SPIRIT-WRESTLERS' VOICES

Honouring Doukhobors on the Centenary of their migration to Canada in 1899

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The Spirit of co-operation in a competitive society

Jim Deacove

Editor's note: It takes a courageous person to stick out his or her neck and go against the grain of society. The Doukhobors did this in 1895 when they destroyed their weapons; and as the *plakun trava*[1] of the day, they dared to choose co-operation instead of conflict as their predominant mode of human interaction when they first settled on the Canadian prairies in 1899. In a capitalistic individualistic environment, this was a courageous move. The author of this paper has been courageous for several decades in developing a unique home-games industry, *Family Pastimes*, based on the co-operative principle. Many banks, many suppliers, many friends and relatives warned him and his wife Ruth that the business would never last with such an outlandish idea.

'Co-operative games? Are you serious? Do not, under any circumstances give up your day-jobs', they cautioned.

But now, twenty-six years later, *Family Pastimes* is solid, dependable and thriving and its developers are very pleased that their thousands of customers have helped prove the naysayers wrong. Today seven people are employed full-time in a farm business with a gross annual turnover of $300,000, some of the games are licensed to companies in Sweden, Germany, Israel and Spain, and there are retailers in places such as America (where 80% of the products are exported), Sweden, New Zealand and the Netherlands. Recently additional interest has been generated in Japan, China and Russia.

These games are the inventions of Doukhobor Jim Deacove. Jim first made a few co-op games for his own family and was encouraged by friends to make more. According to the *Pastimes* catalogue:

'The Deacove family was and is no different from others. Sharing toys, helping mom and dad, being kind to others are values taught in all homes. To find games which help to reinforce such sharing attitudes, however, is very difficult. Thus Jim and Ruth felt they had to create some. The 'hobby' became a small business in their home....

'Slow but steady growth in sales required moving the business into a cottage. With the addition of new games and greater interest by the public, a switch occurred. The family moved into the cottage and the business occupied the two stories of the old farm house. A new workshop was made in 1984 to replace the old barn house destroyed in a terrible fire, October 1983.'

When the Canadian Museum of Civilization launched its Spirit Wrestlers Doukhobor Exhibit (beginning in 1996), Jim took up the challenge of producing a game to honour the centenary of the destruction of weapons by the Doukhobors. He sought inspiration from his grandparents, who told him about the arms burning in Russia in 1895 and how 7,500 Russian Doukhobor dissidents came to Canada in 1899 and co-operated in living, working and singing together.

Ploughshares, as the game is called, addresses the issue of peace and war, with a search for a fresh alternative paradigm to the overfed military 'sacred cow'. According to the game's instructions,

It will be an adventure filled with danger and great rewards. To fulfil our task, we must be gentle as a dove and wise as a serpent. This is a game of collaboration, learning and discussion; a game full of exciting strategy, with each of us making an important contribution.

Ploughshares is Jim's seventieth game, a tribute to his ancestors from Eastern Europe. He continues to revise, upgrade, and reprint earlier games as he gets feedback from his customers by mail and in workshops at schools.

In preparing for one of these workshops, Jim speaks of the philosophy and practice of co-operation, teamwork and shared decision-making — qualities that made possible the survival of his Doukhobor and Polish grandparents and those ancestors who came to Canada to build a new society — as well as bonding, support and playfulness; openness, trust and safety; self worth and personal power; and well-being.

Co-operative games: the beginning

I am always asked, 'How did you get started making co-operative games?' I answer by remembering out loud...

I am in our back yard on the porch watching the neighbourhood kids playing some games. Like most families, my wife Ruth and I have been teaching our two little girls[2] such values as sharing their toys, helping Mum and Dad, being kind to pets. We have been discovering that more and more energy is needed to maintain these values in our home. As we sit and watch the children at play, some rather heady insights come to mind.

The 'kids' gather round and talk over what game they want to play next. They listen for each other's weaknesses, exploiting them for their own advantage. What I am witnessing is a change from consensus to confrontation.

I begin to wonder what would happen if the nature of their decision-making process were transferred into the game situation itself.

Fig. 1. Jim and Ruth Deacove, proprietors of Family Pastimes Co-opetative Games.

A little later when the kids are again deciding on a game, I shout out to them that I know a new game they might like to try. I make up the fine points as I talk to them. 'It's something like *Hide and seek,* but I call it *Lost and found.'*

I go on to describe how I will start the game by covering my eyes at the Home Post and count to a hundred by fives.

