

# Acts of the General Synod of Edmonton, 1965

*Translator's note: The Acts of GS 1965 were, for a part, translated into English as per the decision found in GS 1965 article 7: Procedures 7. This translation, entitled "Brief Report" (= Press Release) was published with the Dutch acts. It should be noted that the numbering of the articles in the "Brief Report" does not parallel the numbering of the articles in the Dutch Acts. The translation that follows here was done "from scratch". Where deemed helpful, the "Brief Report" version is found immediately following the Acts article in italics. Be aware that the translation of the Dutch Acts tends to be form-driven.*

## FIRST SESSION, THURSDAY NOVEMBER 4, 1965

### **ARTICLE 1: Opening**

On behalf of the convening church of Edmonton, Rev. J.T. Van Popta opened the meeting. He had Psalm 84:1, 2 and 3 sung, after which he read 1 Corinthians 15:50-58 and lead in prayer.

He then spoke the following opening words.

"Beloved Brothers in the Lord,

We read together a portion of the Word of our God in 1 Cor. 15. In particular, I now draw your attention to the last verse:

"Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labour is not in vain."

This Apostolic encouragement was chosen by our brother G.Ph. Pieffers as the text for the sermon, with which he would minister the Word of the Lord in the prayer meeting that took place last night.

The council of the convening church had asked him to lead that prayer meeting. Rev. Pieffers had decided with great joy to accept this invitation.

Unfortunately, he was unable to execute that decision. He suffered a light stroke last week and had to be hospitalized again. We rest in what our faithful God and Father does, and our supplications rise to Him, to comfort and restore our brother, and to be near to his wife and children and also his old father with the immeasurable riches of His infallible grace.

Colleague Pieffers had already written the sermon, and it is with his approval that I use his sermon as my opening speech. So we are taught, encouraged, admonished by our colleague, shepherd and teacher of the church of the Lord at Coaldale, with these words:

"Paul was not what you would call an easy gentleman. Not at all. For example, if he became aware a different preaching other than the one Christ and the apostles had brought, he could even become and be very difficult.

Nowadays there is a lot of talk about tolerance, but Paul knew nothing of that sort of tolerance.

If, contrary to the teachings of the apostles and of himself, things were proclaimed that were completely wrong, he was mercilessly sharp, and in so doing very merciful.

No wonder he starts spewing fire when he hears that there are those who preach, that there is no resurrection of the dead. It's as if he flies up from his chair and asks in seething anger: What! No resurrection of the dead? People, understand well how terrible this preaching is. For if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ has of course not risen either, and then our preaching is without substance; for what is there for us to preach if Christ were not resurrected?

And then, O Corinthians, your faith is without substance.

Paul then takes this further and preaches to the Corinthians that Christ IS resurrected.

He then takes the opportunity to say some important things about your resurrection, my resurrection. After all, now that Christ has risen, one thing is certain, namely that we will rise too. Rise in glory. For Christ has acquired for the Father the number of His children.

And when he talks about Christ's victory over death, it becomes almost too much for him and he sings it out: Death is swallowed up in victory. Death, WHERE is your victory?

Death, where is your sting?

The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, Who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

No, no, those are not words of an overexcited mind, words you should not put on a silver platter. Not at all, because Paul was a very down-to-earth man.

But Paul was also a man whose heart was on fire for the Lord and His cause, and whatever fills the heart will overflow from the mouth.

We Christians sometimes say that we are too calm, too sober to speak such words. That may well be, but then it is high time that we became more excited.

For all the water of the sea cannot wash away this, namely, that the Lord asks us to be on fire for Him and for His cause.

After all (*in the words of a hymn*), His Name must receive eternal honor, Praise Him early and late. Let the world hear and follow my song with Amen, Amen.

A General Synod has no other task than to serve the Lord in HIS preservation and maintenance of HIS church.

He asks nothing else from synod members, nothing more, but above all nothing less than the willingness to serve Him with all his heart in his work.

Synod members are asked to do what is asked of all the children of God without the slightest exception, namely, that they are willing and able to put themselves aside. Or really simply wanting to put themselves aside. If so, the Lord will give the ability.

Paul points out to the Corinthians :

- 1) what they should become,
- 2) what they should be,
- 3) what they know.

1. "Therefore, my beloved brothers." That word "Therefore" indicates that the apostle reaches back to what was said before and now draws the conclusion from it. He has fulminated against those who deny that there is a resurrection of the dead and demonstrated to the Corinthians the consequence of this denial, for then the Christ would not have been resurrected either, and we would still be in our sins.

