of North America, August 3-13, 1989, regarding the decisive vote for Canadian Church autonomy. Three committees to provide for Canadian General Conference obligations and strategies will be described. These are: the General Conference Planning Committee, the Task Force on Evangelism and Church Growth and the Task Force on Higher Education.

A. CANADIAN AND AMERICAN RESPONSES TO THE JULY, 1988 VOTE:

1. Canadian Jurisdictional Conference:

The fifteenth meeting of the Canadian Jurisdictional Conference met at Mississauga, Ontario, July 27-30, 1988.¹

Robert J. Buchanan, chairperson, National Task Force on a Canadian General Conference presented a survey of the work that had been done by the National Task Force and officially registered that Canadian Free Methodists in the three Annual Conferences had approved the Canadian General Conference plan by a ninety-six point six percent aggregate vote, July, 1988.² This

¹ The Free Methodist Church in Canada, Fifteenth Canadian Jurisdictional Conference, Minutes, July 27, 1988, 1.

² Ibid, 5.

was followed by Superintendents Glen Buffam of Canada Great Lakes Conference, and Joseph James of Canada West Conference giving reports of the General Conference "climate" in their respective Conferences.³

A motion was made and approved to establish a Committee to prepare for the Canadian General Conference and "grapple" with the vision across Canada based on the results of the recent vote. This motion was referred to the Canadian Jurisdictional Conference Nominating Committee to create a job description and name persons to the committee.⁴

The Nominating Committee made the following response:⁵

- a. We recommend that a new, enlarged National Task Force on a Canadian General Conference committee be formed.
- b. We recommend that it be called The Canadian General Conference Planning Committee.
- c. We recommend that it be convened by Superintendent Robert J. Buchanan, chairman of the former National Task Force.
- d. We recommend that its membership be:
 - Bishop Donald N. Bastian
 - Executive Director, Paul G. Johnston
 - Superintendent Robert J. Buchanan CE⁶
 - Rev. Carl Bull CE
 - Mr. Selwyn Belsher CE
 - Superintendent Glen M. Buffam CGL

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ CE, CGL and CW are short forms for the three Conferences: Canada East, Canada Great Lakes and Canada West.

- Mr. Dale Humphrey CGL
- Mr. Douglas Buchanan CGL
- Superintendent Joseph F. James CW
- Mr. Alfred G. Robinson CW
- Mrs. Joyce Rodine CW

Later in this session of the Conference, Mrs. Joyce Rodine was given the additional responsibility of representing "women's ministries and missions."⁷ As well, the Rev. Vernon Frudd of the Canada Pacific Districts (British Columbia) was named as the representative to the Canadian General Conference Planning committee.⁸

The next major issue to be addressed in this session of the Canadian Jurisdictional Conference was that of communicating the wishes of the Canadian Free Methodist Church to its American counterpart:⁹

We recommend that the Canadian Jurisdictional Conference ratify the vote of the three annual conferences favouring by a 96.6% aggregate majority that the Free Methodist Church in Canada become a General Conference and refer the decision on to the August 1989 General Conference of North America through the General Board of Administration, asking the latter body to consider and approve the letters of agreement worked out between the Executive Director of the Canadian Church and the various executives of the Free Methodist Church of North America.

This Motion was unanimously received.¹⁰

⁷ Ibid, 20.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid, 19.

¹⁰ Ibid, 19.

Another significant action taken at the fifteenth Jurisdictional Conference was the re-establishment of the Education Task Force. The following recommendations were made by the Education and Communications Committee and were adopted by the Conference:¹¹

- a. That the Canadian Jurisdictional Conference affirm that the preferred future context for the training and education of ministers for the Free Methodist Church in Canada be in Canada.
- b. That an Education Task Force be established by the 1988 Canadian Jurisdictional Conference. This Task Force shall prepare a plan for the establishment of at least one seminary level chair of Wesleyan studies in Canada for presentation to the 1989 Canadian Jurisdictional Conference.
- c. That the following persons be the Education Task Force:
 - the Chairpersons of each of the three Canadian annual conference Minsisterial Education and Guidance Boards
 - one lay representative from each of the three Canadian annual conference Ministerial Education and Guidance Boards to be named by the body they represent
 - the President of Aldersgate College
 - the President/Director of the Lorne Park College Foundation
 - the Bishop of the Free Methodist Church in Canada
- d. That the Bishop is to convene and organize the Task Force. And that the Task Force would have the power to

¹¹ Ibid, 11-12.

choose appropriate resource persons. One representative of the Canadian Pacific Districts Ministerial Education and Guidance Board shall be invited to serve as a resource person.

- e. That the Canadian Jurisdiction Conference instruct the Task Force to set up and provide for the training and education of Canadian Free Methodist ministers in the contest and under the tutelage of a person or persons who are thoroughly evangelical and Wesleyan in orientation.

The final instrument on the road to visionizing the mission of a Canadian General Conference was the establishment of a National Task Force on Evangelism and Church Growth:¹²

With a view to seeing the Free Methodist Church in Canada enter a "new day"¹³ of evangelistic and church growth effectiveness, we recommend the formation of a National Task Force on Evangelism and Church Growth composed of:

- the Bishop
- Conference Superintendents
- Executive Director
- the Evangelism and Church Growth Committee
- two representatives from each Conference (appointed by their respective Boards of Administration)
- one representative from the Canada Pacific District to meet in 1988-1989 and report back to the 1989 Canadian Jurisdictional Conference.

Thus four major preparation components for a Canadian General Conference were launched at the 1988 Canadian Jurisdictional Conference.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ This is a reference to the General Conference of North America, 1985 theme: "Under God Ready For A New Day." A major emphasis of that General Conference was to re-emphasize evangelistic outreach, church growth and church planting.

2. The North American General Conference Board of Administration, October, 1988:

The vote on a Canadian General Conference and subsequent actions taken by the Canadian Church were first sent to the North American General Conference Board of Administration to approve in principle the Canadian action and the subsequent "letters of agreement"¹⁴ between the two General Conferences.

The first agreement was between the Department of World Missions, Free Methodist World Headquarters and the Free Methodist Church in Canada. Salient points in this agreement were:

- a) Canadian monies raised "on the free will offering basis in a unified budget approach,"¹⁵ called Canadian Global Ministries will continue to be channelled through the Department of World Missions, Free Methodist World Headquarters.
- b) "The salary payroll for Canadian career missionaries - both active and retired"¹⁶ will be paid at the Canadian Headquarters.¹⁷ These funds will be deducted from

¹⁴ Free Methodist Church in Canada, "Letter of Agreement, Department of World Missions Free Methodist World Headquarters. Winona Lake, Indiana and the Free Methodist Church in Canada, Mississauga, Ontario."

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ This is in accordance with Canadian federal law.

Canadian Global Ministries and yet credited to the total Canadian Global Ministries goal.

- c) The Canadian Church will be given lists of special missions projects, especially where Canadian missionaries are involved.
- d) Canadians can join in such appeals as "Compassion", "Penny-A-Day", and "Thank Offerings" in order to help raise the Canadian Global Ministries goal. However, any other appeals for funding devised by the Department of World Missions must be cleared with the Canadian Executive Director before they are directed to Canada.¹⁸
- e) The Free Methodist Church in Canada and the Department of World Missions will co-operate in the Childcare Ministries program.¹⁹
- f) The Canadian Free Methodist Church will share in the deputation schedule for missionaries involved in the World Missions program.
- g) The Free Methodist Church in Canada and the Department of World Missions in the United States will co-operate in the recruitment of career missionaries and Volunteers in Service Abroad (V.I.S.A.) workers.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ This is a program where individuals can sponsor a child, particularly in third world countries. In Canada, it is incorporated as "Child Care Ministries Canada" in accordance with Canadian federal law.

However, the commissioning of Canadian missionaries will occur in Canada.²⁰

- h) The Free Methodist Church in Canada will continue to have a voting representative on the Commission on Missions when the Canadian Church becomes a General Conference.²¹

A second "letter of Agreement" was forged between the Department of Christian Education, Free Methodist World Headquarters and the Free Methodist Church in Canada.²² The points of agreement here were:

- a) The Free Methodist Church in Canada will be charged "a flat annual fee"²³ for services. This will be reviewed on an annual basis.
- b) These Canadian funds will be sent for:
- staff salaries and benefits
 - publications that are sent to all churches
 - office and mailing expenses
 - age-level programming
 - promotion

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ The agreement calls for a voting member on the Commission, but not on the General Church (American) Board of Administration. On the latter, the Canadian representative would be given honorary status (voice but no vote).

²² Free Methodist Church in Canada, "Letter of Agreement" Department of Christian Education Free Methodist World Headquarters, Winona Lake, Indiana and the Free Methodist Church in Canada, Mississauga, Ontario.

²³ Ibid. The fee for 1990 will be twenty-five thousand dollars (Canadian funds).

- six trips to Canada by Department of Christian Education personnel

- c) The Free Methodist Church in Canada would have a voting member on the Commission on Christian Education²⁴

Another "Letter of Agreement" was drafted between the Department of Higher Education and the Ministry Free Methodist World Headquarters and the Free Methodist Church in Canada.²⁵ Agreements were written in the following areas:

- a) The Canadian Free Methodist Church and the Department of Higher Education and the Ministry will jointly cooperate in the following areas:
- Annual Conference Boards of Ministerial Education and Guidance
 - the John Wesley Institute
 - the Association of Free Methodist Educational Institutions
 - the Free Methodist Chaplain Associates
- b) The Free Methodist Church in Canada will continue to fund Canadian students through the John Wesley Seminary

²⁴ The regulations for this member would be the same as for the Canadian member on the Missions Commission.

²⁵ Free Methodist Church in Canada, "Letter of Agreement, Department of Higher Education and the Ministry Free Methodist World Headquarters Winona Lake, Indiana and the Free Methodist Church in Canada, Mississauga, Ontario."

Scholarships and Free Methodist Futures Scholarships.²⁶

- c) "Canadian students will continue to be welcome at the January Interim (J-term)."²⁷ Scholarships for this continuing education program will come from Canada.
- d) Aldersgate College and the Lorne Park College Foundation will continue to be eligible for membership in the Association of Free Methodist Educational Institutions.²⁸
- e) Those Canadian chaplains who are now members of the Free Methodist Chaplains Association may continue membership in this organization. Those not yet members may join.
- f) The John Wesley Institute, a new program to recruit Free Methodist ministers, is a Department of Higher Education and the Ministry project. The Canadian Church is welcome to participate.
- g) The Canadian Ministerial Education and Guidance work that is now being cared for by the World Headquarters (Free Methodist Church of North America) will be transferred to Canada "at a time agreeable to both

²⁶ These two Free Methodist (North American Church) scholarships are distinct from the Canadian Education Commission grant/loan scholarships given to qualified undergraduate and graduate lay and ministerial students.

²⁷ Ibid. The "J-term" is a continuing education program, particularly for older ministerial students who have limited undergraduate training.

²⁸ Ibid.

parties."²⁹

- h) The Canadian Church will remit an annual fee to cover expenses incurred by the continued liaison and interrelatedness with the Department of Higher Education and the Ministry.³⁰ This will be negotiated on an annual basis.

A final qualification in the relationship between the American and Canadian Churches was requested by the Free Methodist Church in Canada. This was a proposal that the Bishop of the Free Methodist Church in Canada be invited to an honorary seat on the American Board of Bishops which he/she may occupy once a year or more for mutual counsel and benefit.³¹

These four proposals from the Canadian Free Methodist Church were presented to the Free Methodist Church of North America Board of Administration meeting in Winona Lake, Indiana, October 24-28, 1988. Wednesday, October 26 was Canada's day at the Board

²⁹ Ibid. This refers to individual files of persons on track in undergraduate and graduate theological programs, toward ordination. The annual conference Board of Ministerial Education and Guidance works with the Department of Higher Education and the Ministry in assessing progress in educational and itinerant credits prior to deacon's or elder's orders being granted.

³⁰ Ibid. This fee, beginning January, 1990 will initially be assessed at two thousand dollars (Canadian funds).

³¹ Free Methodist Church of North America, Minutes, Board of Administration, October 24-28, 1988, 8. This was a component of the "linkage" that was desired by the National Task Force on a General Conference and by the Canadian Free Methodist "public." Bishop Donald N. Bastian was requested by the Task Force to draft a proposal to be presented to the October, 1988 Board of Administration meeting.

of Administration. Executive Director, Paul G. Johnston gave to the Board of Administration members an overview of the historic vote taken in the three Canadian Annual Conferences, summer, 1988.³² The three "Letters of Agreement" covering Canadian cooperation in the World Mission program, the Department of Christian Education and the Department of Higher Education and the Ministry were given approval.³³

The recommendation regarding linkage of the Canadian Bishop with the American Board of Bishops was given to the Commission on Administration which in turn requested that the present North American Board of Bishops rule on the matter.³⁴

Interesting commentary was written into the Board of Administration, Free Methodist Church of North America minutes regarding the event where acceptance and congratulations of the proposed Canadian General Conference was given by the plenary session of the Board:³⁵

Bishop Van Valin called Bishop Donald Bastian and Paul G. Johnston to the platform, to receive congratulations on this occasion

³² Ibid.

³³ Ibid. The process followed was that these letters of agreement were distributed to the Board of Administration members for first reading. These were part of the agenda given to the Commissions on Missions and Education, hence the letters came to the plenary session as recommendations from the respective commissions.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid. Bishop Clyde E. Van Valin was the chairperson of the Board of Bishops and the chair of the Board of Administration 1988-1989, Free Methodist Church of North America, Minutes, Board of Administration, October 24-28, 1988, 1.

which is something like brothers deciding to work in different fields. Bishop Bastian commented that it could be stated as like a mother giving a son away when he is 108 years old. Bishop Bastian and Paul Johnston expressed appreciation to the board and the personnel at headquarters, noting the strong attachment to the American church by the Canadian people which must be placed over against their wish to address a desire to expand ministry in Canada in a new way.

This Board of Administration also framed a resolution to the thirty-first General Conference, Seattle, Washington, August 4-13, 1989. This resolution read as follows:³⁶

That the Free Methodist Church in Canada be authorized to organize a general conference in August 1990, subject to the approval of the Canadian Book of Discipline in the spring of 1990 by the Board of Administration.

3. The Thirty-First North American General Conference Session, Seattle, Washington, August, 1989:

Canada was featured at the fourth sitting of the thirty-first General Conference of the Free Methodist Church of North America, August 9, 1989. The recommendation from the Board of Administration³⁷ regarding a Canadian General Conference was brought before the General Conference assembly about 3:30 p.m. The presiding Bishop, Gerald E. Bates, called for a standing

³⁶ Ibid, 8.

³⁷ This is the same recommendation as from the Board of Administration minutes referred to in footnote 37.

vote. The vote was in the affirmative.³⁸

The Rev. Leslie Krober,³⁹ former pastor at Lakeview Church Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, led in a special report combining video and narrative of the development of the Free Methodist Church in Canada.⁴⁰

Beginning with Robert Loveless' happenstance perusal of a copy of The Earnest Christian and his subsequent invitation to Bishop B. T. Roberts to Ontario, Krober traced the development of the church through its first minister, C. H. Sage, down through such leaders as Albert Sims, C. V. Fairbairn, R. H. Hamilton, James Gregory, Willis Stonehouse, and Claude Horton.

Krober paid special tribute to the success of Canadian missionaries, particularly in central Africa where the work, pioneered by Canadian J. W. Haley, presently has three annual conferences with a membership more than seven times larger than the entire Canadian Church. Krober also singled out Bishop Donald N. Bastian for praise, tracing his origins in Estevan, Saskatchewan, his education at Greenville College and Asbury Theological Seminary, and his ministry in Lexington, Kentucky, New Westminster, British Columbia and Greenville, Illinois, the last of which was the thirteen years in the 1960's, some of the most rebellious and traumatic years in recent church history.

³⁸ Ibid. Minutes, 31st General Conference, 4th Sitting. Observers have indicated that not every American delegate stood to affirm this action. The Light and Life Magazine, November, 1989, in a special edition that focused on the highlights of the thirty-first General Conference, August 3-13, 1989, makes reference to the fact that "the vote to create a Canadian General Conference was the occasion of both rejoicing and sadness." (page 6).

³⁹ Mr. Krober is an American pastor who presently is senior minister at the Wenatchee, Washington Free Methodist Church.

⁴⁰ The Free Methodist Herald, volume 67, Number 8, September 1989, 1, 3.

That experience clearly hones his skills for his most recent assignment as bishop of the church, said Krober. He added that Bastian, over the past fifteen years, led the church into an era of graciousness, gentility and dignity.

The tribute was concluded with General Conference members joining in singing, O Canada.