> Everyone is to hide so no one else can see them. We will pretend that everyone is lost and I am coming to rescue you. When I find someone we join hands, rush back and both touch the post, which is the Rescue Station. Then the two of us will go out and each try to find someone and bring them back to the post. This goes on until we have just one person left to find. When this person is rescued, since they are the best at hiding, they get to start the next game.

I finish counting to a hundred and wander out, keeping my eyes open. I find a little girl first. With great delight, big person and little person join hands and hippity-hop to the Rescue Station. Already I feel that something tremendous is about to burst open within me. I'm joyously discovering something here. The child looks at me, eyes free of fearing

that this big person is going to wipe her out of the game. The delight on her face is teaching me a lesson which marks my soul deeply.

'I'm not very good at finding people', she confides shyly at the post. 'Can I come with you?' I agree to her suggestion. It's a friendly, flexible game, so we change the rules right there. Soon three of us are running to the post. Then I venture out alone again and the little girl and her friend go off as a pair of rescuers.

The game is nearing an end, but we cannot find one nine-year-old boy. We gather at the post — an impressive search party — and compare theories. 'Have we looked by Riley's garage? Lots of good spots to hide there.' We devise other plans but don't find the boy. Then someone says, 'Hey, we've been looking everywhere but up.' We immediately spread out and look up. Sure enough, the rascal is up a tree, enjoying the spectacle of us scurrying around. A big cheer goes up when we find him. We carry him on our shoulders to the post. He is given the honour of starting the next game.

Later, on the porch, I reflect further on the game we have just played. I know that this is a turning-point in my life. I can't look back now.

The laughter of the kids. The collective good will. No one is eliminated from the game. Even the youngest is playing and making a contribution right to the end. The nature and quality of the relationships of the participants feeels healthy, feels very right. No 'It' pitted against the rest of the group. What a name we assign to that person who does the chasing — *It!*

I realise what has been bothering me about the game we recently bought for our two girls. The game always puts them in conflict with each other. The point of the game is to beat one another and because the older one has the advantage of experience and co-ordination (among other things), she usually wins. The younger one either has to be coaxed to go on playing or, worse, she cheats in order to 'get even' with her big sister! Then the big sister doesn't want to play anymore. 'Christa always cheats!' is the complaint.

I also reflect on situations outside the family. I teach Sunday School in our local church. We have our lesson from the Bible and we discuss finding non-violent ways to solve problems. We explore the meaning of compassion, sharing, affection and so on. Then I set up the recreation programme and the kids pound and push each other something awful. What a contrast here!

They often drift through the class lesson listlessly, but have great vitality for the games. I now see how my recreation programme is not

reinforcing my lessons on living. Let's be honest: the recreation programme is undermining my lessons.

I reflect on my high-school teaching as well. Many more things come together. Competition is an effective tool for classroom management, for realising various academic goals. This is the devilish attraction of the competitive technique: you get those quick, short-term results. To take the co-operative route which tries to nurture action through understanding is 'messy' and takes too much time. I can get my daughter to clean up her room by setting up comparison/ competition images with her neat friend, Amanda. Tanya will clean up under that kind of pressure. But will she understand what cleanliness, punctuality and so on are about if I continue doing that to her? I no longer think so.

Co-operative games: development

That day some twenty-six years ago on my back porch shook up my perspectives for good. I challenged myself to begin the adventure of doing things differently in the family, the neighbourhood, the church and my school-teaching. I had set myself many goals in those areas of endeavour, but now I was challenging myself to realise them by *co-operative* rather than *competitive* means.

For our family it meant going to toy and game stores and asking the salespeople about games that stressed sharing and helping each other. 'We want a good family game.'

I remember well the first store owner laughing aloud, then seeing that we were not laughing with him, he gave serious consideration to our request. We were soon flabbergasted. He could not find a solitary thing in the entire store.

We were forced to change the rules of many of the games we had at home — *Scrabble,* for example: instead of keeping individual scores, we kept a family score. Just that simple rule change created subtle shifts in the dynamics of the game.

Some examples: we allowed free use of the dictionary by all, and helping each other to spell words. Far from hiding behind our tokens, we not only exposed them, we even traded them. Finally, instead of using my cunning to maximise my own score with the treasured letters X, Q, Z, etc., burying them so no one else could use them, I now found I could still use these letters ingeniously and at the same time create opportunities for others to use them.

I can honestly say that I feel a thousand times better using my mind to assist and share rather than as a weapon. Why? The reason is simple.

