

A People of Two Kingdoms: The Political Acculturation of the Kansas Mennonites. By James C. Juhnke. (Newton, Kan.: Faith and Life Press, 1975. Pp. xii, 215. Illustrations, tables, appendixes, notes, bibliography, index. \$7.95.)

To write dispassionately about a subculture of which one is a part and toward which one has assumed something of the role of prophet and critic is no mean achievement. This James Juhnke has done without losing a touch of intimacy in his treatment of subject matter and personalities.

The subtitle of the book, *The Political Acculturation of the Kansas Mennonites*, is well stated. Coming to Kansas, primarily from Russia in the 1870s, to escape compulsory military service in their home country, the Kansas Mennonites formed a religious and cultural island on the American farming frontier. Their isolation was both deliberate and inescapable. From the time of their origins during the Protestant Reformation, Mennonites believed that the proper relationship between the kingdom of Christ and the kingdom of this world "was decisive and thorough separation." Politically this meant that those in the kingdom of Christ "must renounce the sword, the taking of oaths, and the holding of political office" (p. 10). The partial accommodation of these Mennonites to American democracy after centuries of isolation, particularly through participation in the political affairs of the community, the state, and the nation, is the subject of this book.

Juhnke examines voting (and nonvoting) patterns, distribution of the Mennonite vote among the parties, office holding by Mennonites, and political statements by editors of and contributors to Mennonite religious newspapers. But the predominant theme is the painful frustration of Kansas Mennonites who wanted to be good and respectable citizens but who at the same time sought to maintain their radical doctrine of the two kingdoms, particularly as it expressed itself in nonparticipation in war.

The author's research is extensive and thorough. His commendable foray into quantitative history provides needed corrective information as to how Mennonites voted, although the evidence for *why* they voted as they did seems quite fragmentary. Considering that Mennonites did not follow their leaders in matters political (pp. 69-70, 93), it would be most

interesting to know what those farmers said about political affairs while socializing during wheat harvest or after church on a Sunday; but those conversations are lost to us. One could wish that Juhnke had made a greater effort to relate political adjustments of Kansas Mennonites to other aspects of acculturation and to compare this group with Mennonite societies which had been in this country much longer, but to have done so would have violated the author's self imposed limits.

Emerging somewhat from his objective stance Juhnke concludes that "the tragedy of the Mennonites was . . . that they so desperately wanted to be good American citizens and could not fulfill the requirements without violating their consciences or abandoning the tradition of their forebears" (p. 156). But this "Mennonite in America, a pacifist and a citizen," and a 1970 candidate for the United States House of Representatives who espouses "liberal Mennonite Christian values" (p. ix) never states how he proposes to solve the political dilemma of the Mennonites. Like a good historian, he leaves this question unanswered.

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Mennonites in Canada, 1786-1920: The History of a Separate People. By Frank H. Epp. (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1974. Pp. xii, 480. Illustrations, maps, charts, tables, notes, bibliographies, index. \$9.95.)

Frank H. Epp is a well known Canadian Mennonite scholar, author, and leader. In the prologue to this work T. D. Regehr summarizes with genuine insight the objective of the author: to "tell the Canadian Mennonite story accurately, within its European, North American, and Canadian contexts" (p. 17). Rare indeed is the in group author who succeeds in attaining such an objective to the degree to which Epp does.

Modern research has done much to clarify the complex nature of the sixteenth century Protestant Reformation, in particular the many facets of the radical reformation—a series of movements centering especially in Switzerland, central Germany, and the Netherlands. The revolutionary fringe of these movements was soon eliminated by the power of the states involved, and from the main bodies of the peace-