The Rev. Paul G. Johnston, Executive Secretary, Free Methodist Church in Canada, then addressed the conference, giving an overview of the Free Methodist Church in Canada.⁴¹ Mr. Johnston concluded his remarks by making reference to the unique relationship that exists between the Canadian and American Churches:⁴²

We are still family and so will continue to cherish those family ties! Let us continue to work together under God in this "new day"⁴³ for Canadian Free Methodists.

The Canadian Bishop gave his reply to the significance of the occasion:⁴⁴

Donald Bastian expressed his indebtedness to the supporters of the churches and schools who formed him as a pastor and bishop.

⁴¹ See "Report of the Free Methodist Church in Canada - 31st General Conference," Ibid. Minutes, 31st General Conference, 4th sitting.

⁴² Free Methodist Church of North America, General Conference Today, Volume 31, Number 7, August 11, 1989, 2.

⁴³ The theme of the thirty-first North American General Conference was, "Under God Working In The New Day."

⁴⁴ Ibid.

Bastian said that Canadian Free Methodists want to be part of a Growing Evangelical ferment in Canada. He concluded by acknowledging his indebtedness to Jesus Christ for His supreme sacrifice and to the Free Methodist Church for its investment in him across the years.

Bishop Bastian's speech was followed by a Canada East Conference lay delegate and one of the founding members of the Canadian Jurisdictional Conference in 1974, Selwyn P. Belsher. The record states:⁴⁵

Unable to hold back the tears, Belsher acknowledged his personal gratitude for the support of the North American General Conference. He mourned the fact that this would be his last opportunity to participate on the floor of the North American Conference.

Robert J. Buchanan, Canada East Conference Superintendent, and chairperson of the Canadian General Conference Planning Committee, "also paid tribute to the American Church."⁴⁶ His speech made reference to the fact that American and British Free Methodism is different from that of the Canadian Free Methodist Church. This is because the American and British Churches are defined in relation to their larger respective "mother" Methodist bodies. However, in Canada there is no longer a "mother"

⁴⁵ Ibid. Selwyn P. Belsher is a Toronto businessman who originally opposed the Canadian General Conference concept because he was of the opinion that the relationship blend between the Canadian and American churches formulated by the Jurisdictional concept was adequate.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

Methodist Church.⁴⁷ Hence the Canadian Free Methodist sees itself as the major voice of Methodism in Canada. This is significant for all Canadians and especially for immigrants and ethnic communities.⁴⁸

Bishop Bastian was feted in a "proper" manner during this time when Americans and Canadians celebrated together.⁴⁹

The tributes were not without jocularly as both Robert Buchanan and pastoral delegate Vic Stonehouse of Oshawa followed the example of the newly elected Indian Bishop Daniel Ward by presenting two hats to Bishop Bastian.⁵⁰ Bishop Daniel Ward had told a rollicking conference the previous evening that the special golden headdress he wore had three purposes: to help him identify with his culture, to beautify himself, and to cover his bald spot. A beaver pelt presented by Stonehouse and a bishop's mitre by Buchanan were purported to have the same purpose.

This time was concluded by response from the North American Board of Administration representatives to the Canadian Jurisdictional Conference. They "spoke words of appreciation and congratulations to the Canadian Church as they move toward full general conference status."⁵¹

⁴⁷ The Methodist Church of Canada was incorporated in the union with Presbyterian and Congregationalists, June 10, 1925.

⁴⁸ This author has outlined this latter part of his speech from memory.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Bishop Daniel Ward was elected and installed as a Bishop of the Free Methodist Church, August 8, 1989. For the occasion Bishop Ward wore a Bishop's purple clerical vest and special gold "Indian" hat. The Canadians were not to be outdone in terms of their Bishop's headgear.

⁵¹ Ibid, Free Methodist Church of North America, "Minutes," 31st General Conference, 4th Sitting, August 9, 1989, 3.

B. THE GENERAL CONFERENCE PLANNING COMMITTEE:

In accordance with the authorization by the Canadian Jurisdictional Conference of 1988, the General Conference Planning Committee met in Mississauga, Ontario, September 26-27, December 1-3, 1988 and January 24-25, April 10-13, 1989.⁵²

The first act of the new committee was to elect Superintendent Robert J. Buchanan as chair and Executive Director Paul G. Johnston as secretary.⁵³

The General Conference Planning Committee set for itself a job description in three areas:⁵⁴

1. to ensure that the Disciplinary standards for a General Conference are achieved.⁵⁵

⁵² To date of this writing. Other meetings may be required and will be at the call of the chair.

⁵³ Both these gentlemen held identical posts in the former National Task Force on a General Conference.

⁵⁴ Free Methodist Church in Canada, The 1989 Canadian Report. (Published by Free Methodist Church in Canada, 1989), D-2.

⁵⁵ Book of Discipline, 1985, (Winona Lake: The Free Methodist Publishing House, 1985), Part I, 36. Note, the following standards are required. (a) an effective church organization on the local, conference, and/or general levels; (b) effective programs for the nurture and training of members, new converts, children, young people and lay workers; (c) an effective program for ministerial training; (d) evidence of responsible stewardship of life and possessions including proper management of funds and the provision for the support of its own pastors, workers and officers; (e) a definite program of evangelism church extension, and missionary outreach on an indigenous basis; (f) the existence of a property-holding body or more than one such body if required by local laws; (g) A Book of Discipline as approved by the general administrative board of the sponsoring general conference.

2. to prepare for the Canadian General Conference inaugural event in 1990.

3. to work with the National Task Force on Evangelism and Church Growth to establish strategies to enable the Church to minister more effectively in Canada.

Two major issues were faced by the General Conference Planning Committee. These were the adaptation of a Canadianized Book of Discipline and the planning for the 1990 inaugural event.

1. A Canadianized Book of Discipline:

This very large task had initially begun in the National Task Force on a General Conference in 1987-1988.⁵⁶

In order to initiate a process for the task of Book of Discipline adaptation, subcommittees were established to re-write sections of the present North American Book of Discipline, 1985, Parts I and II.⁵⁷ The subcommittees were categorized according to the committee composition in the new Canadian General Conference.⁵⁸ Sections of the 1985 Book of Discipline were assigned for adaptation.⁵⁹ The subcommittees personnel were as follows:⁶⁰

⁵⁶ Op cit.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Ibid, D-3.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

Administrative:

Donald N. Bastian, chair

Selwyn P. Belsher

Alfred Robinson

Outreach:

Joseph F. James, chair

Douglas C. Buchanan

Carl V. Bull

Overseas:

Glen M. Buffam, chair

Vernon Frudd

Joyce Rodine

Education:

Robert J. Buchanan, chair

Dale Humphrey

Paul G. Johnston

These committees would work at the assignments and then bring the proposed edited sections of the Canadianized Book of Discipline to the plenary session of the General Conference Planning Committee for approval.

Because of lack of time the General Conference Planning Committee, April, 1989 authorized a subcommittee on Discipline Revision, namely: Donald N. Bastian (chair), Carl V. Bull, Joseph F. James, and Robert J. Buchanan (ex officio).⁶¹

⁶¹ Free Methodist Church in Canada, General Conference Planning Committee, "Minutes," April 12, 1989, 3.

There will be significant changes in the new Canadian Book of Discipline. These are as follows:⁶²

1. That the "historical introduction" will contextualize Canadian Free Methodism within both world-wide and Canadian Methodism. This section will trace the theological sources of the Free Methodist Church. The "benchmarks" of the Wesleyan movement will be noted.
2. That the Canadian Book of Discipline will be simplified in terms of grammatical construction and plainness of its directives. This is in contrast to the Free Methodist Church of North America, Book of Discipline.
3. That the Canadian edition of the Book of Discipline will focus more on future mission in regard to the three levels of governance - - General Conference, Annual Conference, local church - - than in the past.
4. That the structure of the local church Official Board will receive a new emphasis as the nerve centre of the local church. The Canadian Book of Discipline will provide for an Official Board with smaller membership. This will allow a flexibility of committee structure so as to suit either larger or smaller congregations. This is meant to enhance the more visionary and action-oriented approach to ministry.
5. That the unique Canadian administrative structure

⁶² Op. Cit., D-3.

for the new General Conference - the four commissions plus a Canadian General Board of Administration - will be detailed.

6. That the original articles of religion that predate the 1974 Free Methodist Church of North America Book of Discipline⁶³ and the General Rules written by John Wesley for Methodist societies will be given special place in the Chapter Ten Appendixes.

2. The Inaugural General Conference, August, 1990:

The second major task of the General Conference Planning Committee was to plan for the inaugural event. A Steering committee was formulated as answerable to the General Conference Planning Committee. The personnel composition of the committee is as follows:⁶⁴

Chairman: Paul G. Johnston

Executive Assistant: F. Dean Mercer

Secretary: Lois Tomc

Committees:

1. Program - Donald N. Bastian, chair,

Robert J. Buchanan, Glen M. Buffam, Joseph F.

James

⁶³ The original articles of religion (twenty-three) were given to the founding Methodist Episcopal Conference, Baltimore, Maryland in 1784. These had their origins in the Anglican Church. The writers of the Canadian Book of Discipline will edit archaisms.

⁶⁴ Free Methodist Church in Canada, "Canada '90 Steering Committee Minutes," December 7, 1989, 1-2.

2. Platform and Protocol - Victor W. Stonehouse, chair,
Alton A. Gould, Alice VanNorman
3. Prayer and Communication - Keith E. Lohnes, chair,
L. Roger Gast, Tony Hedrick
4. Facilities and Finance - Selwyn P. Belsher, chair,
Douglas Gibson, Al Brown
5. Accommodation and Meals - Lois Tomc, chair,
Caroline Smith, Betty Johnston
6. Registration and Transportation - Karin Brown chair,
Evelyn Lawrence, Shelley Johnston
7. Youth - John Keller, chair,
Hank Bylstra, Don Hand, Joe Schaefer.

The Canadian '90 Inaugural Celebrations will be held August 3-9, 1990 at Erindale College, University of Toronto.⁶⁵

The schedule will be as follows:⁶⁶

August 3 - Friday: Concurrent Annual Conferences⁶⁷

August 4 - Saturday: Concurrent Annual Conferences

+ Great United Service (evening)

Leader: Superintendent Glen M. Buffam

Preacher: Bishop Gerald Bates

The Ordination of Deacons

Reading of the Free Methodist Church

in Canada Pastoral Appointments

⁶⁵ Ibid, 4.

⁶⁶ Ibid, 4-7.

⁶⁷ Canada East, Canada Great Lakes and Canada West Annual Conferences.

August 5 - Sunday Celebrations:

- + General Conference Inauguration Worship Service (morning)
Leader: Superintendent Robert J. Buchanan
Preacher: Bishop Donald N. Bastian
Ordination of Elders
- + Music Celebration (afternoon)
Leader: Bishop Donald N. Bastian
Combined Mass Choir/Congregational Singing
Multicultural Presentations
- + Youth Service (evening)
Leader: Superintendent Joseph F. James
Youth From Across Canada
Aldersgate College Jubilee Reception⁶⁸

August 6-9 - Canadian General Conference Business Sessions

C. THE TASK FORCE ON EVANGELISM AND CHURCH GROWTH:

This Task Force was authorized by the Canadian Jurisdictional Conference of 1988. Its members were:⁶⁹

Donald N. Bastian - Bishop

Paul G. Johnston - Executive Director

Robert J. Buchanan - Superintendent, Canada East

⁶⁸ 1990 is the Aldersgate College fiftieth anniversary.

⁶⁹ Ibid, Free Methodist Church in Canada, The 1989 Canadian Report, E-5.

Glen M. Buffam - Superintendent, Canada Great Lakes

Joseph F. James - Superintendent, Canada West

Thomas C. Mealey - C.J.C. Church Growth Committee

Victor W. Stonehouse - C.J.C., Church Growth Committee

Donald E. Hodgins - Canada East Ministerial

Representative

Edna Snider - Canada East Lay Representative

Harold D. Scott - Canada Great Lakes Ministerial

Representative

Paul Mathewson - Canada Great Lakes Lay Representative

Gordon J. Hallett - Canada West Ministerial

Representative

Lee S. Barbour - Canada West Lay Representative

George Fleming - British Columbia Representative

This committee met in Mississauga, Ontario, November 28-30, 1988. The major purpose of this Task Force was to "develop a national master plan for evangelism and church growth to the year 2000."⁷⁰

Concentration was given to rejuvenation of status quo churches as well as new church plantings.⁷¹

The proposed goals to be reached were:⁷²

1. Short-term goals for redevelopment:

⁷⁰ Ibid, E-1.

⁷¹ Ibid, E-4.

⁷² Ibid, E-4-5.

- a. Each annual conference communicate past growth rates and future strategies.
 - b. Each annual conference will develop an appropriate diagnostic tool to evaluate their churches.
2. Long-term goals for redevelopment:
- a. Identify pastors with redevelopment gifts.
 - b. Each annual conference will initiate an on-going redevelopment process.
 - c. Provide an annual redevelopment training program.
3. Short-term goals for Church Planting:
- a. Each annual conference will set a goal for the number of new churches by the year 2000. Our national goal is 75 new churches.
 - b. Appoint a person to the Canada Immigration board to direct interested ethnic people to our church.
 - c. Request the Canadian General Conference to make provisions for land banking.
 - d. We will adapt the Pacific Northwest Conference church planting strategy guide for our national strategy and that each annual conference Board of Evangelism give this consideration.
4. Long-term goals for Church Planting:
- a. We recommend that Quebec be targeted as a key emphasis for church planting and that Quebec move to an annual conference status by the year 2000.

- b. Prioritize ethnic church plantings with a goal of 25 new ethnic congregations by the year 2000. This would be one-third of our projection of 75 new churches.

D. THE TASK FORCE ON HIGHER EDUCATION:

The Task Force on Higher Education authorized by the Canadian Jurisdictional Conference, met at the Canadian Church headquarters, January 26-27, 1989. The following were personnel of this committee:⁷³

Donald N. Bastian - chair

Paul G. Johnston - secretary

Robert J. Buchanan - Canada East Conference

Garland Shadbolt - Canada East Conference

Glen M. Buffam - Canada Great Lakes Conference

Dale Humphrey - Canada Great Lakes Conference

Joseph F. James - Canada West Conference

Alfred G. Robinson - Canada West Conference

Daniel G. Pugerude - Aldersgate College

Paul G. Johnston - Lorne Park College Foundation

As a result of this meeting, a recommendation was drafted to invite other Canadian church ecclesiastical leaders and leaders of denominational academic institutions to consider joint programs for undergraduate and graduate theological education and

⁷³ Free Methodist Church in Canada, "Task Force on Higher Education," Minutes, January 26-27, 1989, 1.

training in Canada. These leaders would come from the following denominations.⁷⁴

- the Missionary Church of Canada
- the Wesleyan Church in Canada
- the Church of the Nazarene
- the Brethren in Christ Church
- the Standard Church of America
- the Evangelical Church in Canada
- the Church of God (Anderson, Indiana)
- the Salvation Army in Canada
- the Free Methodist Church in Canada

As a result of this initiative, eighteen representatives of these denominations (except Brethren in Christ, Standard Church and Church of God [Anderson]) were represented at a special meeting concerning undergraduate and graduate (seminary level) education in Canada. This meeting was held on the campus of Canadian Nazarene College, Winnipeg, Manitoba, November 24-25, 1989. The following release was issued:⁷⁵

"Due to the rising costs of higher education, and in recognition of the vast distance across Canada, the majority concluded that denominations having "Wesleyan Heritage" should consider some form of undergraduate college consortia in three or four regional centres across Canada.

⁷⁴ Ibid, 4.

⁷⁵ Wesleyan Cooperative Education Committee, Canadian Nazarene College, Winnipeg, Manitoba, November 24-25, 1989, "Press Release," 1-2.

The seven colleges represented were:

Canadian Nazarene College, Winnipeg, Manitoba; Aldersgate College, Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan; Bethany Bible College, Sussex, New Brunswick; Catherine Booth Bible College, Winnipeg, Manitoba; Emmanuel Bible College, Kitchener, Ontario; Hillcrest Christian College, Medicine Hat, Alberta; and Mountain View Bible College, Didsbury, Alberta. The aggregate budget of these institutions is \$5,655,000; their aggregate enrolment exceeds 800. The aggregate membership of these denominations is 64,700.

A major issue discussed was the possible establishment of a Wesleyan seminary in Canada. The denominations involved currently have in excess of 50 students in seminaries. The consultation discussed invitations from two existing seminaries, Ontario Theological Seminary in Toronto and Canadian Theological Seminary in Regina, to establish chairs of Wesleyan studies. The committee favoured further exploration of these options because they would provide opportunities for seminary training in schools where Wesleyan studies would be part of the curriculum in eastern and western Canada. These would be considered first steps toward the possible later establishment of a Wesleyan seminary in Canada. Members of the consultation agreed to report back to their respective bodies. Further consultations are planned."