Our initial impulse to play a game is social — that is, we bring out a game because we want to do something together. So how ironic it is that in most games we spend so much energy and effort trying to bankrupt someone, destroy their armies, or in other words try to get rid of the very people we just invited over to play with us. If we can play a game that *develops,* rather than *defeats* that social impulse, then everyone feels better for it.

In addition to altering existing games, I began to cook up my own. The old cliché that 'necessity is the mother of invention' proved true in my case: since I could not find any co-operative games, I simply began inventing them.

Once my mind began seeing the possibilities, I found myself creating original games for birthday parties and 'Play Days' at school, or co-op games as Christmas gifts, and it was not long before friends suggested that I start selling them. Ruth and I ran a few advertisements and were encouraged by the response. Slow but steady growth in sales made us move the little business, which we called *Family Pastimes,* from our own living room into a 'prefab' cottage. We literally had a 'cottage industry'.

The several hundred games I have invented over the years fall roughly into three categories: (l) Co-op-type games and activities such as *Lost and found,* which I have written up in several manuals; (2) 'Parlour'-type games in board, card and block format; (3) Large wooden table-action games — the co-operative answer to Table Hockey, Soccer, etc.

Co-operative games: distinctiveness

What makes a co-operative game different? My working definition of a co-operative game is simple. I never have people being against people in any of my games. I have to make this clear because I am often asked at conferences and workshops whether I would not consider such and such a sport an example of co-operative effort. I acknowledge that a group may co-operate among its members, but often with the purpose of obliterating the opposing group. The goal cannot be separated from the means by which it is achieved. We could point out, by extension, that even fighting a war requires a kind of co-operation. The ultimate game for altogether too many people!

I have noticed some magazine reviews refer to various gangland crime games and certain adventure fantasy games as 'co-operative'. In

each case, what the reviewer is describing is the opportunity the game offers for some players to combine efforts for a brief time in order to destroy another player, which is not my idea of a co-operative game. Very simply, in a cooperative game, people play together and not against each other.

To this day we still make a full range of co-operative games by hand in small quantities. We sell mostly by mail through a colour catalogue as well as through a variety of stores.[3] Also there are a growing number of people who willingly distribute our games from their homes and churches.

Initially, I hoped my idea would eventually be adopted by some of the big game companies (I was perfectly happy in my teaching position and had no intentions of becoming a full-time inventor and manufacturer). I was keenly disappointed by repeated rejection from the giants of the game industry. My approach was extremely naïve. I walked into company presidents' offices expecting to talk about the worthwhile game concepts I had developed and tested, but I quickly learned that they had other priorities. I became quite cynical about the brutally competitive toy and game industry when I saw that behind the façade of cute and cuddly stuff for kids were hardnosed business-men and -women. Very few of them were cute or cuddly themselves. Hence my own introduction to the business of producing co-operative games.

Co-operative workshop: *Musical chairs*

I recall another workshop for a church group. I like the format — children are invited to join in. The adults are well educated and sophisticated. From the chit-chat beforehand I realise that they are also not convinced. It is a challenge to spend a couple of hours with people who are sceptical about co-op games. I decide to play a typical 'little kid's' game with them.

'Grown-ups, please be little children with me for the next while and begin to re-experience what a child feels in playing the games we offer them.'

The first game we play is the first game I ever remember playing myself as a child. My Grade One teacher introduced it to our class of children who came mainly from farming families. Since they lived far apart, the kids did not know each other and were apprehensive about starting school. The teacher attempted to 'socialise' us and help us feel at home by using games, one of which was *Musical chairs*. Being a shy child

and not tuned in to the cultural roles required to play the game successfully, I was bewildered by the rush and push for a chair when the music stopped. Eliminated early from the game, I felt puzzled and embarrassed when told that I was 'out' and had to take away a chair with me. Of course, the more we played, the better I got at elbowing my way to a chair. A prime example of quick cultural conditioning!

I wonder what will happen in the workshop now as we start playing the same game. The game itself speaks louder than words ever could. One little boy in the group, four or five years old, is eager to play. The music stops: people push and take places, then look around to see who the first casualty is. Some adults audibly moan upon seeing that the little boy is 'out'. He is crushed and flees to his mum's arms. After that some people are polite or do not try very hard, and are soon eliminated, but later confide that they feel uncomfortable being forced into an aggressive role of having to push others around. Children who drop out of the game early say much the same thing. Finally, we have a big group of spectators watching the last two participants go for the big win.