He also demonstrated the richness of the meaning of Christ's resurrection and at the end he, as it were, begins to sing. After all, thanks be to God in Christ Jesus, we are more than conquerors today.

And now he can move on to the word "Therefore": that's because one thing is certain, namely that God gives us victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. THEREFORE, my beloved brethren, be steadfast...

So in that word THEREFORE he presents the brothers with the consequences of what he has said AND with the demand that now comes to them.

And he does so in the most urgent way in order to find good acceptance for his words, and says: my beloved brothers.

In those words, my beloved brothers, Paul is not as generous as it may seem. There are people who easily say "beloved brothers". Paul doesn't. Therefore, when Paul does use them, those words have all the more value. Then you taste and feel Paul's true love for the brothers.

He had important things to say to the Corinthians, and he wanted to burn those words on their souls, and so he says, therefore, my beloved brothers. He wants to penetrate into the hearts of the addressees with what he has said and what he still has to say, and hence that saying: Therefore, my beloved brothers.

Oh, it's very easy to repel a brother, there are many, many Christians who don't have the slightest problem with it. It's immensely harder to attract a brother.

We will only be able to do this if we ourselves have become very small before the Lord and have learned to live in all humility.

"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast." Be steadfast. But that's not really what the original text says. It does not say: BE steadfast, but BECOME steadfast.

And that's something else. "Be" can have the meaning of: whatever happens, persevere, beset, show steadfastness. Then the man is already steadfast, but he must be so in all circumstances. He is then resurrected to SHOW that STEADFASTNESS as well.

But BECOME steadfast tells us, that they are not yet, that they have yet to become it, still have to learn.

It is not for nothing that Paul wrote about so many important things to those Corinthians. Just think of the resurrection of Christ. Several of them were immediately deluded by the claim that Christ had not risen. For there was no resurrection of the dead.

As a result, some people had already completely lost the plot.

These people had not proved steadfast. They were fooled by others.

That is why Paul admonishes them and says, become steadfast. So, not "be" but "become". They were not, they had to become it. Learn to hold on to what you were taught by the apostles and NEVER let it go. Under no circumstances.

Become steadfast, an admonition to which we should listen very closely today. Today more than ever. Because more than ever in this world, everything is out to put our steadfastness to the test. And more and more Christianity is showing that it no longer knows of steadfastness.

More and more Christianity illustrates that well-known saying: as the wind blows, so blows my jacket.

The thought these days is: participate, whether you want to or not. You can't stay behind. The church too needs to radically change course. At least, if the church does not want to lose its grip on the people.

Paul has a different view of this and says: be steadfast, no, *become* steadfast. Especially at a time when everything is crying out for renewal, broadening, expansion, one should expect the church to become more and more steadfast, to cling more and more to the doctrine that is according to the Holy Scriptures.

The General Synod can only do right in all that is put on the table, in all judgments that are asked of it, in every decision it has to make, in all considerations and so on if they act in keeping with this word of Paul: become more and more steadfast.

Do not be led astray off the right path, but let it be that you become more and more steadfast, for then one thing is certain: then decisions will be made which are a rich blessing to the churches. But only in this way.

Therefore, my beloved brethren, become steadfast and become ever more immovable.

They must become immovable. That is also the intention here. They apparently aren't yet, but they have to become it. The call to become immovable indicates that they were often moved.

And no wonder. For again and again they hear all kinds of errors proclaimed, all kinds of things that the apostle did not teach them. And, truth be told, it's the nature of the beast that errors are consumed like cake. Even overbaked, there are always those who eagerly reach for it.

And there were also those in Corinth who were fooled by those errors. That is why Paul says: do not BE, but BECOME immovable. And you can only do so if you live close to the Lord and ask of Him in sincerity of heart: to MAKE you immovable by His Holy Spirit.

That Christian immovability, which is nothing but God's grace in Christ Jesus, must be found in abundance at a synod. No, not persistence, not stubbornness, but true Christian immovability, which, for Christ's sake and for the sake of His church, purchased with a costly price, must be present at the Synod.

Then, but only then, can this synod be a rich blessing to the churches.

So Paul said what the Corinthian Christians are to become. And when they have become steadfast and immovable, count on the Lord taking them further.

Then He will make things so that they abound in the work of the Lord all the time.