E. SUMMARY:

This chapter has described the activities of the Free Methodist Church in Canada from the Annual Conference vote to become an autonomous church until this present writing. In this one year and a half, the pace has quickened in order that all components of a General Conference will be in place by August, 1990.

The details of the legal process via the North American General Conference have been noted. Also, the ongoing linkages with the American Church have been detailed.

The ongoing activity in three committees has not yet been completed: General Conference Planning Committee (approval of the new Canadian Book of Discipline, the planning for the inaugural event, August 3-9, 1990); the Task Force on Evangelism and Church Growth (goals and strategies to the year 2000); the Task Force on Higher Education (cooperative venture in undergraduate and graduate theological education in Canada).

The answers given by these committees will be crucial for the future direction of the Free Methodist Church in Canada!

Chapter VI

REFLECTIONS ON STRATEGIES FOR MINISTRY

This chapter will broadly define and describe Canadian culture and general characteristics of Canadians. Also, a contemporary Canadian church profile will be discussed. Two major sources for Canadian culture and church profile will be used extensively. These are Pierre Berton, A Personal Exploration Of Our National Character: Why We Act Like Canadians, and Reginald W. Bibby, Fragmented Gods: The Poverty And Potential Of Religion In Canada. In light of these realities, ministry emphasis and strategies will be proposed as the new Canadian General Conference guides the Church into the second millennium.

A. THE CANADIAN CULTURE:

The word "culture" was first used by the French during the Middle Ages. The verb "culturer" meant "working the soil."¹ Hence, in the seventeenth century the term was used for both "wheat culture" and "the culture of the sciences."² Culture further evolved in the eighteenth century to mean "the formation of the human spirit" with special emphasis on social and

¹ Guy Rocher, "Culture," The Canadian Encyclopedia, ed. James H. Marsh (Edmonton: Hurtig Publishers, 1988), 553-554.

² Ibid.

historical dimensions.³ Accordingly, in the twentieth century "culture" is defined as

an ensemble, formalized in varying degrees, of ways of thinking, feeling and behaving which once learned give people a particular and distinct collectivity.⁴

This study has concentrated on reasons the Free Methodist Church in Canada is moving toward autonomy and away from the "mother" Free Methodist Church in the United States. The underlying assumption is that the Canadian culture is different from that of the United States. Pierre Berton, in his book, A Personal Exploration Of Our National Character: Why We Act Like Canadians sets forth most clearly the characteristics of Canadians and Americans."⁵

1. Institutional Order Versus Individual Rights:

Pierre Berton cites the Klondike gold of the early twentieth century. On the Yukon side the Canadians did as they were told by the law. On the Alaska side,

the Americans do as they please until rules are needed; then they form a committee, elect a chairmap and abide by the decision of the majority.⁶

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid, 554.

⁵ Pierre Berton, A Personal Exploration Of Our National Character: Why We Act Like Canadians (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart; 1982). This book is a series of letters to an American friend, "Sam," and includes colourful, historical, contrasting examples from the histories of both the United States and Canada. Most examples come from the early twentieth century Klondike gold rush that effected both Alaska and Yukon. Pierre Berton is one of Canada's most prolific journalists. He is also considered an authoritative contemporary historian.

⁶ Ibid, 18.

Canadians first set up the institution and its laws as opposed to initially declaring individual rights and then developing institutions to meet the needs of the situation.

2. A Moderate Socialist Society Versus A Capitalist Society:

Berton declares that in the early days of the development of the Western provinces the Canadian government exercised a kind of paternalism. This was accomplished through the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

These red coated men were seen to be enforcing the blue laws, succouring the sick, feeding starving Indians, settling domestic disputes, putting out prairie fires, collecting taxes ... It was dull, lonely work, scarcely the stuff from which Zane Gray novels were fashioned ...

This early paternalism is seen to be a forerunner of the later government social intervention. That is, the "universal mediance, family allowances - that distinguish Canadian society today."⁸

From the history of eastern Canada, Pierre Berton uses Bishop John Strachan⁹ who was both loyal to Anglicanism and the

⁷ Ibid, 31-32.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Bishop John Strachan (1778-1867) was the Anglican leader in Upper Canada (Ontario) during the War of 1812-1814. It was his conviction that Upper Canada must be kept "British." Developing the Anglican Church as "the established church" was part of the plan. The Methodist Egerton Ryerson took issue with the claims of Anglican dominance. However, both Ryerson and Strachan held to the principle of loyalty to the British constitutional monarchy. This was described in chapter two.

British crown, to put these differences sharply. For Strachan the capitalist Americans were money grubbers, "vain and rapacious and without honour - they are hurried to any action provided they gain money by it."¹⁰

There are implications to those general characteristics. The Americans are risk-takers, good showmen and salesmen. By contrast Canadians tend to shun advertising, show business and hard sell:¹¹

To a large degree we (Canadians) have shunned commercialism in our culture, much of which is publically subsidized. Yours' (American) isn't. Yet without those public subsidies we are in danger of being swamped by you (Americans). Thus our identity has also been shaped by our negative reactions to your overpowering presence. We know who we are not even if we aren't quite sure who we are.

3. Multiculturalism versus the Melting Pot:

When Sir Guy Carleton requested the British parliament to pass the Quebec Act of 1774¹² which allowed the French to retain their customs, culture, language and religion, he set Canada on a course of multiculturalism. The idea of the melting pot,¹³ as in the United States, was never really tried. "Our ethnic minorities have managed to retain their identity and now are

¹⁰ Ibid, Pierre Berton, 51.

¹¹ Ibid, 58.

¹² S. R. Mealing, "Carleton, Guy, 1st Baron Dorchester," The Canadian Encyclopedia, ed. James H. Marsh (Edmonton: Hurtig Publisher, 1988), 363-364.

¹³ Pierre Berton, A Personal Exploration Of Our National Character: Why We Act Like Canadians, 70.

being praised for having done so."¹⁴ Another reason that Canada, as a member of the British Empire in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, had a policy of multiculturalism as opposed to the melting pot was:¹⁵

... that double loyalty was necessary if Canadians were not to fall into the arms of you Americans. The melting-pot concept ... is a revolutionary idea - a rejection of homeland and hence a rejection of established values. The conservative elite who ran this country wanted no part of it....

In broad categories there are four major Canadian cultural groupings.¹⁶ The first two represent the founding peoples; namely, Anglo-Saxon and French. It should be noted that these categories subdivide into "cultures". In the former, English, Scottish, Irish and Welsh cultures are representative. In the latter, even though the French Canadian "originally emigrated from the different provinces of France, under the French regime they quickly merged into one "Canadian culture."¹⁷ Yet, French Canadians living in Ontario or Manitoba represent cultural variations from their "cousins" in Quebec.¹⁸

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid, 62. Pierre Berton makes an exception in the melting pot theory as applied to the United States is black America, page 73.

¹⁶ Ibid, Guy Rocher, "Culture". 544.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid.

The third major cultural grouping includes all the other ethnic groups that have come to Canada since the latter part of the nineteenth century.¹⁹ These cultures represent Europe, Asia, the Near East and Central and South America.²⁰ "They devoutly hold to the customs and traditions of the old country, though they learn English as their working language."²¹

The fourth Canadian cultural grouping is that of the native peoples. These were once divided into six cultural and linguistic groups.²²

The greatest distinguishing factor among native peoples now is the degree to which they maintain ancestral ways or have integrated into the structures and adopted the culture of industrial society.

Canada is known as an officially "bilingual country", embracing the languages of the two founding peoples, French and English. Pierre Berton tells us that multiculturalism is not all easy:²³

The problem of ... language has bedeviled us ... Do any of your people (American) oppose the teaching of a second language in school? I doubt it. But in much of Canada, when that language is French, there has been bitter opposition. Even the appearance of the

¹⁹ Ibid. Guy Rocher "Culture". 544.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid. The Metis or "mixed bloods" are considered as a subculture within the native peoples. These are the most integrated into Canadian industrial society.

²³ Ibid, Pierre Berton. A Personal Exploration Of Our National Character: Why We Act Like Canadians, 75.

French language on breakfast cereal packages in the (Canadian) West has been condemned. Now, conversely, we are faced with demands from other language groups who insist that the state support the teaching of "heritage languages" in the public schools - Ukrainian in Winnipeg, Chinese in Toronto.

4. A "Cool" Nation Versus A "Hot" Nation:

Pierre Berton uses Marshall McLuhan's categories of cool medium and hot medium²⁴ and applies this to national temperament.²⁵ He then makes the observation that climate has something to do with "cool" and "hot" nations:²⁶

Italy, Spain, Greece and southern France and the other Mediterranean countries are hot - not just climatically, but also emotionally. These are demonstrative peoples, openly warm, even passionate, easily provoked to laughter, tears and sometimes revolt. They live out of doors on the streets or in sidewalk cafes ... jostling one another in the cities without embarrassment The Scandinavians, Teutons and Anglo-Saxons to the north are less demonstrative, more phlegmatic, less openly emotional.... As a pioneer country (Canada), we attracted other northern peoples - Scots, Scandinavians, Slavs, northern Irish. We maintain a polite distance from our fellow creatures ... we are not a back-slapping race

²⁴ Marshall McLuhan was Professor of English at the University of Toronto. He became an international figure in the 1960's. His distinction between "hot" and "cool" media was the difference between low or high sensory involvement of the receptor. For example, "hot" media such as news print or radio, are packed with information and require less sensory interaction than "cool" media such as telephone or television which have less information yet invite more sensory interaction on the part of the receptor.

²⁵ Ibid, 82.

²⁶ Ibid, 84-85.

This "cool" versus "hot" image is carried over to the fact that "public displays of emotion"²⁷ are embarrassing to Canadians. This analogy also refers to the lack of patriotic display on the part of Canadians in contrast to their American cousins.

Berton declares that the "cool" Canadians do have some strengths:²⁸

Show business isn't in our blood as it is in yours ... As northerners we are better teachers than entertainers. Our best films, our best radio, our best television have been the kind that instructs and informs as it entertains.

These differences carry over to the issue of romanticism versus realism. "Canadian earnest Film Board documentaries and our sturdy public affairs programs contrast sharply with your mythic view of America."²⁹ The "cool" and "hot" application of national character involved the "realism" of institutional authority³⁰ versus the cult of the individual or "the star system".³¹ This can be applied in Canada to media figures and politicians alike.

5. The Canadian "Shield" versus the American "Plains":

The Canadian "Shield" is the oldest rock in the world.

²⁷ Ibid, 86.

²⁸ Ibid, 87.

²⁹ Ibid, 88.

³⁰ Ibid, 91.

³¹ Ibid, 89.

It is "the hard, unyielding floor on which North America sits."³² However, it is only in Canada that "the glaciers have scoured it clear, and that is why the Canadian shield is unique."³³

Berton describes the difference in the development of American and Canadian frontiers:³⁴

When you think of your frontier (American) you conjure up a long line of covered wagons moving westward across the plains. But our frontier was quite different: an endless expanse of gnarled, grey rock, pocked by millions of gunmetal lakes, with twisted pines, skeletal birches and stunted black spruce bending before the wind. No covered wagon could cross it, only strong men sturdy enough to hoist a canoe on their backs or to shoulder a hundred pound pack at the end of a tump line.

This "shield" covers the provinces of Quebec, Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia. It defines human habitation and lifestyle.³⁵

On the map Canada looks square; in reality we are another Chile, with nine-tenths of our people living within two hundred miles of our border (American).

This population "ribbon" along the Canadian-American border has natural breaks and barriers. The east-west population sprawl is made up of "population islands walled off from each other by

³² Ibid, 96.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Ibid, 95.

³⁵ Ibid, 97-98.

the terrifying obstacles of Precambrian rock, muskeg, mountain barriers, storm-tossed waters."³⁶

Canadian lifestyle is defined by this geography.³⁷

We are a shield people ... a wilderness people. Every city-dweller from St. John's to Victoria is within a few hours drive of lake, mountain or Precambrian rock.

The Canadian "Shield" had its imprint on the Canadian consciousness regarding law and order:³⁸

In the United States, the settlers moved west ahead of the law. But when ours finally reached the prairies, thanks to the new railway, the law was already in place.

Pierre Berton points out that the Canadian railway which was built to unite the country east to west, over the Canadian "Shield", contained the seeds for the tensions between east and west that reach into the courts of the Church as well as in Canadian politics today. Prime Minister John A. McDonald³⁹ was forced to accept the monopoly of the Canadian Pacific Railway over the Canadian West.⁴⁰ If the rail link for all Canada was to be built, the Canadian Pacific Railway forged an agreement that

³⁶ Ibid, 98.

³⁷ Ibid, 97.

³⁸ Ibid, 99-100.

³⁹ Sir John Alexander MacDonalld was Canada's first prime minister. His two great contributions were (1) leading the move towards the realization of the "British North America Act" (parts which have been retained in the Constitution of Canada, 1982); (2) the initiation and final completion of the national railway in 1885, which bound Canada east to west by rail and allowed settlement of the four Western provinces, British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba.

⁴⁰ Ibid, Pierre Berton, 100.

"no other Canadian line could be built within fifteen miles of the border for the next twenty years."⁴¹

This early rail monopoly was and is the root cause of East-West tension in Canada:⁴²

the CPR stood as the symbol of an official policy, which saw the West as a huge granary supplying the East with food while purchasing, at inflated prices, the necessary manufactured goods and farm machinery from the East.

Thus, western Canadians have seen themselves as "hewers of wood and drawers of water" ... for the moneyed interests of Central Canada.

B. THE CANADIAN CHURCH PROFILE:

The most recent and exhaustive profile of religion, and consequently the Christian Church in Canada, has been compiled by Reginald W. Bibby.⁴³ His book, Fragmented Gods: The Poverty And Potential Of Religion In Canada⁴⁴ is a detailed analysis through polling and census data of religious affiliations, trends and values. This data is used to project trends into the year 2000.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Ibid, 103.

⁴³ Reginald W. Bibby was raised in the Nazarene Church. He is now an Anglican priest who serves as the professor of sociology at the University of Lethbridge, Alberta.

⁴⁴ Reginald W. Bibby, Fragmented Gods: The Poverty And Potential Of Religion In Canada (Toronto: Irwin Publishing, 1987).

Bibby declares that Canada has the following religious profile:⁴⁵

Roman Catholic - 47%
 United Church of Canada - 16%
 Anglican Church of Canada - 10%
 Conservative Protestants - 7%⁴⁶
 Canadian Lutherans - 3%
 Presbyterian Church in Canada - 3%
 Jewish - 1%
 Hindu and Sikh - 1%
 Other Religions - 5%
 No Affiliation - 7%

The Conservative Protestant profile is as follows:⁴⁷

Baptist (all groups) - 3.1
 Church of Christ Disciples - .1
 Christian and Missionary Alliance - .1
 Christian Reformed - .3
 Free Methodist - .1
 Mennonite - .8
 Pentecostal (all groups) - 1.4
 Salvation Army - .5

⁴⁵ Ibid, 47-48. These statistics came from the 1981 Canadian census. Bibby indicates that the figure proportions remain the same at the printing date of his book, 8.

⁴⁶ The Free Methodist Church in Canada is included in the Conservative Protestant grouping.

⁴⁷ Ibid, 28.

Other Conservative Protestant groups under one percent are grouped as follows:⁴⁸

Associated Gospel - .03
 Brethren - .09
 Canadian Reformed - .05
 Church of God - .04
 Church of the Nazarene - .05
 Evangelical Free - .02
 Missionary Church - .03
 Plymouth Brethren - .03
 Wesleyan - .03

Reginald Bibby goes on to use his data plus present Canadian Church trends to project the shape of the Christian Church in Canada as we approach the year two thousand. His findings are as follows:

1. That Religion "mirrors" Culture in Canada:

Religion is seen to be another "product" to be used by a consumer-minded society.⁴⁹

A specialized society is met with a specialized religion. Consumer-minded individuals are provided with a smorgasbord of fragment choices. Culture leads, religion follows.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Ibid, 233.

The consumers will increasingly pick and choose as they like from many theologies, church traditions, styles and practical involvements:⁵⁰

This is no groundless speculation. As we have seen, analysis of religion styles by age cohort have shown that the consumption of belief, practice and service fragments - versus identifiable commitment - is considerably more prevalent among younger Canadians than others.

2. That Traditional Church Groupings Will Remain In Canada:

"The twenty-first century should see the continued presence of organized religion, primarily in its present dominant forms."⁵¹ However, because of the selective consumer market, theological, ecclesiological and liturgical models will be "abridged versions"⁵² compared to their original designs.

But, according to Bibby, "some of the new competitors ... may be resisted and strongly opposed as too different."⁵³

3. That There Is A Decreasing Regular Involvement By Canadians:

Reginald Bibby declares that unless church groups are willing to adapt to the new realities: ⁵⁴

what can be projected with a high degree of confidence is a continued drop off in regular attendance at services.