I know that the adults can see how even though the game may begin as a socialisation process, it quickly defeats this very objective as players get eliminated and must sit around watching.

I talk a bit about how I felt in Grade One when I was made to leave the game early. I try to make plain to adults and children alike why the games I make up today are different.

Then I introduce *Co-operative musical chairs* and bring the players back again with the same furniture.

'People are now going to be more important than the chairs,' I announce, 'so the only rule-change is that after each round we take away a chair, but we keep all the people. It's up to the imagination of the group to figure out how to make a place for everyone.' I can still vividly see the laughter as the people hug each other, sit on each other's laps and succeed in all getting on one chair at the end. The little boy is on the shoulders of an adult. He is having a fine time.

The game uses the same hardware, the same music and the same people. But with the change in the structure of the game the roles the people play change too. People relax after a few rounds when they suddenly realise: 'Hey, I don't have to rush and push because I am guaranteed a spot.'

People afterwards remark on how good they feel using their strength to hug instead of push. Children make the same observation over and over.

Other co-operative games

The workshop then moves into a sampling of various table games. Groups of people gather round different games I have set out. *Harvest time* is a board game for families with children aged 3 to 7 years of age. People enjoy being neighbours helping each other bring in the harvest before winter comes — a very real-life situation. I often look to real life for my game themes. Cooperative games are rooted in reality.

If *Harvest time* were competitive, players would each be trying to get a garden harvested before anyone else. If an opponent were getting too close to winning, others would have to send some disaster into that garden to slow him or her down. That is reality? Yet that is exactly how most competitive games are set up and instruct us to behave accordingly.

I also set up *Housebuilders* for children 5 to 8 years of age — a game inspired by my working with friends to build our home. *Mountaineering* (ages 7 to l2) is based on an experience I once had mountain-climbing in the Rockies with several friends. We were tied to one another at times. The last person we wanted or needed was some clown racing ahead trying to be 'King (or Queen) of the Mountain'.

Other co-operative board games which have proved popular include *Community* (9 to adult), where people work together to make a community or build a stable economy in their town,*Space future* (l0 to adult) whose players engage in the adventure of completing a common mission in space, and *Earth game* (l0 to adult), in which ' world leaders' develop strategies to solve the many problems on 'Spaceship Earth'.

Co-operative *Puzzle game*

We have time for one more game. I select the *Puzzle game* as it brings the entire group together again for a big co-operative effort.

A tiny six-year-old girl named Cindy comes to the front of the church auditorium where I stand holding out a paper bag. She and several other children reach into the bag and each take out one piece of a puzzle. Rather it is three puzzles, whose pieces are all mixed together. Cindy must find out which puzzle her piece belongs to.

She goes around to all three tables where people are working on the puzzles. 'Does this piece belong here?' she asks a teenaged boy at the last table. He eagerly examines the new piece and pops it into place.

Cindy smiles triumphantly before returning for another puzzle piece. She prefers selecting the puzzle pieces, while others enjoy fitting the

pieces together. The adults in the group seem more interested in solving the cartoon mysteries printed on the puzzles. But because she's playing a co-operative game, Cindy's contribution is as valuable as anyone else's.

Finally, the children go off after the play session to their study groups and the adults remain with me for a concluding questionand-answer session. The questions are direct and challenging. Some are surprising to me, coming from a church group; I realise that I have brought with me some mistaken assumptions about adults who belong to churches.

Co-operative games: questions and answers

Q. Don't you think that co-operative games and the cooperative philosophy will tend toward mediocrity, toward making everyone the same, while competitive approaches bring out individuality, qualities of leadership, etc.?

A. On the contrary. The games I make and the games we have just played allow for the gifted to do their very best and for those less able to make their best contribution too. Each is valued. Those with leadership qualities quite naturally emerge and contribute. What pleases me is that these leaders had to use their abilities in a responsible way that showed caring for others. They were not asked to dominate, exploit weaknesses for selfaggrandisement, manipulate and then defend themselves from others trying to take over and get rid of them. It's a deeper challenge to the gifted to work with people in a co-operative way.

You see, some people like to think that co-operative games are for losers only. Indeed, while a co-operative game does allow for the 'loser' to express ability without fear of elimination, it also serves the winner, whose character might otherwise suffer from constant winning at the expense of others. I see no harm in the quick-minded learning to be patient with the slow.