The Greek word here that has been translated by with **ABOUNDING** (*overflowing*) really couldn't have a better translation. For the Greek word indicates that it runs over the edge all the way around. It's more than full. It overflows. This is how we are to work now, to be engaged in the work of the Lord, in the service of the Lord.

Of course, Paul was sober enough to understand that in the lives of the Father's children there were more things that demanded attention. But he does ask that the work of the Lord should have our full attention. Not just from some pastors or elders or deacons, but from ALL Father's children without the slightest exception. No one has the right to withdraw from that work.

No one, no member of Christ's Church, has the right to sit and twiddle their thumbs in the Lord's service. We must abound in the work of the Lord. One in a very important position, another in a less important one, as long as we remember correctly that ALL positions in the service of the Lord's work are most important positions.

The apostle understands by the work of the Lord all the work that is done in the service of the Lord, for the expansion of His kingdom, for the building up of His church, for the edification of His children on earth.

And now it says that it has to be done "always". It must always continue; it cannot be paused for a moment.

It is sometimes said that all abundance harms. Maybe so, but with this exception: the child of God can never be too busy in the work of the Lord. Certainly, it is sometimes said, it would be better if that man was less busy for the church and had more attention for his family. But let us understand that the proper care of the family in what is included what is here called the work of the Lord.

Tomorrow, our brothers delegates will go to work. A respectable number of pieces have been put on the table. They are asked to work a lot in the first two or three weeks.

They are indeed asked to abound in the work of the Lord all those days.

But this is their rich knowledge: in the end, it is the work of the Lord. Certainly, that also imposes a great responsibility, of course. And those brothers will be aware of that. But it is a consolation that, after all, it is the work of God and not their work.

Criticism will, of course, be levelled at it. Reformed people cannot live without criticism. It is completely impossible to strive to do the work in such a way that no one can fault it. All you can do is ask for the will of the Lord, dedicate your work to the Lord, and then do quietly as you think you should do it.

As long as your work is such, that ALSO thanks to that work, in the church of Christ one can continue to sing with joy:

O LORD of hosts, almighty King,  
the praises of your house I sing.  
How lovely is your habitation!  
Your holy courts I yearn to see;  
faint with desire, I long to be  
where pilgrims join in celebration.  
My heart and flesh with joyful shout  
to you, the living God, cry out.

Psalm 84:1.

"Therefore, my beloved brethren (and these words came directly from Paul's heart), be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labour is not in vain."

It is not for nothing that Paul ends with these words: knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.

He wants to encourage believers to keep up their work, to do in their position what the Lord has commanded them to do. Their positions were not always easy, especially in those days. The hatred of Christ and His Church was already great at that time. In every possible way, life was made difficult for all

of Father's children.

And that certainly won't get any better over the years. That is why Paul wants to encourage the church and says: knowing that in the Lord your labour is not in vain.

That knowledge must always excite Father's children to do their task, the knowledge that in the Lord their labour is not in vain, not without fruit.

Not in vain. Actually: not empty. That your labour is not EMPTY in the Lord. Paul is not thinking first of all about the fruits of labour. As if to comfort them with the words: do not think now that you are working in vain.

He says, knowing that your labor has SENSE, has a true purpose.

Your labour, brothers, so he says, is not a display, but holy earnestness, and as such is judged by the Lord. Your labour makes sense, the labour you do in service of the Lord.

Difficult? Sure, but still more than meaningful. Pushing your strength to the limit? So be it, I will not contradict it. But of the utmost importance for the good of Christ's church.

There's no room for recreation when working for the Kingdom of God. That's true. It's plod and toil, strive and struggle.

Don't fret about the fruits of your labour. Leave that to the Lord. "You labour," says the apostle, "in holy earnestness and prayerfully looking to the King of the Church, and then I, THE LORD, will make it so that you must marvel."

Did you really think that I, the Lord, did not know what material I was dealing with? Don't worry. Your labour cannot be in vain in Me, the LORD, for I, the Lord, have called you to this work, and if you now do that work prayerfully, you must leave the rest to me.

Look, my brothers and sisters, could not all of us do the task that the Lord has placed on our shoulder? Certainly, if all is well, Father's children will have to work a lot harder than the children of the world. But where there is true love, it is done with joy.

People will say: there's no shame in work. Indeed. This is what the Christ teaches us, for He trembles in saying: My Father is working until now, and I am working. As is the Father, so is the Son.