⁵⁰ Ibid, 234.

⁵¹ Ibid, 236.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

Part of the reason for this is that cultivation for lifetime involvement in religious institutions begins at infancy and childhood. There has been a sharp drop off of regular attendance since the nineteen fifties. "At present (1987), the proportion of Canadians between the ages of 18 and 29 who attended services weekly stands at about 16%."⁵⁵

Having made these statements, Bibby still asserts that religious organizations will still be needed and desired by Canadians, through "fragmented" involvements.⁵⁶

The desire of people to have churches perform rites of passage surrounding birth, puberty, marriage and death guarantees the religious groups at least a service role well into the twenty-first century.

4. That Consolidation And Re-Alinement Will Happen In Canada:

Since there is a projected lessening of regular attendance, there will be diminishing revenues, the bills will not be paid. Also there will be a demand for better use of existing church facilities.⁵⁷

Canadian religious groups will continue to diversify their ministry offerings to a highly competitive and consumer oriented

⁵⁵ Ibid, 238.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Ibid, 239.

culture. This will have ramifications for religious organizations both externally and internally.⁵⁸

The denominational menu diversification means that over a period of time many of the religious outlets across Canada will look very much the same. The result is that they will feel so comfortable with one another that there will be a measure of merging At the same time, within denominations, the extremities of this range of items can be expected to create increasing tension between advocates of different emphasis ... schism is certainly not out of the question.

Economic interdependence is creating a "global economy."⁵⁹ There will be closer international ties both within the world's dominant religions and between them."⁶⁰ "As with the "global village" and "global economy", this does not mean there will be a loss of national expressions of religion."⁶¹

⁵⁸ Ibid. This is already happening. The present proposition within the United Church of Canada to ordain practising homosexuals within its ministry orders is an attempt to extend the market range. However, this is causing schism. The tiny denomination, Conference of Congregational Christian Churches in 1988 had just seven member churches. By the end of 1989, this denomination welcomed forty-five breakaway United Church congregations into its fold. The Free Methodist Church in Canada is also witnessing several large increases in congregational growth because of dissident United Church of Canada members.

⁵⁹ At present world trading blocks are being formed such as the European Economic Community and the "free trade" treaty between Canada and the United States. The latter was signed jointly by Prime Minister Brian Mulroney and President Ronald Reagan to take effect January 1, 1989.

⁶⁰ Ibid, 240.

⁶¹ Ibid.

This kind of interaction and dialogue will be necessary to face such global issues as nuclear weapons, environmental issues, poverty, hunger, etc.

5. That Religion Will Rely On Instant Communications:

The Christian Church in Canada will rely heavily on the use of the computer to identify needs and locate persons in an increasingly mobile society.⁶²

A basic task of religious groups is to locate ... people, primarily through survey techniques, and to establish a good record-keeping system. Beyond the local level, there needs to be good inter-congregational communication in order to keep track of the geographically mobile.

Video cassettes and other computer related visual and written materials will be utilized for education, worship and entertainment.

6. That There Are Several Implications For Canadians:

Reginald Bibby's data findings and conclusions have both corporate and individual implications:

- a) That, there is little difference in the values and social concerns of Canadians be they religiously committed or not.⁶³

⁶² Ibid, 241-242.

⁶³ Ibid, 245.

- b) That, religion is no longer the dominant factor in shaping "the values, concerns, and interpersonal attitudes that most people regard as important."⁶⁴
- c) That, though global communications and the increasing emphasis on human values, would make the observer feel that there are more moral issues than ever, this is not necessarily so. Because present communications can immediately confront one with issues such as interpersonal relations, equality and general standards of living, this does not mean that these are new or necessarily more intensified.⁶⁵
- d) That, human relationships, particularly family relationships, rate as the number one concern to Canadians.⁶⁶
- e) That, culture is having its influences on how and what individuals believe regarding "life after death."⁶⁷

7. That Christianity Must Effectively Communicate With Canadian Culture:

The role of the Church in Canadian society has ceased to be one of dominance.⁶⁸

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Ibid, 246.

⁶⁷ Ibid, 248.

⁶⁸ Ibid, 252. This is also the thesis of H. Richard Niebuhr in Christ and Culture. (New York: Harper and Row, 1951).

It is not the Church's place to dominate society. Rather, it is called to be the "leaven" or "the salt", to exert a positive, godly influence on society.

The fact that individuals are adopting fragments is not all bad, according to Bibby:⁶⁹

They are creating their own personal expression of religion, instead of mindlessly accepting pre-packaged sets of beliefs and private practices.

The culture will dictate the forms of religion. For example, "liturgy and educational curricula are modified to match the language, the understanding, and the moods of the day."⁷⁰ Bibby also indicates that there is a place, even in the twenty-first century Canadian Church for religion to transcend culture. He quotes the Roman Catholic Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger from a 1986 lecture in Toronto:⁷¹

Theology will "dissolve into arbitrary theory" unless it exists in and from the Church, with personal conversion at the heart of the theologian's teaching. If this doesn't happen, says Ratzinger, "if the theologian does not live and breathe Christ through the Church ... then I suggest we are not dealing with a theologian at all, but a mere sociologist, or historian, or philosopher.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Ibid, 253. Bibby makes sure that the reader is aware that "there is a fine line between translating the message and transforming it altogether."

⁷¹ Ibid, 256.

On the other side, theologically conservative churches, such as the Free Methodist Church in Canada need to beware of the perils of ignoring culture:⁷²

This tendency to resist and ignore culture has also meant that the traditionalists have been fairly ineffective in changing culture. Many evangelical Protestants, while emphasizing that religion should influence the entirety of life, have tended to focus upon individuals and personal morality to the exclusion of culture and social structure.

8. That There Are Great Possibilities For The Christian Church In Canada:

Bibby sees the Church in Canada as having real possibilities by steering a middle course between two ditches - excessive dependence on culture and ignoring it. "The first tends to be a listener; the second refuses to listen."⁷³

If religion is to interact effectively with culture, then it has to be able to transcend culture, so that it has something to bring, and be responsive to culture, so that it knows how to bring it.

That "something" is found in three words: "God", "Self" and "Society":

a) God:⁷⁴

When it comes to providing ultimate meaning, even the most sophisticated computer or micro-electronic instrument comes up short ... If the supernatural or numinous source of

⁷² Ibid, 257-258.

⁷³ Ibid, 259-260.

⁷⁴ Ibid, 262-263.

information can be rediscovered, religion has the potential to speak with an authoritative voice about the meaning of life and the meaning of death.

The author declares that "not everyone will listen", but he also indicates that his "research and that of others indicate that many will."⁷⁵

b) Self:

This is a day when many persons are being attracted to seminars and groups that emphasize the inner potential of human beings.⁷⁶

In its historical form, Christianity asserts that people made in the image of God have incredible potential. In right relationship with God, that potential can be realized to its fullest ... it seems to me [Bibby] that such a human potential-plus product has the potential itself to be a formidable market entry. A religion that can legitimately ... with conviction - speak the good news of the potential of individuals will find an audience.

c) Society:

Gregory Baum of the University of Toronto is quoted. The Christian faith "has always understood itself as a community" characterized by "fellowship, interdependence, mutuality, exchange, communication."⁷⁷

⁷⁵ Ibid, 263.

⁷⁶ Ibid, 265.

⁷⁷ Ibid, 266.

Reginald Bibby particularly singles out this very important factor in his survey data:⁷⁸

Some 90% of the country's adults and young people report that they place paramount value on relationships and being loved. Intimacy, caring, community - these are traits of supreme significance as Canadians move into the twenty-first century.

"Community" transcends the divisions of personal and social religion. Therefore, "social issues become personal issues, because they involve people."⁷⁹

Hence, if the Christian churches are to be relevant in the twenty-first century in Canada, "the God-self-others triangle is to be inseparable."⁸⁰

C. STRATEGIES FOR THE FREE METHODIST CHURCH IN CANADA:

The aspects of Canadian national character, as elucidated by Pierre Berton and the Canadian Church profile and projections of Reginald Bibby, have been noted. The following represent implications for the Free Methodist Church in Canada as it "gears up" to be a national church entering the twenty-first century.

1. Canadian Identity and Presence:

Pierre Berton has pointed out the importance of loyalty to

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

honourable traditions as a characteristic of Canadians. This assertion has been confirmed by Reginald Bibby's findings in that as churches move into the twenty-first century the "present dominant forms"⁸¹ will remain. From chapter two of this study it was noted that Methodism in Canada has been etched into Canadian traditions as a "dominant form."⁸²

The purpose of the General Conference relationship is to authentically be the major voice of Methodism in Canada. It would be folly for the Canadian Free Methodists to become just another segment of the conservative Protestant sub-culture. This church must be most thoroughly evangelical and Methodist. In order to communicate with, and appeal to a larger segment of Canadians a pertinent name change could be "the Methodist Church of Canada."⁸³

Bibby also points out that the church of the twenty-first century will at once be national and global in its outlook. For the Free Methodist Church this is already in place due to the fact that the Free Methodist Church in Canada is a member of the

⁸¹ Ibid, Bibby, 236.

⁸² The United Church of Canada which came into being in 1925 with a large contingent of Methodists still likes to identify its Methodist linkage. However, the Free Methodist Church in Canada and the African Methodist Episcopal Church are the only bodies that have retained the Methodist name.

⁸³ The Canada East Conference, 1989 voted in a survey 101 to 43 to change the name in preparation for the General Conference (Canada East Conference minutes, July 1989, 6). It would need to be understood that this would not signal a change in essence from a conservative evangelical church, but it would enhance the communication with both traditional and ethnic Canadians.

World Fellowship of Free Methodists.⁸⁴ Further, the Free Methodist Church in Canada could enhance its global input by becoming a member of the World Methodist Council.⁸⁵

Reginald Bibby presents a profile of churches in Canada, taken from the national census. The Free Methodist Church in Canada is "lumped" among the conservative Protestants. Hence, as a denomination it is small and largely unknown in Canada. Increased presence could be attained throughout the nation by communicating its "Methodist" heritage. This can be accomplished through a more vigorous evangelistic and social action mode where it is presently planted, a strategic church planting program, particularly in urban and ethnic areas and an enhanced media exposure⁸⁶.

2. Relating to Canadian Culture:

Bibby gives a word of caution regarding the relationship of

⁸⁴ This body is still in primary form. However, it can become a forum for dialogue and mutual world-wide action. See further minutes, thirty-first General Conference, Free Methodist Church of North America, Seattle, Washington, August 3-13, 1989.

⁸⁵ This is a fellowship structure for dialogue and interaction between Methodist denominations throughout the world. Its headquarters is Lake Junaluska, North Carolina. Dr. Joseph Hale is the present Director.

⁸⁶ For example the Canadian Radio and Television Communications network have organized a new television channel entitled, Vision T.V. This channel is for the use of the major religions in Canada. This could be utilized creatively by the Free Methodist Church in Canada with a one half hour program per week. It would be beamed across the nation.

the church to culture. The "mainline" Protestant Churches have attempted to "mirror" Canadian culture. The conservative Protestant Churches tend to resist culture or ignore it.⁸⁷ The Free Methodist Church in Canada must avoid the one "ditch" of complete identification with contemporary Canadian culture.⁸⁸ On the other hand, the Church must also avoid the other "ditch" of exclusivity from culture as usually happens in conservative sect groups.

If Canadian Free Methodists are loyal to their theology this will not happen. It was noted in chapter two,⁸⁹ that the proclamation of universal atonement was also the proclamation of equal rights and privileges of all classes and persons. This means that the Church's message must transcend Canadian culture in ways that bring individuals to discipleship in Christ and to involvement in social action ministries. These ministries will be extended to all persons regardless of sex, "roots" or social standing.

3. The New Canadian General Conference Organization: The Canadian characteristic maintaining traditional

⁸⁷ Ibid, Bibby, 254, 257.

⁸⁸ As happened within the former Methodist Church of Canada. For a study about the Methodist Church's upward social mobility, the ignoring of social needs such as poverty, and the teaching of classical liberal theology, see Marguerite Van Die, An Evangelical Mind: Nathanael Burwash And The Methodist Tradition In Canada, 1839-1918. (Kingston, Queens University Press, 1989).

⁸⁹ Ibid, Egerton Ryerson, Canadian Methodism: It's Epochs And Characteristics, 133.

institutional order, as identified by Pierre Berton, is exemplified by the configuration of the new General Conference body. The traditional form, which is the commission system utilized by the American Church has been blended with a Canadianized form of the Board of Administration. This latter body will meet regularly between sittings of the General Conference.

The Canadian inclination to corporateness combined with the force of instant communications through computers and fax machines will militate against regionalism. That is, independent tendencies within Annual Conferences plus the tensions unique to "the Shield" people (Eastern and Western regionalism) will need to be minimized.

This direction to corporateness will be evident in the following ways:

- a. That the personnel tracking to ordination originally under the supervision of the Department of Higher Education and the Ministry, Winona Lake, Indiana⁹⁰ will be brought to the Canadian Headquarters.
- b. That the continuing education courses offered to pastors will be held in Canada.⁹¹ A January term will be offered at the Canadian Headquarters or regionally across

⁹⁰ This is now cared for through a "Letter of Agreement" and a sum of money paid on a yearly basis to Winona Lake/Indianapolis.

⁹¹ The present policy for Canadian continuing education is to send pastors to J-Term in Winona Lake/Indianapolis.

Canada. A continuing enrichment program for pastors will be offered through the video media.

c. That the matching of pastoral leadership gifts to congregational leadership needs will be negotiated on a Canada-wide basis with the aid of computer.

d. That both levels of Canadian church government (Annual Conference and General Conference Headquarters) business accounting will be done through computer and fax machines at the central General Canadian Headquarters.

e. That the Annual Conferences will substitute the accounting personnel for more supervisory and support persons to work with pastors in the field.

4. Education and Training in Canada:

The Task Force on Higher Education that was established by the Canadian Jurisdictional Conference, 1988 has already begun its work.⁹² As a result of the special meeting between "Methodist-Holiness" denominations in Canada, Winnipeg, Manitoba, November 24-25, 1989, two guiding principles were agreed upon. The first is that there will be a consolidation of seven undergraduate institutions across Canada to three or four. This would allow for greater "critical mass" in a very competitive market. The second principle agreed upon was the establishment of a Canadian "Wesleyan" seminary.

The Task Force has committed itself to the guiding principles

⁹² For details see Chapter five, "Becoming a General Conference".

of a "made in Canada" ministerial education policy and the undergraduate plus seminary education. It seems that the Canadian Church will need to face the issue of Aldersgate College,⁹³ its viability and move in the direction of this institution becoming part of a larger co-operative undergraduate institution.

Further, a Canadian "Wesleyan" seminary ought to be considered. The graduate theological level must consider both the academic aspect and the training aspects of ministerial preparation. In regard to the latter, an internship program must be introduced.

There will also need to be a lay training program for ministry. This legacy of the New Testament Church and of Methodism needs to be recovered. As Bibby has pointed out, people desire to be involved and they are freed as never before to do the various ministries of the church.⁹⁴

5. Evangelism And Church Growth in Canada:

The Task Force on Evangelism And Church Growth which was inaugurated the Canadian Jurisdictional Conference, 1988 has as its mandate to cast a vision for Canada to the year 2000.⁹⁵ Each

⁹³ Aldersgate College presently has nearly fifty full time students. This number does not bode well for the "critical mass" viability and the very competitive market for students that exists all across Canada.

⁹⁴ Ibid, Bibby, 263-265.

⁹⁵ For further information see Chapter Five, Becoming A General Conference.

Annual Conference Board of Evangelism will need to actively target those church rejuvenation projects and church planting projects. The urban areas without a Free Methodist witness will need primary attention.

In terms of philosophy of ministry, Pierre Berton's "cool nation"⁹⁶ category as applied to Canada would indicate that the super-church with a "star" pastor is not really the Canadian way.

The great "untapped" resource of Canadian Free Methodism is found among the multicultural communities. The Free Methodist Church in Canada is at present mainly ministering to the Anglo-Saxon culture. A foothold has been made among the Quebecois and Haitian (French speaking).⁹⁷ Further, "ethnic mosaic" congregations are found in Kingston, Toronto, Hamilton, Regina and Vancouver.⁹⁸ In order to "tap" into the stream of immigrants coming to Canada, it will be important for the Canadian Church to appoint a denominational representative to the Canadian Immigration Board. This will be a directive,

⁹⁶ Ibid, Berton, 89.

⁹⁷ There are five Quebecois and Haitian Free Methodist congregations in the Province of Quebec. The Quebec District is part of the Canada East Conference. Each year the District Conference is held in Montreal with the Canada East Conference Superintendent presiding. A stated goal for the District is that this annual event is a "dress rehearsal" for the future status of Annual Conference.