Finally, one of the best features about our games is that most are fun for adults and children to play together. The trouble with many competitive games of strategy is that parents deliberately play poorly in order to make the game fair and interesting for children. When competition between individuals is removed, skilful players are able to make sincere efforts to win, because their efforts help all the players, while competition forces the more skilled to be mediocre in their efforts in such situations.

Q. I need competition to better myself, to learn new things, to pursue excellence in what I do. Otherwise where is the incentive to get ahead?

A. There seems to be a lot of concern here about 'getting ahead'... What is wrong, if I may ask (a bit facetiously), with the head you now have? Perhaps we spend too much time pursuing an ideal we are not and not enough time enjoying and realising what we already are. We strive to be this someone else whom we are constantly comparing ourselves to. If you look at it closely you'll see that this comparison is the very root of competition. For me, competition kills the pursuit of excellence. Let me offer some examples.

When I have friends over for a meal, I go to a lot of trouble to provide a superb meal, the best I can cook. If someone comes early, I get him or her involved in making the meal. We are tasting, slicing, adding this and that until the meal shapes up 'just right'. Getting things 'just right' is what we naturally do. You see it in children when, say, their blocks fall down. They try again. They want it to be right. Now in making this meal what has been my incentive? I am doing it for its own joy. What is operating here is affection, simple affection for what I am doing. To introduce competition would be extraneous and unnecessary. It's only necessary when there is no affection. Really, I don't need the 'Galloping Gourmet' or some famous chef in the next room whipping together a better meal than mine to drive me to do better.

Or let's take dancing. My wife and I are dancing and there are a lot of other couples on the dance floor as well. We are both getting into the rhythm of the music and of each other. We try some neat steps and greatly enjoy what we are doing. Suddenly there is a spotlight focused on us and a voice over the P.A. announces that a dancing contest is on and the spotlight will move from couple to couple with the judges declaring a winner of incredible prizes. Personally, this would ruin the occasion for me. I don't need the competitive element to make me dance better.

I am reminded of the time when our two girls were in Grades One and Two. They loved to sing in the little kids' school choir and to do simple folk dancing in groups. Every year there was a 'Music Festival', or so it was called. A festival is a time for people to get together and celebrate, but, alas, this festival turned out to be a contest. A number of trophies donated by local merchants were awarded to the best choir and the best folk-dancing group. The Killarney School down the road won both trophies. This happened the next year as well.

Coming home from this second festival, our older girl said she didn't want to take singing or folk dancing any more. 'Why?' I asked, a bit stunned.

'Because Killarney always wins the trophies. They are better than we

are and they'll always win,' was her solemn answer. You see what had happened to her love of singing and dancing? We adults with our structuring of winners and losers, trophies and hoopla, had corrupted it. It happens slowly but thoroughly, until you get to be my age and like me do not want to do very much unless prodded and pulled by the carrots of reward and punishment. Reward and punishment are central to competitive patterns of behaviour.

Q. Still, don't co-operative games tend to shelter, even coddle children?

A. I am providing a supportive play experience, it's true, but not a fail-safe shelter. I don't protect children from not making it to the summit of the mountain or completing the space voyage. Our games are designed to offer realistic challenges. It is entirely possible for people to fail in our games. Of course, the way failure arises and is faced differs from that in a competitive endeavour. But the risk of failure is present.

In addition, I should point out that the cultural habit of competing and confronting adversaries runs deep. Some players end up fighting the game itself, even when it's a co-operative game. We suggest that people will get better results learning how to get along with Time, with Winter, with Gravity, with Mountains and so on rather than fighting them.

Q. What I'm worried about is that children are going to take their place in a competitive society and it's a tough, even brutal, society. Don't we do them a disservice if we commit them to the kind of philosophy and environment that you are suggesting? They should be given the tools and skills to make their way in a competitive society. They have to be prepared to live in the reality of today.

A. First, let us not underestimate the amount of sharing and caring that takes place daily in our families, neighborhoods and societies... If we didn't have at least 50% co-operation, we wouldn't have much of a society at all. So, people can find a place in society to live and work and be friendly, sharing human beings. I think we adults have to be active in creating more such places for our young.

Secondly, it is an open question for me as to which is the best way to prepare children for that dog-eat-dog society you describe. I'll say more about that.