What do you think, could not the Synod work like that? So no matter how much it asks of them, and how dissatisfied the brothers themselves may be afterwards, know that one's labour, done prayerfully, looking to the Father of lights, CAN never be empty in the Lord.

Not asking for people's favor for you may have it today and have lost it tomorrow. Today people say "Hosanna" and tomorrow "Crucify Him."

Just ask what the Lord wants you to do.

May the Lord our God, Who is our Father in Christ Jesus, bless the Synod and make it a rich blessing.

So that the church of our Lord Jesus Christ may sing in pure gratitude:

Blest be the LORD, who on our way

Provides for us and day by day

Upholds us by His power.

Amen."

With these words I declare the fourth General Synod of Canadian Reformed Churches opened.

## ***ARTICLE 2: Examination Credentials***

Brothers J. P. Kuntz and J. Mulder are requested to examine the credentials. They report that the following brothers are present with proper credentials:

For the Regional Synod of the Canadian Reformed Churches in Ontario: The ministers D. De Jong of Brampton, F. Kouwenhoven of Toronto, H. Scholten of Smithville and L. Selles of Chatham; the elders C. Ouwersloot of Smithville. H. Van Veen of Fergus, H. J. Wildeboer of London and P. H. Wildeboer of Orangeville.

For the Regional Synod of the West: The ministers J. Mulder of Carman, H. A. Stel of Houston, W.W.J. Vanoene of New Westminster and J.T. Van Popta of Edmonton; the elders E. C. Baartman of New Westminster, J. P. Kuntz of Edmonton, L. M. Toet of Winnipeg and J. Vander Linde of New Westminster.

### **ARTICLE 3: Election Executive**

The following brothers were elected to the executive:

- Rev. H. Scholten as chairman;
- Rev. H. A. Stel as vice-chairman;
- Rev. W. W. J. Vanoene as first clerk;
- Rev. F. Kouwenhoven as second clerk.

The Synod is constituted.

### **ARTICLE 4: Communication from the convening church**

The convening Church communicates that it has written to the churches that proposals had to be submitted by August 15. Several proposals, however, were received far too late. The convening Church attributes this in part to the fact that proposals have to come to general synod via classis and regional synod, something the convening Church considers erroneous. It considers that timely receipt of proposals would be facilitated greatly if these were sent directly to the convening church, and then in as many copies as necessary so that a copy is available for each of the future delegates and also for others who need it. Fifty (50) copies would be ideal.

The Synod takes note of these communications.

### **ARTICLE 5: Procedure**

It is decided that the executive will look into the matter and come with proposals for adopting the agenda and procedures of Synod.

The session is adjourned.

### **ARTICLE 6: Reopening.**

The chairman reopens the meeting. Psalm 86:6 is sung, attendance is taken, the meeting is again adjourned for a meal and reopened immediately afterwards.

### **ARTICLE 7: Adoption of the agenda. Procedure.**

Given a letter from "The Canadian Reformed Church of Winnipeg, Manitoba" address: 729 Hoskin Avenue, Winnipeg 15, Manitoba dated November 1, 1965, the Synod decides to announce that a submission received before November 15, 1965 will as yet be added to the agenda.<sup>1</sup>

The agenda is now adopted as follows:

1. Opening on behalf of the convening church at Edmonton.
2. Examination of credentials.
3. Election of the executive.
4. Constitution of the Synod.
5. Communications on behalf of the convening Church.

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<sup>1</sup> Translator: The Press Release contains the following article 6:

#### **ARTICLE 6: Letter from Winnipeg.**

Session is reopened and a letter, signed C. de Haan, 729 Hoskin Ave., Winnipeg 15, Manitoba, is read. It contains information about a time-problem in preparing a letter to this Synod due to the late arrival of the answer of the Particular Synod of Abbotsford, September 8-10, 1965.

It is decided that a letter shall as yet be added to the agenda, provided it is received before November 15th.

6. Adoption of the Agenda.
7. A. Session times and procedure.
  - B. Letter from the Board of the Superannuation Association, containing the request that Synod take into account that the Board has called a General Meeting of the Association on Friday, November 5, at 8:00 P.M.
8. Submissions
  - A. Eligibility for call of ministers who have served beyond our churches and churches with which we are in correspondence.
    1. Proposal 7 from the Regional Synod of Ontario, 1965.
    2. Proposal from the church at Coaldale.
  - B. Training for the Ministry of the Word.
    1. Request from Br. M.C. Werkman, Edmonton, August 15, 1965.
    2. Report from the church at Coaldale on the finances for Training.
    3. Submission from Rev. L. Selles.
    4. Submission from Rev. G. Van Dooren.
    5. Report from br. H. Leffers.
    6. Governors' Report, with additional material yet expected.
  - C. Needy Students.
 