⁹⁸ These represent Korean, Japanese, Tamil, Cambodian, Fijian, North American Indian and peoples from India and Pakistan (Eastern Koinona). The Canada East Conference has appointed Dr. Nesa Lysander of Toronto, whose origins are in India, to become coordinator of the Ethnic Ministries Council for Greater Metro Toronto. This is to identify and develop ethnic congregations in this area.

particularly to those persons from the British Commonwealth who have "Methodist" roots and affiliations.

6. Future Emphasis:

Reginald Bibby, from his data, has discovered that the local churches will need to rediscover a three-fold emphasis of God, self and society. It is quite clear, "there is a market for God, self and society ... these three central emphases of religion are very much in demand in contemporary life".⁹⁹ These emphases must permeate every ministry program.

a. God:

The futurist Aurelio Peccei, former president of the Club of Rome has written:¹⁰⁰

... humanity, although the prisoner of materialistic motivations, has a profound need for spirituality.... We humans feel that we are living in a dangerous void, that we must restore communion with spheres that transcend those motivations.

Canadians, both adults and teenagers are wrestling with the ultimate questions about the meaning of life and existence beyond death.¹⁰¹

The gospel preached, taught and lived in the Canadian Free

⁹⁹ Ibid, Bibby, 267.

¹⁰⁰ Aurelio Peccei, One Hundred Pages For The Future: Reflections of the President of The Club of Rome. (New York: Pergamon Press, 1981), 25.

¹⁰¹ Ibid, Bibby, 261.

Methodist Churches must be powerful, real and life-changing. There is no substitute for an experience of the justifying, freeing grace of God in Jesus Christ! This is communicated by ministerial and lay leaders who themselves experience God! It comes through prayer emphases and lively preaching, teaching and modelling! The Free Methodist Church in Canada must never substitute anything for this gospel. This is the essence of the Christian faith and Methodism.

b. Self:

The Biblical emphasis on the worth and potential of selfhood is essential as we approach the twenty-first century.¹⁰² Jesus commanded His followers to love their neighbours as they love themselves.¹⁰³ Self-actualization programs are very popular. The Church, through young adult, men's and women's groups can offer seminars and workshop groups for persons, both churched and unchurched. This could be done in the context of the potential offered by the gospel for persons created in the image of God.

Jesus' great commission was to "make disciples."¹⁰⁴ This means a balanced emphasis on nurture as well as conversion.

At this point, it has been shown in chapter two, that mainstream Canadian and American Methodism "largely abandoned at

¹⁰² Ibid, 263.

¹⁰³ Matthew 22:36-39.

¹⁰⁴ Matthew 28:18-20.

the turn of the century",¹⁰⁵ the chief means of nurture and self discipline, namely, the class meeting. This became one of the distinctions between the early Canadian Free Methodists and their Canadian mainline Methodist counterparts. The Free Methodist Church allows for the historic Methodist class meeting in The Book of Discipline, 1985.¹⁰⁶ These are called "growth groups." This allows for the division of the local church society into growth groups and for the selection, education and training of growth group (class) leaders.¹⁰⁷ The function of the growth groups (classes) and the duties of growth groups (class) leaders is laid down.¹⁰⁸

However, from this writer's vantage point, the accountability, nurture and self-actualization afforded by such early church and Methodistic structure, is being neglected in Free Methodist Churches.¹⁰⁹ A fresh understanding of the roots of the classes

¹⁰⁵ Kyle Haseldon and Martin E. Marty, What's Ahead For The Churches? A Report From The Christian Century. (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1964), 82. The thesis of this book is that Methodism is based on itinerancy, lay preaching and the class meeting. To ignore any of these is to dampen the dynamic of the movement.

¹⁰⁶ The Free Methodist Church of North America, The Book of Discipline 1985, Part I (Winona Lake, Indiana: The Free Methodist Publishing House, 1986), 184-185.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ The writer who is Superintendent of the Canada East Conference, Free Methodist Church in Canada, knows of few active growth group (class) ministries among the seventy-seven churches within this Conference. However, pastors and lay persons are expressing new interest in the recovery of this instrument in "making disciples."

needs to be made along with the bridging of this concept to contemporary needs in "disciple making." The distinction between the generalized "class" (a group consisting of no more than twelve persons) and the more specialized needs group called the "band" (the same number as the class),¹¹⁰ needs to be made. The significance of the growth groups (classes or bands) must be seen to be twofold.

First, the growth groups (class or band) is to be an accountability forum in order that persons can mature through the mutual sharing of experience of the inward witness within the context of Scripture and the church community. Second, this maturation process enhanced by such groups will enable individuals and the local church to deploy persons for witness and service to the local community and to the world. David Lowes Watson indicates the importance of the class or band (growth groups) for discipleship in the world:¹¹¹

It (class, band, growth group) was a prudential means of grace whereby Christians in witness to the world could sustain one another in their distinctive tasks assigned by God at a particular time and place in human history.

This is the link between the powerful and life changing experience with God and the deployment of mature disciples in order to bring redemptive change to society. Reginald Bibby's

¹¹⁰ David Lowes Watson, The Early Methodist Class Meeting Its Origins And Significance (Nashville: Discipleship Resources, 1987), 94-95.

¹¹¹ Ibid, 145.

"God", "Self" and "Society" is a proper sequence enhanced and linked by the renewal of growth groups (classes or bands) within the Free Methodist Church in Canada.

c. Society:

Bibby confronts us, "while community begins with people who share faith, it busts through the boundaries of those who would keep religion for themselves and speaks to all of life. Social issues become personal issues, because they involve people."¹¹²

This "community" atmosphere begins with joyful worship events; people who are involved with each other through small groups,¹¹³ and challenged through acts of service.

The challenge for the local church is the discovery of human needs in the community and the world. Active involvement for others can be the ministry of Day Care or "Keenagers" Club¹¹⁴ and a lively World Missions program. The church must lend an active voice and involvement in all ethical and moral considerations of community and nation. Issues like racism, abortion, the drug culture, marital breakdown, the environment, etc. must be faced with contemporary Biblical answers.

¹¹² Ibid, Bibby, 266.

¹¹³ Small groups or "classes" were re-discovered for the Christian Church through Methodism in the eighteenth century. The Free Methodist Church in Canada needs to reclaim this aspect of its heritage.

¹¹⁴ A "Keenagers" Club is a social ministry offered to senior citizens in a community. This is being utilized presently in Free Methodist Churches such as Barrie, Perth and Uxbridge, Ontario.

All in all, if the Christian Church is God's new community on earth, this will be modelled by caring love within the various local churches!

D. SUMMARY:

The distinctive characteristics of Canadian Culture were outlined as expressed by Pierre Berton in his classic book, A Personal Exploration Of Our National Character: Why We Act Like Canadians. These characteristics were the emphasis on institutional order, the moderate socialist society, the multicultural mosaic, the "cool" unemotional society and the lifestyle with its special national needs developed by the Canadian "shield."

A profile of religion in Canada as it presently exists along with future projections was delineated from Reginald W. Bibby's book, Fragmented Gods: The Poverty And Potential of Religion in Canada. Bibby's findings include the facts that religion needs to address culture, that church tradition is still very important, that regular attendances will decrease in the churches, that re-alignment of denominations will occur, and that there are great possibilities for the Christian Church in Canada. Churches that will realize their purpose will interact with Canadians through a three fold emphasis that is found in the words, "God", "Self" and "Society."

Adopting both the Canadian distinctive characteristics as laid out by Pierre Berton and the Canadian Church profile and projections offered by Reginald Bibby, strategies for the Free Methodist Church in Canada were offered.

Chapter VII

CONCLUSIONS

The thesis statement of this dissertation declares that "the Free Methodist Church in Canada has been discovering its own identity and its place in Canadian culture, is seeking to develop and implement an appropriate strategy for effective ministry."

The assumption that Canadian culture is distinct from that culture known as "American" has been demonstrated with the aid of two classic works; namely, Pierre Berton, Why We Act Like Canadians: A Personal Exploration Of Our National Character and Reginald W. Bibby, Fragmented Gods: The Poverty And Potential of Religion in Canada. Berton enumerated those traditional Canadian characteristics as contrasted with traditional American cultural identities. Bibby's work was the result of a Canada - wide census regarding a religious profile of Canadians. Bibby also offers projections for effective ministry strategies with the Canadian culture and present realities.

Chapter two of this dissertation demonstrated that when the distinctives of the Methodist message were clearly proclaimed that both individual salvation and corporate justice issues emerged. To be thoroughly Wesleyan and Methodist means that the Free Methodist Church in Canada must interact with the Canadian cultural identities.

The thesis statement, "Free Methodist Church in Canada has been discovering its own identity," was supported by extensive

documentation of the reasons Free Methodists were invited to Canada initially, the formation of the infant Free Methodist Church in Canada in 1876, the initiation of the Canada Conference in 1880 and later divided into the East and West Ontario Conferences in 1895.

This journey was further documented by the resolutions of the Sarnia Convention of 1920, the formation of the Canadian Executive Board and later, in 1974, the re-packaging of the Canadian Executive Board into the Canadian Jurisdiction Conference with its own Canadian resident bishop.

Special attention has been given to the interactions between Canadian culture and the Canadian Free Methodist Church during the period 1876 to 1990. A detail of the parallel evolution of the Canadian nation from a colony to a sovereign nation with its own constitution, with that of the Free Methodist Church in Canada as a mission extension of the North Michigan Conference to the present General Conference Status, has been stated. Attention has been focused on that period in Canadian history when national identity was at a high point. This happened when the development of a national anthem, flag and Canadian constitution were large issues. In tandem within this period, among Canadian Free Methodists, the Canadian Church identity became an issue. Such events as the Canadian Executive Board study regarding a Canadian General Conference, 1972, and the coincidence of the year 1982, when the Canadian Constitution was signed, plus the initiation of the General Conference process,

demonstrate this reality.

This study represents the first time that the various documents of the process that has set the stage for a Canadian General Conference have been brought together. Chapter four documents the establishment of the National Task Force On A General Conference. The various issues from that Task Force also contain the writers own historical reflections. The presentations to the Annual Conferences and the historic vote results for a Canadian General Conference are noted. As a follow-up, the General Conference Planning Committee is also documented.

This documentation has included Canadian cultural distinctives, the interaction of the Free Methodist Church in Canada within Canadian society, the journey towards autonomy through a Canadian General Conference and the present Canadian religious profile. From this "mixture", ministry strategies and emphases have been suggested as the Free Methodist Church in Canada faces challenges in the second millennium.

It must be stated that the autonomous General Conference will give the Canadian Church much more freedom to adapt ministry strategies to the various cultural needs in Canada. This, along with the movement toward contextualization and ownership will enhance the ministry effectiveness of the Free Methodist Church in Canada.

This study has identified ways in which the Free Methodist Church in Canada "has been discovering its own identity and its

place within Canadian culture." However, it must be admitted that this study is incomplete in the following ways:

1. That the actual inaugural event on Sunday August 5, 1990 and the attending General Conference sessions will need to be written into the history of the Free Methodist Church in Canada.

2. That the Task Force On Evangelism And Church Growth will need to continue its work. Understanding of future population configurations will have impact on ways to relate to the aboriginal peoples, those peoples of English and French origins and the newer ethnic mosaic. Cultural distinctives within these groups whether in urban or rural settings, need to be enumerated as the Church seeks ministry communication in a developing Canada.

3. That the Task Force On Higher Education will need to continue its work. Two major issues confront this committee. These are the philosophy of education and training for ordained ministers and lay ministries in Canada and the facilitation of such a contextual commitment. In response to the latter, continued dialogue and action will be required of the interdenominational committee inaugurated in Winnipeg, Manitoba, 1989.

The ongoing process of investigation and study in the areas of cultural and practical issues facing the Free Methodist Church in Canada will aid the Holy Spirit in realizing full potential through this segment of His people!

Chapter VIII

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**FIVE QUESTIONS
ABOUT A
CANADIAN GENERAL CONFERENCE**

- I. WHY A CANADIAN GENERAL CONFERENCE?**
- II. HOW DOES THIS MOVE FIT INTO THE PICTURE FOR WORLD FREE METHODISM?**
- III. WHAT PRINCIPLES HAVE THE TASK FORCE FOLLOWED IN THEIR PLANNING?**
- IV. WHAT WOULD A GENERAL CONFERENCE GOVERNING BODY LOOK LIKE?**
- V. HOW MUCH WOULD A CANADIAN GENERAL CONFERENCE COST?**

An Interim Report of
The National Task Force
on a
Canadian General Conference

March 1988

FIVE QUESTIONS

ABOUT A CANADIAN GENERAL CONFERENCE

Should the Free Methodist Church in Canada become a full General Conference? That is, should it become autonomous in the government of its affairs? Should it remain under the umbrella of the North American Church or should it become one of several General Conferences around the world?

The question has been in the air for a long while. But in August of 1987, the Canadian Jurisdictional Conference (CJC) -- the present governing body of the Canadian Church -- discussed the question in two sessions totalling six hours and then voted to bring the matter to a referendum vote at the annual conferences in the summer of 1988.

The sequence of events is to be as follows:

1. A special Task Force made up of representatives from all three conferences will put together a report of their study, to be broadly released after their meeting in February, 1988. This document constitutes that report.
2. The Conference Superintendents will arrange a series of public forums across each conference to be held during the months of March, April and May. The report will be discussed at these meetings.
3. Any feedback from these meetings will be in the hands of Task Force Chairman, Rev. Robert J. Buchanan, Box 670, Belleville, Ontario, K8N 5B3 by June 1, 1988.
4. The 1988 annual conferences will then receive a final Task Force report for their discussion and final vote. The votes will be sealed uncounted until all conferences have voted. Each packet of votes will be surrendered into the hands of Rev. Paul G. Johnston, who will supervise the count after the third conference has voted. A two-thirds aggregate vote will be required for the proposal to pass.
5. The results will be referred to the Canadian Jurisdictional Conference which will finalize the decision at its annual meeting at the end of July, 1988.
6. If a Canadian General Conference (CGC) is approved the inaugural General Conference would meet not later than 1991.

This report attempts to answer five questions that have surfaced repeatedly in recent years. The Task Force urges all participants in the debate to think in terms of what will be most honouring to God and most advantageous to the forward movement of the Free Methodist Church in Canada.

I. WHY A CANADIAN GENERAL CONFERENCE?

The Task Force began its work with a variety of assumptions, opinions and questions on the subject of a Canadian General Conference. At the outset the members were not agreed that one should be ordered. But as their study progressed, uncertainty gave way to consensus. Their reasons for recommending that the Canadian Church go ahead with the project are presented in this paper. But they can be summarized at the outset as follows:

FIRST, THE MODEL IS RIGHT

Since 1974, the administrative body of the Canadian Church, the Canadian Jurisdictional Conference, has met as a board with 22 members plus honorary members and observers.

The proposed new model would have seventy-two members divided into four commissions of eighteen each, meeting at three-year intervals. This is a good plan, much better than the present.

A Board of Administration of sixteen members meeting annually is stronger than a Board of Directors of ten members which currently meet.

Bringing home our own constitution and taking charge of our own destiny will make greater sense to the increasing number of new people coming to us each year.

Relating to the United States General Conference on an equal footing through the Constitutional Council of the World Free Methodist Church will, also, make a great deal of sense to our people.

SECOND, THE PRICE IS RIGHT

At first there was fear that to become a General Conference would greatly increase our administrative costs. Some complaints from the field were based on the misconception that we would

duplicate everything in Canada that now is carried out in the United States. But as the study progressed, it became clear -- as you will see from following details -- that the price need not be increased unless the conferences call for more services from our headquarters. In fact, the present CJC plan is not as cost effective as a General Conference plan would be.

THIRD, THE TIME IS RIGHT

We have been a Jurisdictional Conference for fourteen years. This was intended at the outset as an interim status. Since 1974, we have centralized all our national ministries in a commodious central office. We have paid for these facilities in full. We have established a literature depot in Canada. We have fourteen years of experience in handling our own affairs in Canada. There is no good reason to delay longer.

Moreover, waiting until we reach 10,000 members or more becomes unnecessary when we deal with the cost question and discover that it will not be more affordable ten years down the road than it is now.

Once we settle the cost question, then we begin to see that by seizing the opportunity now we can experience several earlier advantages.

1. Accelerated development of a larger pool of leadership: Our pastors and lay leaders will rise to the challenge of the leadership requirements necessary in shaping a Canadian General Conference.
2. Ownership for our own destiny should develop more effectively with greater kingdom results if we move from the hybrid kind of situation that exists now under CJC to a more efficient and cost effective plan, namely, a Canadian General Conference.