Thirdly, I think that at some point you have to decide what kind of society you want to see achieved. I've had a glimpse of compassion, sharing and caring and it feels a whole lot better to me than confrontation, violence, greed, etc. The danger in saying that society is brutal and then following that with the notion of preparing our children

for it is that we accept the status quo and go on perpetuating it. I refuse to accept that way of living. I've seen and you have also seen that there is a better way for people to live and work and play together on this planet. And when this sense of caring gets firmly established within you, you have to act out from that source. You can't help it. But also you see what happens when the caring isn't there!

Your relationships — at all levels and of all kinds — begin to change in the glow of caring. As a teacher I simply couldn't go on doing the same old things as before. I had no new formulas, but the insight and intelligence newly uncovered began to work out better ways to teach and relate to the students in my care.

Life began unfolding differently in my family as well. The skills and values we taught our children just had to be different. First it meant moving out of the city into a rural area. It eventually led to home--schooling and then a small parent-run school. We gave our energy to this kind of non-competitive environment for ourselves as adults and for the kids.

Now I admit that we were operating on faith about this, because at some point the kids would have to go to the local high school and then take their places as citizens in this 'brutal society' you speak of. But Ruth and I had to find out if it was possible for people to live in a different way, personally. If so, perhaps it is possible for society at large.

When our girls went to high school, they began not without tears. They were inwardly prepared for all the competition for marks they knew would be there, but they were not as well prepared for the competition for popularity and peer approval. We worked through this and other traumas as a family. Our girls are friendly people and diligent students, curious and wanting to learn. Over a period of time they came to be liked and also to be enjoyed by their teachers for being good students.

The girls have survived and thrived without being trained to compete, strive and do all those things we think will better equip children to deal with a tough society. And they were not so insecure, fearful and anxious as many of their peers were.

I think the key reason is that our girls did not have a big emotional investment in winning and losing. Winning and losing were not tied in with their sense of self-worth. When they failed a test, they looked it over to see what went wrong. They didn't feel somehow diminished as a person by not succeeding at something. But they did try to do their best — to 'get it right'. They gained a self-confidence, flexibility, resilience

that has served them well as members of adult society. I am pleased with their growth and the intelligent adaptability they show in a competitive environment. I want them to be 'good citizens' in the special sense of 'goodness' we have been talking about.

Q. Our family plays a lot of games and we get pretty enthusiastic about them. I'm wondering if it will be hard for us to play a co-operative game. It sounds like we would have a lot of re-educating to do.

A. Some re-orientation will have to take place. You won't have to view each other as enemies anymore, for one thing. Your enjoyment of games will take you a long way as an incentive to play a co-op game. I think that the enthusiasm we have for games is a social impulse to do something enjoyable together. If that is your basic motivation, then you will adjust to a cooperative game quickly. However, if your enthusisam and enjoyment have developed further than that and depend on gaining satisfaction from wiping out the other person, then you'll have a tough time at first. You'll be disoriented. You keep wanting to attack and keep waiting to be attacked and it never happens. Someone else gets in trouble and you can help out by sharing your carefully amassed fortune, or else if you get in trouble and someone else extends a helping hand, you may get confused. It's a sad comment on our culture. But there it is. We see it every day writ large on the front pages of our newspapers. The fruits of a competitive way of life!

Conclusion

Let me sum up this article. Games are used in various settings and for various reasons — socialisation, entertainment, academic learning and character-building,to name a few. Whatever your objective, I invite you to try realising it by co-operative means. Parents and teachers attempting to teach children to share, to be kind to living things and to help others are often troubled by games and recreational programmes which undermine these values. Co-operative games provide the opportunity to experience sharing and caring behaviour. I believe we simply do not yet have enough such experiences.

Footnotes

[1] *Plakun trava* — a water plant that stretches against the current. It was used as a metaphor by the Doukhobors to characterise themselves as a people who dared to challenge unpopular ideas such as conflict, militarism and war.

[2] Tanya, born in 1967, is currently living on Saltspring Island, British Columbia, working in a toy store as well as doing art therapy with street kids. She is also studying piano and hopes to use this skill in teaching children. Christa, born in 1968, owned a bookstore in West Vancouver; in 1996 she and her husband Hugh moved back to join the family in Perth, Ontario, and both are now closely connected with *Family Pastimes*. Both Tanya and Christa were brought up in a co-operative atmosphere; they received their primary education at home from their parents and later made a successful transition to high school, where they excelled in their studies. Tanya went on to obtain Art and Art Therapy degrees, while Christa took a degree in business administration — *ed.*

[3] This catalogue is available at no charge from: Family Pastimes, RR#4, Perth, Ontario, Canada K7H 3C6.