Proposal from the church at Edmonton, February 3, 1964.
  - D. Address to the Federal Government.
    1. Proposal from Rev. G. Van Dooren.
    2. Submission from the church at Toronto.
    3. Submission from Br. T. Van den Brink in Barrhead.
  - E. Appeals
    1. A. De Vries and others at Hamilton, Ont.
    2. Cl.K. Oosterveld at Winnipeg.
    3. K. Esselink at Winnipeg.
    4. E. Ter Mors at Winnipeg.
    5. H. Tams at Edmonton.
  - F. General Archives.
 

Report from Rev. G. Van Dooren.
  - G. Deputies.
 

Proposal from the church at Barrhead concerning the bodies to which governors and other deputies have to report.
  - H. General Synod Hamilton 1962.
    1. From Rev H. Scholten re execution of the decision to send a telegram to Rev. Knigge.
    2. "Financial Statement" of General Synod Hamilton 1962.
    3. Report from the church at Smithville on facilitating the finances of General Synod 1962.
  - I. Heidelberg Catechism.
    1. Proposal from Rev. G. Van Dooren concerning the English translation of Dr. T. F. Torrance.
    2. Proposal from the church at Edmonton, to decide in accordance with the proposal of Rev. Van Dooren.
    3. From the Church at Barrhead, proposal to decide in accordance with the proposal from Rev. Van Dooren.
  - J. Psalms and Hymns.
    1. Report of Deputies.
    2. Proposal 2 from the Regional Synod of Ontario 1965.
    3. Submission from the church in Toronto.

4. Request of deputies.
- K. Excommunication and re-admission of baptismal members.
  1. Forms for this as adopted by Classis Ontario North, May 22, 1964.
  2. Proposal 15 from the Regional Synod of Ontario 1965.
  3. Submission from the church at New Westminster.
- L. Foreign Churches in correspondence with us.
  1. Proposal from the church at Barrhead to revise the rules for correspondence.
  2. Report deputies for correspondence with foreign Churches.
- M. Christian Reformed Church.
  1. From "Special Contact Committee" to Rev. Van Popta, Nov. 20, 1964.
  2. From Rev. Van Popta to Rev. N. B. Knoppers, Feb. 4, 1965.
  3. From "Special Contact Committee" to General Synod, March 13, 1965.
  4. From the church at Edmonton to "Special Contact Committee", May 6, 1965.
  5. Proposal from the church at Edmonton, June 28, 1965.
  6. Proposal 1 from the Regional Synod of Ontario 1965.
  7. Proposal from the Church at Barrhead, September 20, 1965.
- N. Orthodox Presbyterian Church.
  1. Report on possible contact with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church.
  2. Proposal 4 from the Regional Synod of Ontario 1965.
  3. Proposal from the Church at Toronto.
- O. Reformed Ecumenical Synod.
  1. From the Calvin Christian Reformed Church, Grand Rapids, March 1963.
  2. From the Church at Edmonton to Rev. Boomsma, April 5, 1963.
  3. From Rev. A. Brink to Rev. Van Popta, May 20, 1963.
  4. Two circulars and two surveys seeking data.
  5. Two copies in Dutch and two in English of the Agenda of the Fifth Reformed Ecumenical Synod.
  6. Proposal from the church at New Westminster, Aug. 13, 1965.
  7. Proposal from the church at Burlington, Sept. 23, 1965.
- P. Church Order.
  1. Proposal from the church at Barrhead, Aug. 11, 1965.
  2. Proposal 6 from the Regional Synod of Ontario, 1965.
  3. Proposal from the church at Carman on CO Article 8.
- Q. Information regarding our churches.
  - Proposal 3 from the Regional Synod of Ontario, 1965.
9. Reports.
10. Appointment of deputies.
  - Submission from Regional Synod of the West nominating governors.
11. If necessary, censure as per CO article 43.
12. Publication of the Acts
13. Facilitating the finances of the Synod.
14. Appointment convening church.
15. Adoption of the Acts.
16. Adoption of the Press Release.
17. Close.