II. HOW DOES THIS MOVE FIT INTO THE PICTURE FOR WORLD FREE METHODISM?

As long ago as 1920, forward looking Canadian leaders from east and west met in Sarnia, Ontario for an All Canada Conference. Out of that meeting came the formation of a Canadian Executive Board, the establishment of Lorne Park College, the later establishment of Aldersgate College, the founding of a Canadian monthly publication, The Free Methodist Herald, and an agreement with the American Church permitting us to keep more dollars at home for the development of the Canadian Church.

FIVE QUESTIONS
CANADIAN GENERAL CONFERENCE

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But based on that distant and significant move, we must consider more recent events. From the year 1959 to the present, important things have happened both in Canada and the world church. These events must be considered because they broaden the question, should we become a General Conference? They help us to see that the Free Methodist Church in Canada is more than an island by itself. It is even more than a body interlocked with the American Church. We are a part of a developing network of General Conferences, Jurisdictional Conferences, Annual Conferences, Provisional Annual Conferences and Extension Districts serving the Lord in 30 countries of the world. Consider some significant moments.

1959. In Canada a merger was effected between the Holiness Movement Church and the Free Methodist Church. This enlarged the home base, brought into the Free Methodist Church a fresh cadre of leaders and was attended by an enlarged vision for the future.

1960. This was the centennial year of the Free Methodist Church of North America. At that time there was only one General Conference with headquarters at Winona Lake Indiana. By then, a number of mission fields had grown to become annual conferences. However, in 1960, the Japan and Egypt General Conferences were recognized, giving them equal status with the North American General Conference.

1962. The question arose: In the developing world-wide church, how were nationals to be more fully developed as leaders? How were they to be taught to greater effectiveness? And how were they to have their vision for the larger church clarified? The World Fellowship, organized in Greenville, Illinois, in the late winter of 1962, was a partial answer to this question. Nationals from nearly all overseas fields were brought together for mutual dialogue, and the enlargement of vision. This was one further sign that the leaders of the North American Church were encouraging overseas fields to reach toward full maturity as Christian bodies. The underlying issue was greater effectiveness in their own homelands and the more rapid spread of the gospel.

1964. This developing network of ecclesiastical bodies had other needs as well. There were now three General Conferences. How were they to be linked together? The General Conference of 1964 in Winona Lake, Indiana ordered the establishment of a Constitutional Council. This was not a law-making body but it did serve to monitor the legislative actions of the three General Conferences and assure the actions were consistent with a common constitution.

1966. The Constitutional Council was formed in 1966. This was a further step toward the full sharing of all sectors of the church in a mature ecclesiastical relationship.

1974. For some time prior to 1974, leaders of the Canadian Church had been talking about the need to become a General Conference. At the General Conference of 1974, held in Winona Lake, Indiana, a large step toward full autonomy was taken. The Free Methodist Church in Canada became a Jurisdictional Conference.

1985. The movement toward self-government and full autonomy was accelerating in several fields. At the General Conference of 1985, Rwanda, Central Africa, was authorized to become a General Conference. The church in Burundi was authorized to become a Jurisdictional Conference. Accordingly, the North American General Conference meeting in Winona Lake elected a Burundi elder, to be a bishop. A few weeks later, Rwanda formed itself into a General Conference and elected and installed its own bishop. Also at the 1985 General Conference, the Free Methodist Church in Canada was granted permission to form their own General Conference, if and when the requirements are met to the satisfaction of the Board of Administration of the Free Methodist Church of North America, at the option of the Canadian Jurisdictional Conference.

1989. What will transpire at the upcoming General Conference of August 1989 in Seattle, Washington? It is still partly a matter of speculation. According to our information, the church in the Philippines is driving toward Jurisdictional Conference status. The Church in India is moving in this direction and has already nominated a person to be elected bishop.

In keeping with this world-wide development, here in North America plans have already been laid to recommend changing the name Jurisdictional Conference to Provisional General Conference. The name, Provisional General Conference, more accurately reflects the temporary or interim nature of this sort of body. The recommendation coming to the General Conference will also set a time limit (four or eight years) so that the interim body will be expected to move on to full General Conference status within such a time limit or revert to the status of annual conferences. This is to offset the possibility that several overseas areas will become interim bodies so they can have their own bishops but settle at that level.

In the light of the above, the past 27 years have been important in the development of the Free Methodist Church. It's an interesting footnote to history that long before 1960, a leading exponent of the movement toward self government and self support was none other than the Canadian Church's first overseas missionary, J.W. Haley.

**III. WHAT PRINCIPLES HAVE THE TASK FORCE
FOLLOWED IN THEIR PLANNING?**

At the outset, the National Task Force had to establish principles of organization. These would need to take into account the Canadian temperament, our proximity to the American Church and

what would be within the realm of possibility. The following two principles were decided upon:

- A. **ADAPTATION:** The objective of the Task Force has not been to devise a radically new sort of organization. Some changes will be recommended for the perceived well-being of the Canadian Church. But, wherever possible, this will be accomplished by the adaptation of present structures. First, the constitution of the Free Methodist Church set forth in paragraphs 100-228 of the 1985 Discipline will be adopted en toto. This is required and will link the Canadian Church constitutionally with all other Free Methodist bodies. Then the remainder of the Discipline will be reworked to make it relevant to the Canadian situation.
- B. **FRATERNITY:** The Task Force recognized that physical proximity to the American Church, language and cultural similarities and longstanding church ties have forged a special relationship between the Canadian and American Churches. The Task Force recommends that valuable aspects of that relationship be retained as follows.
1. It is expected that the Canadian bishop will be invited to sit with the American Board of Bishops at least once a year. This will give opportunity for the exchange of information, advice and counsel and, in doing so, both communions will benefit. Discussions with leaders in the American Church have brought assurance that such an arrangement is desirable. If and when a Canadian General Conference is authorized, we will request this arrangement, asking that details be spelled out in a letter of agreement.
 2. In conversations with the former and present Director of World Missions, Winona Lake, Indiana, we were assured that it would be mutually beneficial to have Canadian missionaries processed through the American office. If this arrangement can be finalized, we will request that we have one member sitting on the Commission on Missions of the American Church. We will also request that one member of the Canadian Church be seated on the

Commission on Christian Education because we will continue to use materials from Free Methodist Publishing House, Winona Lake, Indiana. Preliminary discussions have been favourable. If and when a Canadian General Conference is formed, we will seek arrangements through official letters of agreement.

3. It is expected that there will be a free exchange of resource persons between the two General Conferences. That is, members in either body with special expertise in education, administration, construction etc. will be drawn upon in a spirit of fraternity for service at home or abroad. This too, at an appropriate time, will be spelled out in a letter of agreement.
4. The Task Force proposes that the Canadian bishop be offered for oversight of one overseas area, sharing the task with the American bishops. This too will be spelled out in a letter of agreement.

IV. WHAT WOULD A GENERAL CONFERENCE GOVERNING BODY LOOK LIKE?

The National Task Force on a Canadian General Conference recommends that the following legislative structures be in place, consistent with the adapting principles:

A. OVERSIGHT:

The Task Force recommends that the General Conference elect by ballot one travelling elder to serve as Bishop, having oversight of the Free Methodist Church in Canada. The Canadian General Conference would then request of the American Church that the Canadian Bishop be granted honorary status with the American Board of Bishops and that he be invited to sit with their board at least once a year to give and receive relevant input for mutual benefit. Further, the Canadian Church would offer its Bishop for the supervision of one missions area overseas per quadrenium, consistent with present practices.

A Bishop is subject to the constitution of the Free Methodist Church as found in the Book of Discipline. He is accountable to his home conference for the annual review of character and performance. He is answerable to the General Conference for the carrying out of his administrative task. When he administers discipline, he must work in close agreement with appropriate committees of the relevant annual conference.

To further assure the existence of checks and balances in a Canadian General Conference, a Bishop's Cabinet would be formed, composed of each conference superintendent plus one lay person from each conference. This cabinet would meet at least once a year. But it could be called at any time at the request of the Bishop or two superintendents or one superintendent and one lay person. The purpose of the cabinet would be to offer mutual counsel or encouragement or to lay strategy for the future.

B. STRUCTURE:

The National Task Force recommends that the Canadian General Conference governing body be composed of seventy delegates (35 ministerial and 35 lay) plus the Bishop and Executive Director who would be in a non-voting relationship. And that the number of delegates from each conference be based proportionately on full adult membership.

Dialogue is presently underway between the Free Methodist Church in Canada and the Canada Pacific Districts of the Pacific Northwest Conference regarding the possibility of their becoming an integral part of the Free Methodist Church in Canada.

With this possibility in mind the following model has included the Canada Pacific Districts. Representation is based upon the 1986 full adult membership statistics.

MODEL WITH CANADA PACIFIC

	<u>Members</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>CGC Delegates</u>	<u>Present CJC Delegates</u>
Canada East	2814	51.0%	36	10
Canada Great Lakes	1364	24.7%	16	4
Canada West	940	17.1%	12	4
Canada Pacific	397	7.2%	6	-
	<u>5515</u>	<u>100.0%</u>	<u>70</u>	<u>18</u>

MODEL WITHOUT CANADA PACIFIC

	<u>Members</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>CGC Delegates</u>	<u>Present CJC Delegates</u>
Canada East	2814	55.0%	38	10
Canada Great Lakes	1364	26.6%	18	4
Canada West	940	18.4%	14	4
	<u>5118</u>	<u>100.0%</u>	<u>70</u>	<u>18</u>

In addition to the above delegates, the Bishop and Executive Director plus lay and ministerial representatives from the Free Methodist Church of North America and some honorary members (Director of Planned Giving, Editor of The Free Methodist Herald, President of Aldersgate College) would be included. In 1987 the CJC included 16 honorary and 4 voting members in addition to the elected conference delegates. Adding these representatives was an effort to allow greater representation.

In electing the seventy, the conferences are to give due regard to geographical representation as well as electing delegates from key leadership areas in their conferences. This will reduce the number of honorary members.

A provision counteracting the possible dominance of any one Conference while assuring representation by population is recommended as follows:

Whenever any annual conference has 50% or more of the delegates, a majority vote will be considered to be 5% above the percentage of the delegates of that conference. This percent shall be published at the beginning of every General Conference and shall be required of each vote in that General Conference. This rule shall not prevail in those votes requiring a 2/3 majority.

It is recommended that the Canadian General Conference meet once every three years unless otherwise ordered.

C. ORGANIZATION:

The General Conference would be divided into four commissions, with seventeen or eighteen members each. The General Conference would assign oversight and/or receive reports as follows:

Administrative Commission

- Business and Legal Concerns
- Planned Giving Department
- Finance and Budgets
- Group Insurance and Pension Plans
- Mortgages for Churches
- Light and Life Press Canada
- Trustees (facilities and properties)
- Staff and Salaries
- Social Service Agencies
- Audio-Visual rental and distribution

Education Commission

- Canadian Education Commission
- John Wesley Seminary Foundation Grant/Loans
- Free Methodist Futures Scholarships
- Higher Education and the Ministry
- All Canada Ministers Resource Events
- Archives and Historical
- "The Free Methodist Herald"
- Receive reports from Aldersgate College
- Receive reports from Lorne Park College Foundation

Overseas Commission

- Department of World Missions Promotion
- Canadian Missionaries Payroll
- Promotion of Canadian Global Ministries
- Childcare Ministries Canada
- VISA Canada
- Compassion Canada
- Canada World Missions Co-ordinator
- Receive reports from Women's Missionary Fellowship International

Outreach Commission

- Church Growth and Planting
- French Ministries
- Native Ministries
- Ethnic Ministries
- Moral Issues and Social Action
- Seminars and Conventions Promoting Evangelism
- Receive reports from Light and Life Men Canada

A Board of Administration to care for the affairs of the General Conference between meetings would be elected by the General Conference, charged to meet at least once per year. The composition of this body would be three members for each of the four commissions plus the Canada Pacific representation (Superintendent and one lay person) as well as the Bishop and Executive Director for a total of sixteen persons. Care would be taken in the selection to observe equal number of laypersons and clergy, as well as broad representation from the conferences.

**V. HOW MUCH WOULD A CANADIAN GENERAL
CONFERENCE COST?**

After studying costs as thoroughly as possible, the National Task Force has concluded that the move from a Jurisdictional Conference to a full General Conference would cost approximately the same as the present arrangement. Some funds now forwarded to World Headquarters would be retained for Canadian purposes.

A. CGM/UMC HOME MINISTRIES

The following breakdown of the UMC Home Ministries budget at World Headquarters for 1988 shows that the Free Methodist Church in Canada is involved in 8 areas that are presently being funded through our Canadian Global Ministries (CGM) contributions.

These percentages approximate the portion of the total \$59,000 projected to be received in the 1988 CGM receipts and forwarded to Winona Lake, Indiana to help fund these departments:

42.8%	Department of Christian Education	\$25,200.
8.9%	Ministerial Education and Guidance	5,200.
5.4%	Free Methodist Futures Scholarships	3,200.
29.0%	JWSF Grant/Loans	17,100.
0.7%	Continuing Education	400.
1.6%	Pastoral Orientation	1,000.
8.9%	General Conference (Travel & Program)	5,200.
2.8%	Historical Committee	<u>1,700.</u>
	TOTAL UMC HOME MINISTRIES	\$59,000.

B. MEETING COSTS

Comparison costs have been studied showing the difference between a new Canadian General Conference (CGC) and the existing Canadian Jurisdictional Conference (CJC) as it relates to the costs of their various meetings. Under the present system the CJC members are also members of the General Conference of North America (GC-NA).

**FIVE QUESTIONS
CANADIAN GENERAL CONFERENCE**

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Present Meeting Costs for the CJC and GC-NA System:

* CJC Annual Meeting (22 + 15)	\$ 10,250 .
* Board of Directors' Annual Meeting (10)	1,200.
GC-NA (food and lodging) raised annually by the Canadian Conferences in their budgets	4,500.
GC-NA (travel and program) forwarded annually from CGM to UMC Home Ministries	<u>5,200.</u>

TOTAL AVERAGE YEARLY COSTS FOR CJC \$21,150.

Projected Meeting Costs for a Canadian General Conference System:

Travel	72 + 3 @ \$180. Avg.	\$ 13,500.
**Food (9 meals)	72 + 3 @ 51. Avg.	3,825.
***Lodging	72 + 3 @ 29. Avg.	2,175.
Office Supplies		3,000.
Secretarial		1,000.
Representatives to World Headquarters		<u>3,000.</u>
		\$ 26,500.
Three year meeting cycle -- per year		\$ 8,833.

Board of Administration Meeting Twice a Year:

Travel (to Mississauga) 16 @ \$180. X 2 Mtg.	\$ 5,750.
**Food 16 @ 34. X 2 Mtg.	1,088.
Office Supplies/Secretarial	1,000.
Per Year	\$ 7,838.

TOTAL AVERAGE YEARLY COST FOR CGC \$ 16,671.

NOTES:

Travel costs averaged about \$306 each when CJC met in Saskatoon in 1986. The average was \$180 for the Mississauga CJC meeting in 1987.

- * These figures do not include any lodging costs as area homes are utilized.
- ** Food and Lodging based upon Wesley Acres quotes.
- *** Additional costs in lodging (difficulty to house 75 in homes) is offset by the conferences presently paying food and housing at the General Conference of North America sessions.

SUMMARY COMPARISONS:

At present, the Canadian Jurisdictional Conference, with 22 members plus 15 honorary members, meets annually for 3 days. A Board of Directors, 10 in number, also meets annually for 2 days. If a General Conference with 72 Members (plus possibly five honorary members) met every three years, for 3 days and a Board of Administration with 16 members met twice a year for 2 days, it would actually cost less than the present arrangement.

Most of the "meeting costs" of a Canadian General Conference meeting every three years would be covered by Canadian Global Ministries (CGM) funds presently being forwarded to World Headquarters in Winona Lake (about \$5,200 per year) which is used through UMC Home Ministries to assist in funding the General Conference of North America. These funds would be retained in Canada going toward the cost of assembling a Canadian body.

If a Canadian General Conference should be held in a two-year interval (1990 & 1992) for the first and second General Conferences, costs would increase by approximately \$4,000 per year.

If the Inaugural Conference were to be a major event, cost factors would increase for all concerned (the Canadian Church, the Annual Conference, the Local Church and the persons attending).

If the Free Methodist Church in Canada should decide to remain as a Jurisdictional Conference but enlarge its membership for broader representation this course would cost more than to go the route of a General Conference meeting every third or fourth year.

C. ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS

The Canadian headquarters at Mississauga is already carrying practically all the responsibility of a General Conference with its present business and clerical staff. Very little would change at headquarters unless more responsibilities were added. Possible areas to be added would be Ministerial Education and Guidance, Free Methodist Futures scholarships and John Wesley Seminary Foundation grant/loans. These areas, presently being funded through Canadian Global Ministries contributions of approximately \$27,000 annually to Winona Lake, could be handled directly from the Canadian office using the same funds now allocated for these areas. The added cost would be clerical.

If increased services were required from our headquarters it may be necessary to hire some limited part-time assistance. The Task Force study showed this to be minimal.

The National Task Force recommends that the Free Methodist Church in Canada continue to fund the Department of World Missions and Department of Christian Education in Winona Lake, Indiana in the same manner as at present because these departments would be rendering special services to the Canadian Church. Official letters of agreement with World Headquarters would spell out the financial arrangements.

OBSERVATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

1. It appears to the Task Force, after careful research, that the reorganization of the Canadian Church into a General Conference would not require major changes in our present structures.
2. It appears also that the cost would be nearly the same as we presently incur, unless new services were requested from the national headquarters.
3. We believe the Canadian Church should develop a greater sense of ownership for its mission in Canada. Becoming a General Conference will not, of itself, assure that this will happen. But our coming together in larger numbers to rethink our task and set priorities should increase our sense of ownership for our work in Canada.
4. On several occasions, the Task Force confronted the fact that the original request of the Canadian Church in 1974 was to become a General Conference. We were directed, instead, into an interim relationship which we have now been in for fourteen years and therefore, it is time to advance to a General Conference.

5. Accountability at the time of election and during intervals between elections would be greater if the Canadian Church had authority to elect its own Bishop. A Jurisdictional Conference must look to an outside body to do this. Only General Conferences elect Bishops.

6. We need a larger body to care for the administration and planning of our Canadian work. By the model set forth in this paper, a General Conference of 72 members would meet every three years.

* * * * *

The National Task Force on a Canadian General Conference offering this report is composed of representatives from the three Canadian annual conferences and the Canada Pacific Districts as follows:

Canada East:	Rev. Robert J. Buchanan Mr. Glen Snook
Canada Great Lakes:	Rev. Glen M. Buffam Mr. Dale Humphrey
Canada West:	Dr. Joseph F. James Mr. Alf Robinson
Canada Pacific:	Rev. Vernon Frudd (Honourary)
Canadian Church:	Bishop Donald N. Bastian Rev. Paul G. Johnston (Honourary)

Persons reading this report are encouraged to talk to their pastors and delegates as well as members of the National Task Force on a Canadian General Conference. They are also urged to attend any gatherings in their area called prior to conference to discuss this very important topic.

Much prayer is needed that the Canadian Church, through the referendum votes at the Conferences this summer, will make the decision most glorifying to God.

The Free Methodist Church in Canada
4315 Village Centre Court
Mississauga, Ontario L4Z 1S2
(416) 848-2600

**A PROPOSAL
FOR A
CANADIAN GENERAL CONFERENCE**

Presented to the
Annual Conferences in Canada:

June 27, 1988 - Canada East Conference
July 8, 1988 - Canada Great Lakes Conference
July 15, 1988 - Canada West Conference

by

The National Task Force
on a
Canadian General Conference

Free Methodist Church in Canada
4315 Village Centre Court
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A PROPOSAL
FOR A CANADIAN GENERAL CONFERENCE

INTRODUCTION

We believe this is a time of golden opportunity for the Free Methodist Church in Canada. As a country, our sense of nationhood is growing. At the same time, as a church, we have made strides over the past fourteen years in managing our own affairs. We are in the position to address our Christian task in Canada as we never have been before in our 108 year history. It is time, we believe, to become a General Conference.

We did not begin our work as a task force with this unanimous point of view. We came to our first meetings holding a variety of opinions shaped by our regional loyalties, our conservative hearts, our personal doubts and apprehensions. We expressed them guardedly at first. We have worked them through in the light of gathered facts, moments of inspiration and, we believe, a God-given vision. Now, we share that unanimous vision with our people across three conferences. We believe it is time for the Free Methodist Church in Canada to arise and build.

I. THE PROCESS WE HAVE FOLLOWED

The Canadian Jurisdictional Conference (CJC) meeting in August, 1986, authorized the establishment of a National Task Force on a Canadian General Conference. There have been nine members, representing the ministers and laymen of three conferences, plus representatives from the Canada Pacific Districts of the Pacific Northwest Conference.

We have met in Mississauga, Ontario on the following dates: December 16, 1986; February 11, 1987; June 6, 1987; July 29, 1987; October 2-3, 1987; February 10-12, 1988; and June 10-11, 1988.

On February 10-11, 1988 we met to produce a detailed interim report, Five Questions on a Canadian General Conference. On February 12, 1988 we presented our results to the Board of Directors of the Canadian Church for their review. The report was then sent to all the local churches across Canada, mailed out early in March. Every Free Methodist family in Canada has had access to the report.

A PROPOSAL

Canadian General Conference

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THE PROCESS WE HAVE FOLLOWED - Cont'd.

The superintendents organized town meetings to give all members of their conferences opportunity to interact with the report and send back their responses to Rev. Robert J. Buchanan, chairman of the National Task Force. Canada East had six meetings, one in each of its districts. Canada Great Lakes had five, one in each zone. Canada West conducted twenty-six society meetings, the superintendent being present, so that every church could consider our report.

On June 10-11, 1988, the Task Force met in Mississauga to consider the feedback from the town meetings and draw up a final proposal. We now prayerfully submit our report.

By order of the CJC in its July 1987 meeting, the further procedure in this process will now be as follows: Each conference will have opportunity to discuss and vote on the recommendation at their 1988 annual conference. The ballot vote will be sealed uncounted and surrendered into the hands of the Executive Director of the Canadian Church, Rev. Paul G. Johnston. He will hold the ballots until all conferences have voted. A count will then be supervised, conference by conference, probably on July 15, 1988 at the Canada West Conference and the results will be reported to the three conference superintendents. In order to pass, a two-thirds aggregate vote will be necessary.

The results of the vote will be referred to the 1988 Canadian Jurisdictional Conference, meeting in Mississauga on July 27, 1988, and if the aggregate vote of the three conferences was at least a two-thirds majority the decision will then be forwarded for ratification to the General Board of Administration and 1989 General Conference of the Free Methodist Church of North America, meeting in Seattle, Washington, August 3-13, 1989.

If a Canadian General Conference is approved the inaugural General Conference may meet August 2-6, 1990, if ordered by the CJC, but not later than 1991.

II. AN HISTORICAL REVIEW

In order to understand the question before us today, we must see it in a larger historical perspective. Accordingly, we note a series of important dates that have significance in leading us to today's discussion.

1876 The first Free Methodist minister was appointed to Canada from Michigan.

AN HISTORICAL REVIEW - Cont'd.

- 1880 The Canada Conference of the Free Methodist Church was organized with 13 churches and 324 members.
- 1920 The All-Canada Convention held in Sarnia, Ontario, brought together leaders from east and west to consider the future of the Free Methodist Church here. Out of this came such forward steps as the formation of a Canadian Executive Board, the establishment of Lorne Park College, the later establishment of Aldersgate College, the establishment of the Free Methodist Herald, a Canadian monthly paper, and an agreement with the American Church permitting us to keep more dollars at home for the development of the Canadian church.
- 1927 A Federal Charter was secured by a Dominion Act of Incorporation for the Free Methodist Church in Canada.
- 1959 In Canada a merger was effected between the Holiness Movement Church and the Free Methodist Church.
- 1960 This was the centennial year of the Free Methodist Church of North America. The Japan and Egypt General Conferences were recognized, giving them equal status with the North American General Conference.
- 1962 The World Fellowship was organized in Greenville, Illinois. Overseas fields were being encouraged to reach toward full maturity as Christian bodies.
- 1964 The General Conference in Winona Lake, Indiana, ordered the establishment of a Constitutional Council to monitor the legislative actions of General Conferences and assure the actions were consistent with a common constitution. This was accomplished in 1966.
- 1974 For some time prior to 1974, leaders of the Canadian Church had been talking about the need to become a General Conference. At the General Conference of 1974, held in Winona Lake, Indiana, a large step toward full autonomy was taken. The Free Methodist Church in Canada became a Jurisdictional Conference.
- 1985 The Free Methodist Church in Canada was granted permission by the North American General Conference to form their own General Conference, at the option of the Canadian Jurisdictional Conference, if and when the

AN HISTORICAL REVIEW - Cont'd.

requirements are met to the satisfaction of the Board of Administration of the Free Methodist Church of North America.

1986 The Canadian Church took serious action in establishing a National Task Force with representatives from all three conferences to study the formation of a General Conference.

1987 A vote on the recommendation of the National Task Force, requiring an aggregate two-thirds majority, was ordered by the Canadian Jurisdictional Conference for the three annual conferences.

III. THE MODEL OF A CANADIAN GENERAL CONFERENCE

A. CONSTITUTION

The Constitution set forth in the 1985 Book of Discipline of the Free Methodist Church, paragraphs 100-253, which includes such things as the Articles of Religion and general organization, will be adopted en toto. This is required of all General Conferences and will link the Canadian church constitutionally with all other Free Methodist bodies.

B. OVERSIGHT

1. The General Conference shall elect by ballot one travelling elder to serve as bishop, having oversight of the Free Methodist Church in Canada. The Canadian General Conference shall request of the American Church that the Canadian bishop be granted honorary status with the American Board of Bishops and that he be invited to sit with their board at least once a year to give and receive relevant input for mutual benefit. Further, the Canadian Church will offer its bishop for the supervision of one missions area overseas, consistent with present practices.

2. A bishop shall be subject to the constitution of the Free Methodist Church as found in the Book of Discipline. He shall be accountable to his home conference for the annual review of character and performance. He shall be answerable to the General Conference for the carrying out of his administrative task. When he administers discipline, he will work in close agreement with appropriate committees of the relevant annual conference.

THE MODEL - Cont'd.

3. To further assure the existence of checks and balances in a Canadian General Conference, a Bishop's Cabinet shall be formed, composed of each conference superintendent plus one lay person elected by the conference from among their lay delegates to General Conference. This cabinet shall meet at least once a year. But it may be called at any time at the request of the bishop or two superintendents or one superintendent and one lay person from the cabinet. The purpose of the cabinet shall be to offer counsel, encouragement or to lay strategy for the future.

C. ORGANIZATION

1. GOVERNING BODY

- a. The Canadian General Conference shall be composed of 70 delegates (35 ministerial and 35 lay), plus the bishop. The bishop or his deputy shall be chairman.
- b. The following shall be ex officio members without a vote:

Executive Director
Director of Planned Giving
Editor of The Free Methodist Herald
President of Aldersgate College
Missions Co-ordinator for Canada
Honourary Life Members

- c. The expenses of elected delegates and ex officio members will be shared by the Canadian General Conference and the Annual Conferences.

2. DISTRIBUTION OF DELEGATES

- a. The number of delegates from each conference shall be based proportionately on the full adult membership as reported the previous year.
- b. Dialogue is presently underway between the Free Methodist Church in Canada and the Canada Pacific Districts of the Pacific Northwest Conference regarding the possibility of their becoming an integral part of the Free Methodist Church in

THE MODEL - Cont'd.

Canada. With this possibility in mind one of the following models has included the Canada Pacific Districts.

ELECTED DELEGATES WITH CANADA PACIFIC

Canada East	36
Canada Great Lakes	16
Canada West	12
Canada Pacific	<u>6</u>
	70

ELECTED DELEGATES WITHOUT CANADA PACIFIC

Canada East	38
Canada Great Lakes	18
Canada West	<u>14</u>
	70

- c. Delegate representation for these models is based on 1987 full adult membership statistics.

3. CHOOSING DELEGATES

- a. Conference superintendents by virtue of their office shall be ministerial delegates of their respective conferences.
- b. The Conference Nominating Committee shall present to the annual conference a list of nominations which shall include:
- i) The Chairman, or a representative from each of the following Committees: Finance, Christian Education, Missions, WMFI, Evangelism, MISA and Camping.
 - ii) A lay or ministerial representative from any district not yet represented in the above nominations.
- c. The Conference Nominating Committee shall prepare two ballots (one lay and one ministerial) listing the

THE MODEL - Cont'd.

above nominees on the appropriate lay or ministerial ballot. In addition they shall provide sufficient spaces for the remaining lay and ministerial delegates at large. Space shall also be provided for additional names should the voter choose not to vote for the persons nominated.

- d. The Canada East Nominating Committee may include one representative from French ministries and the Canada West Nominating Committee may include one representative from Native ministries on their respective ballots.
- e. Reserve lay and ministerial delegates (up to 1/2 of the full number of delegates) shall be elected by separate ballots and each shall require a majority vote of those present and voting.

4. COMMISSION STRUCTURE

The General Conference will be divided into four commissions, with approximately nineteen members each. The General Conference will assign oversight and/or receive reports as follows:

- a. **Administrative Commission**
 - Business and Legal Concerns
 - Planned Giving Department
 - Finance and Budgets
 - Group Insurance and Pension Plans
 - Mortgages for Churches
 - Light and Life Press Canada
 - Trustees (facilities and properties)
 - Staff and Salaries
 - Social Service Agencies
 - Audio-Visual rental and distribution
 - Promotion of Canadian Global Ministries
- b. **Education Commission**
 - Christian Education
 - Christian Camping
 - Canadian Education Commission
 - John Wesley Seminary Foundation Grant/Loans
 - Free Methodist Futures Scholarships

THE MODEL - Cont'd.

- Higher Education and the Ministry
- All Canada Ministers Resource Events
- Archives and Historical
- "The Free Methodist Herald"
- Aldersgate College (reporting)
- Lorne Park College Foundation (reporting)
- Promotion of Canadian Global Ministries

c. **Overseas Commission**

- Department of World Missions Promotion
- Canadian Missionaries Payroll
- Childcare Ministries Canada
- VISA Canada
- Missions Co-ordinator for Canada
- Women's Missionary Fellowship International
- Promotion of Canadian Global Ministries

d. **Outreach Commission**

- Church Growth and Planting
- French Ministries
- Native Ministries
- Ethnic Ministries
- Moral Issues and Social Action
- Seminars and Conventions Promoting Evangelism
- Light and Life Men Canada
- Promotion of Canadian Global Ministries

5. **BOARD OF ADMINISTRATION**

There shall be a Board of Administration to oversee the affairs of the Canadian Church in the interim of General Conferences. The General Conference shall elect this board which will be composed of three members for each of the four commissions. If the Canada Pacific Districts join they shall be represented by their superintendent and one lay person elected from their delegates. In the formation of the board, care shall be taken to have equal representation of ministerial and lay members and broad representation from across the three conferences.

6. **A MAJORITY VOTE**

A provision counteracting the possible dominance of any one conference while assuring representation by population is recommended as follows:

THE MODEL - Cont'd.

Whenever any annual conference has 50% or more of the delegates, a majority vote will be considered to be 5% above the percentage of the delegates of that conference. This percent shall be published at the beginning of every General Conference and shall be required of each vote in that General Conference. This rule shall not prevail in those votes requiring a 2/3 majority.

7. FRATERNAL DELEGATES

If the Canada Pacific Districts do not join the Canadian Church, they will be invited to send two fraternal delegates, one ministerial and one lay.

The Board of Administration of the American Church will also be invited to send two fraternal delegates, one ministerial and one lay.

8. INTERVALS

The interval between General Conferences shall be three years unless otherwise ordered by the General Conference.

D. APPROXIMATE COSTS OF A CANADIAN GENERAL CONFERENCE

A full General Conference will cost approximately the same as the present arrangement--a Canadian Jurisdictional Conference in conjunction with the General Conference of North America. Over half of the Canadian Global Ministries (CGM) funds now forwarded to World Headquarters for United Ministries for Christ (UMC)--Home Ministries will be retained for Canadian purposes. This will offset most of the additional services and programs associated with a Canadian General Conference.

1. CGM/UMC--HOME MINISTRIES

- a. The following breakdown of the UMC--Home Ministries budget at World Headquarters for 1988 shows that the Free Methodist Church in Canada is

THE MODEL - Cont'd.

involved in eight areas that are presently being funded through our Canadian Global Ministries (CGM) contributions.

These percentages approximate the portion of the total \$59,000 projected to be received in the 1988 CGM receipts and forwarded to Winona Lake, Indiana to help fund these departments:

42.8%	Department of Christian Education	\$25,200.	
8.9%	Ministerial Education and Guidance	5,200.	*
5.4%	Free Methodist Futures Scholarships	3,200.	*
29.0%	JWSF Grant/Loans	17,100.	*
0.7%	Continuing Education	400.	*
1.6%	Pastoral Orientation	1,000.	*
8.9%	General Conference (Travel & Program)	5,200.	*
2.8%	Historical Committee	<u>1,700.</u>	*
	TOTAL UMC HOME MINISTRIES	\$ 59,000.	

* To be retained for Canadian purposes

2. ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS

- a. The Canadian headquarters at Mississauga, Ontario, is already carrying practically all the responsibility of a General Conference with its present business and clerical staff. This central office facility is now fully owned. We have fourteen years of experience in handling our own business affairs in Canada.
- b. Negotiations with three departments at World Headquarters--World Missions, Christian Education and Higher Education and the Ministry--have resulted in "Letters of Agreement".
 - (1) A Canadian General Conference will continue to contribute to the Department of World Missions at basically the same level as at present through the CGM program. (See Addendum #2)
 - (2) The Department of Christian Education will continue to provide materials, promotion and personnel who will travel into the Canadian conferences on an agreed upon basis costing approximately \$25,000 per year. This is about the same as we are presently contributing through CGM. (See Addendum #3)

THE MODEL - Cont'd.

- (3) The Department of Higher Education and the Ministry has agreed to transfer to the Canadian church most of their responsibility regarding Canadian ministerial students but will maintain a co-operative relationship with the Free Methodist Church in Canada which we will fund at a flat rate of \$2,000 per year. (See Addendum #4)

Ministerial Education and Guidance, Free Methodist Futures scholarships, John Wesley Seminary Foundation grant/loans, Continuing Education and Pastoral Orientation expenses, presently being funded through Canadian Global Ministries contributions of approximately \$27,000 annually to Winona Lake, Indiana, could be handled directly from the Canadian office using the same funds now allocated for these areas.

- c. The reorganization of the Canadian church into a General Conference will not require additional financial resources unless the churches of Canada expect increased services or programs from the Canadian office.

3. MEETING COSTS

- a. Comparison costs have been studied showing the difference between a new Canadian General Conference (CGC) and the existing Canadian Jurisdictional Conference (CJC) as it relates to the costs of their various meetings. Under the present system the CJC members are also members of the General Conference of North America (GC-NA).
- b. The cost of funding the present system of meetings which include annual CJC meetings (3 days), annual Board of Directors meetings and the cost of Canadian delegates at the General Conference of North America every four years is approximately \$21,150 per year.
- c. The projected costs of a Canadian General Conference of 77 persons meeting every three years (5 days), travelling to the west every third or fourth

THE MODEL - Cont'd.

General Conference, plus the funding of a Board of Administration of 16 persons meeting twice a year, and Canadian representatives interfacing with World Headquarters will amount to approximately \$20,000 per year. The compared "meeting costs" are about the same.

E. RELATIONSHIPS

(1) A SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP

Physical proximity, language and cultural similarities and longstanding church ties have forged a special relationship between the Canadian and American Churches. This close relationship shall be retained in the following areas.

- a. Department of World Missions
- b. Department of Christian Education
- c. Department of Higher Education and the Ministry
- d. Study Commission on Doctrine
- e. Association of Free Methodist Educational Institutions
- f. Light and Life Press

Letters of Agreement for some of the above are being obtained. (See Attached Addenda)

(2) EXCHANGE OF RESOURCE PERSONS

It is expected that there will be a free exchange of resource persons between the two General Conferences. That is, members in either body with special expertise in education, administration, construction, etc. will be drawn upon in a spirit of fraternity for service at home or abroad.

(3) REPRESENTATIVES AT WORLD HEADQUARTERS

- (a) We are requesting that one Canadian representative be a member of the Commission on Missions and also one be a member of the Commission on Christian Education because of our continued

THE MODEL - Cont'd.

relationship with these ministries of the American church.

- (b) We are requesting that the Canadian Bishop and Executive Director be granted a fraternal relationship with honorary membership on the General Board of Administration.

*** *** *** *** *** *** ***

The National Task Force on a Canadian General Conference offering this report is composed of representatives from the three Canadian annual conferences, the Canada Pacific Districts and the Canadian church as follows:

Canada East:	Rev. Robert J. Buchanan Mr. Glenn Snook
Canada Great Lakes:	Rev. Glen M. Buffam Mr. Dale Humphrey
Canada West:	Dr. Joseph F. James Mr. Alf Robinson
Canada Pacific:	Rev. Vernon Frudd (Honourary)
Canadian Church:	Bishop Donald N. Bastian Rev. Paul G. Johnston (Honourary)

*** *** *** *** *** *** ***

In light of our findings, searched out across two years of study and referred to all three conferences for discussion and feedback, your Task Force on a Canadian General Conference offers the following resolution:

IV. RESOLUTION TO BECOME A CANADIAN GENERAL
CONFERENCE OF THE FREE METHODIST CHURCH

WHEREAS, key leaders of the Canadian Free Methodist Church such as the late C.V. Fairbairn and R.H. Hamilton envisioned a more sharply-focused ministry in Canada as early as 1920 when they met in Sarnia, Ontario, as an All-Canada Convention to discuss the future of the church in Canada; and,

WHEREAS, this vision was advanced in 1974 when key Canadian leaders such as Earl S. Bull, John L. Walrath, Selwyn P. Belsher and Leslie A. Freeman, representatives to the General Board of Administration, requested of the North American General Conference convening in Winona Lake, Indiana, June 24, 1974, that the Free Methodist Church in Canada be authorized as a Jurisdictional Conference with its own bishop who would be a Canadian and would reside in Canada; and,

WHEREAS, the Constitution of the Free Methodist Church in Canada adopted August 25, 1977, makes provision for us to become a General Conference in every respect, anticipating the day when this would be realized; and,

WHEREAS, in order for our ministry in Canada to be effective we must take account of the fact that Canada as a country is experiencing a growing sense of nationhood; and,

WHEREAS, our mission in our own country to propagate the gospel of Jesus Christ, call people to a life of holiness and raise up healthy growing churches must be more sharply focused in Canada; and,

WHEREAS, to accomplish this sharpened focus we must have a national forum and court which meets periodically to discuss goals, define church order and generally unite and inspire our people for aggressive mission to Canada and beyond;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Free Methodist Church in Canada become a General Conference, to be inaugurated not later than 1991 and, after the 1988 Canadian Jurisdictional Conference, refer this decision for ratification to the North American Board of Administration and the General Conference meeting in Seattle, Washington, August 3-13, 1989.

ADDENDUM:

- # 1 - Chairman, General Board of Administration
- # 2 - Department of World Missions
- # 3 - Department of Christian Education
- # 4 - Department of Higher Education and the Ministry

ADDENDUM #1

June 15, 1988

The Rev. Paul G. Johnston
Executive Director
Free Methodist Church in Canada
4315 Village Centre Court
Mississauga, Ontario
L4Z 1S2

Dear Paul:

I have followed with interest the movement of the Free Methodist Church in Canada toward a vote, conference by conference, on the question of becoming a General Conference. I have also read your interim report released this past March and your final report which will be going to the conferences in a few days.

I note in your interim report that you wish to follow the principles of adaptability (use present structures with modifications as much as possible) and fraternity (keep ties with the American church strong for the mutual benefit of both General Conferences). Based on your documents and conversations with Bishop Bastian, you and others, I understand you want to accomplish agreements in the following areas:

- 1) You wish to have a Canadian representative sit on the Commission on Missions because it is your plan to continue to use the Department of World Missions to process and assign your missionaries rather than to set up a separate sending agency in Canada. In this regard, you also wish to have a letter of agreement from the above department.
- 2) You wish to have a Canadian representative sit on the Commission on Christian Education because the Canadian church will continue a special relationship with that area of ministry. In this regard also, you wish to have a Letter of Agreement from the Department of Christian Education.

THE REV. PAUL G. JOHNSTON
JUNE 15, 1988

- 2

- 3) You are also asking for a Letter of Agreement from the Department of Higher Education and the Ministry outlining the ways the two General Conferences can work together in the preparation of ministers for the future.
- 4) You are proposing that the Canadian bishop be invited to an honorary seat on the American Board of Bishops which he may occupy once a year or more for mutual counsel and benefit.
- 5) You are also wondering if the Canadian bishop and executive director might not be offered an honorary seat on the American Board of Administration, in this case also in the interest of fraternity. I know that your constitution gives two representatives from the American Board of Administration, a minister and a lay person, a seat on your CJC with voice and vote. I understand you plan to invite two fraternal delegates from our General Board of Administration if and when a General Conference is organized.
- 6) Your interim report notes, finally, that a Canadian General Conference will offer your bishop for the oversight of one overseas field, in collegiality with the American bishops.

I have read the drafted Letters of Agreement you have already drawn up with certain executives here at World Headquarters. I know these came about after several conversations between you and them. I concur with the directions you are taking.

I understand that there has been dialogue with the UMC Budget Committee regarding the financial implications as to how these changes may impact the UMC--Home Ministries budget.

It appears to me that what you are proposing will be for the benefit of the Free Methodist Church on both sides of the border. I commend you for your work. The above proposals will go before the Board of Administration this next October for approval.

Clyde E. Van Valin
Chairman
General Board of Administration

LETTER OF AGREEMENT

Department of World Missions
Free Methodist World Headquarters
Winona Lake, Indiana
and
The Free Methodist Church in Canada
Mississauga, Ontario

This Letter of Agreement is currently in effect and will continue to be effective if and when the Free Methodist Church in Canada becomes a Canadian General Conference.

The Reverend Paul G. Johnston, Executive Director and Treasurer of the Free Methodist Church in Canada (hereafter referred to as FMCC) and Dr. Elmore L. Clyde, General Director of the Department of World Missions (hereafter referred to as DWM) conferred on different occasions relative to these arrangements.

It is the understanding of both the FMCC and the DWM that the FMCC will continue to fund the DWM from the Overseas Ministries division of the Canadian Global Ministries (CGM). In 1988 the minimum goal for Overseas Ministries is \$235,000.00 (Cdn). In Canada CGM is on the free-will offering basis in a unified budget approach.

Funds for DWM will be directed to that department to be used in sustaining the present relationship with the DWM.

The salary payroll for Canadian career missionaries--both active and retired--will be paid through the Canadian Headquarters in Mississauga, Ontario on the monthly instructions of the DWM. Payroll funds will be deducted from the CGM-Overseas Ministries contributions received.

The DWM will prepare project lists from which the FMCC will select Canadian Overseas Ministries projects; for example, Canadian missionaries and their related fields of service as well as mission fields with a Canadian connection.

In promoting CGM-Overseas Ministries contributions, programs such as Compassion, Penny-A-Day and Thank Offerings will be used to help raise the CGM unified budget. All appeals for funds made by DWM to Canada should be cleared with the Canadian Executive Director first.

The FMCC will continue to co-ordinate the sponsoring of over 800 children in at least ten countries through Childcare Ministries Canada in co-operation with Childcare Ministries at DWM.

The Deputation Department will continue to schedule both Canadian and American missionaries through the Canadian churches. Offerings for deputation expenses are over and above CGM contributions.

The FMCC and DWM will co-operate in the recruitment of career missionaries as well as Volunteers In Service Abroad (VISA) workers. DWM will process and assign these career and short-term missionaries in consultation with the Canadian headquarters. The commissioning of Canadian missionaries will take place in Canada if feasible.

It is being requested of the General Board of Administration that the FMCC continue to have a representative as a voting member of the Commission on Missions if and when the FMCC becomes a General Conference.

The signature of the parties below will be placed following authorization by the appropriate bodies in the United States and Canada.

Elmore L. Clyde
General Director
Department of World Missions
Free Methodist Church of North America

Paul G. Johnston
Executive Director/Treasurer
Free Methodist Church in
Canada

Date

Date

LETTER OF AGREEMENT

Department of Christian Education
Free Methodist World Headquarters
Winona Lake, Indiana
and
The Free Methodist Church in Canada
Mississauga, Ontario

This Letter of Agreement will become effective if and when the Free Methodist Church in Canada becomes a Canadian General Conference. The Reverend Paul G. Johnston, Executive Director and Treasurer of the Free Methodist Church in Canada (hereafter referred to as FMCC) and Dr. Dan L. Riemenschneider, General Director of the Department of Christian Education (hereafter referred to as DCE) conferred on different occasions relative to these arrangements.

It is the understanding of both the DCE and the FMCC that the FMCC will continue to fund the DCE from the Canadian Global Ministries. The FMCC agrees to reimburse the DCE a flat annual fee of \$25,000 (Cdn) to be used in sustaining the present relationship with the Department of Christian Education.

These funds will be paid on a monthly basis directly to the Department of Christian Education to ensure that they are used in Christian Education ministries. The DCE will provide a periodic report on how this money was spent.

It is agreed by the DCE that these funds will be used to offset general operating expenses that directly benefit all Free Methodist churches in the United States and Canada. Examples of general operating expenses include:

- Staff salaries and benefits
- Publications such as "Accent" sent to all churches
- Office and mailing costs
- Age-level programming
- Promotion

Services directly benefiting Canadian churches will include the "purchase" of six trips to Canada annually by DCE personnel. Four of these trips will be for strategy planning meetings with each conference Board of Christian Education. The other two will be for specific training events sponsored by one of the Canadian conferences and/or a local church.

These trips will be rotated among the Canadian conferences, thus ensuring at least one contact with each conference every year and two contacts every two years. Any additional travel into Canada will be charged to the church or conference sponsoring the event.

Looking at past records, this proposal will greatly expand the direct ministry opportunities presently being provided to Canada.

It is being requested of the General Board of Administration that the FMCC continue to have a representative as a voting member on the Commission on Christian Education if and when the FMCC becomes a General Conference.

The signature of the parties below will be placed following authorization by the appropriate bodies in the United States and Canada.

Dan L. Riemenschneider
General Director
Department of Christian Education
Free Methodist Church of
North America

Paul G. Johnston
Executive Director/Treasurer
Free Methodist Church
in Canada

Date

Date

LETTER OF AGREEMENT

Department of Higher Education and the Ministry
Free Methodist World Headquarters
Winona Lake, Indiana
and
The Free Methodist Church in Canada
Mississauga, Canada

This Letter of Agreement will become effective if and when the Free Methodist Church in Canada becomes a Canadian General Conference. The Reverend Paul G. Johnston, Executive Director and Treasurer of the Free Methodist Church in Canada (hereafter referred to as FMCC) and Dr. Bruce L. Kline, General Secretary of Higher Education and the Ministry (hereafter referred to as HETM) conferred several times relative to the matter. On May 18, 1988 in Kline's office this Letter of Agreement was drafted.

It is the understanding of both HETM and FMCC that the following programs and ministries will continue to be interrelated: Ministerial Education and Guidance, The John Wesley Institute, The Association of Free Methodist Educational Institutions, The Free Methodist Chaplains Association, Continuing Education, and correlation of financial aid for students who receive John Wesley Seminary scholarships and Free Methodist Futures scholarships. The interrelatedness will continue for the interests of both General Conferences.

Financial aid to John Wesley Seminary Foundation seminarians will be funded directly from the FMCC to the Canadian students. It is the intention of both HETM and the FMCC that the church portion of financial aid to seminarians from Canada be the same as financial aid to seminarians from the United States.

Free Methodist Futures scholarships for eligible Canadian students will be funded by the FMCC. Liaison will also continue on this matter.

It is agreed that Canadian students will continue to be welcome at the January Interterm (J-term) taught in Winona Lake. As in the past, students will care for their own expenses. However, Canadians will be eligible for scholarships only through the Canadian Church, not as at the present through Higher Education and the Ministry.

Aldersgate College and the Lorne Park College Foundation will continue to be eligible for membership in the Association of Free Methodist Educational Institutions whose constitution and by-laws permit international membership. They will continue to pay their dues and assessments as in the past.

Canadian chaplains may retain membership in the Free Methodist Chaplains Association by payment of regular dues since the constitution is valid for international membership. Chaplains from Canada not now members may join.

The John Wesley Institute is the new program being developed through HETM. The FMCC will be welcome to join in this program. Beginning with the 1988-89 academic year each of the AFMEI schools will have a John Wesley Institute Campus Director. The amount of \$200 per institution is being provided by HETM. This will include Aldersgate College and be a portion of the liaison work between HETM and FMCC.

Ministerial Education and Guidance work now carried on by HETM will be transferred into the operation of the FMCC at a time agreeable to both parties.

Pastoral orientation carried on by World Headquarters and headed by HETM will be open to Canadian pastors on the same basis as those in the USA as long as such seems appropriate. Officials of both General Conferences will confer on further pastoral orientation programs, working together as mutually agreed upon.

In recognition of the executive and office expense for continued liaison and interrelatedness, the Free Methodist Church in Canada agrees to reimburse the Department of Higher Education and the Ministry a flat annual fee in the amount of \$2,000.00 (Cdn).

The signature of the parties below will be placed following authorization by the appropriate bodies in the United States and Canada.

Bruce L. Kline, General Secretary
Department of Higher Education and
the Ministry
Free Methodist Church of North
America

Paul G. Johnston
Executive Director/Treasurer
Free Methodist Church in
Canada

Date

Date