Regarding procedures, the Synod adopts the following proposals:

1. Meeting times will be from 9am – 12n, 2pm - 5:30pm, 7:30pm – 10pm. Saturdays only from 9am



- 12n. These times will apply to both plenary sessions and committee work.
2. As much as possible, plenary sessions will be held in the evening.
  3. Friday evening, November 5, there will be no session given the meeting of the Superannuation Foundation called for that evening.
  4. The Press Release will not be published until after the conclusion of the Synod.
  5. Discussion will be limited to two rounds as much as possible.
  6. All proposals must be submitted in writing to the executive.
  7. The Press Release will be drafted in Dutch and published in English translation on the understanding that it will be clearly indicated that its translation is the responsibility of the vice chairman. The most important acts translated into English will be included in the published edition of the Acts.
  8. The committee appointed by the Edmonton Church Council for the purpose of overseeing the finances of the Synod, consisting of brothers W. Van Assen and H. A. Van Spronsen, will be asked to continue to look after the finances of the Synod.
  9. The following advisory committees are hereby appointed, with mention of the items on the agenda entrusted to them to prepare for reporting:  
Advisory Committee I: the Brs. E.C. Baartman, H.A. Stel, W.W. J. Vanoene and P.H. Wildeboer.  
Items 8 A, B, C, E 1, G, P.  
Advisory Committee II: the Brs. D. De Jong, J.P. Kuntz, J. Mulder, L.M. Toet. Agenda items 8 D, F, H, I, J, K, L, plus report deputies correspondence with foreign churches.  
Advisory Committee III: the Brs. F. Kouwenhoven, J. VanderLinde, J.T. Van Popta, H.J. Wildeboer.  
Agenda items 8 M, N, O, Q.  
Advisory Committee IV: the Brs. C. Ouwersloot, H. Scholten, L. Selles, H. Van Veen. Items on the agenda 8 E 2, 3, 4, 5 and any further appeals, see first paragraph of this article of the Acts.
  10. On Friday afternoon at half past five, it will be determined whether it makes sense to meet in plenary session on Saturday morning. On Saturday afternoon at 12 noon, it will be determined whether it will be possible to begin with a plenary session on Monday morning.
  11. Each Synod member will have to obtain a copy of the reports of the advisory committees so that each matter can be sufficiently studied.
  12. Even if there is only committee work, the day will open and close in plenary session.

**ARTICLE 8: Welcome guests.**

The chairman speaks a word of welcome to those who show their interest by their presence.

**ARTICLE 9: Close**

After Psalm 146:8 is sung and the chairman leads in a prayer of thanksgiving, the session is closed.

**SESSION OF FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 5, 1965.**

**ARTICLE 10: Reopening.**

The chairman has the synod sing Ps. 118:1. He reads 2 Timothy 2:14-26 and leads in prayer.

**ARTICLE 11: Roll call**

Roll call is taken.

**ARTICLE 12: Acts**

The Acts up to and including Article 9 are adopted.

### **ARTICLE 13: Submission H. Tams**

Advisory Committee IV presents the following re Agenda 8 E5.

1. "Br. Tams requests that his objections to the decisions concerning the suspension and dismissal of Rev. C. de Haan, objections which are based on the Church Order, be submitted orally to the Synod, as it is almost impossible for him to put his objections on paper.
2. The committee recommends that Synod not grant this request, since it is not its task to take over articulating this brother's objections in a submission which then requires a response. Further, the Committee advises the Synod to inform this brother that he will still have the opportunity to submit his objections in writing to the Synod before November 13."

The Synod adopts the committee's proposal.

**Press Release version: ARTICLE 7: Letter H. Tams.**

*Br H Tams requested Synod to grant him the opportunity to deliver his objections against the suspension and deposition of Rev. C. de Haan orally, since it is almost impossible for him to put them in writing.*

*Upon advice of Committee IV it is decided not to grant this request, because it is not the duty of Synod to take over from this brother the task to put in writing what is necessary for an answer to his objections.*

*It is further decided to inform this brother that he still receives the opportunity to send his objections in writing before November 13th.*

### **ARTICLE 14: Roll call**

For the remainder of the day, the advisory committees meet. At 5:30pm roll call is taken, and all brothers indicate their presence.

### **ARTICLE 15: Submission Smithers Church**

The chairman informs the synod that a letter has come from the Church at Smithers, BC containing the two proposals, one concerning the rules of correspondence, the other concerning the Psalms.

The cover letter is read. The Synod rejects the following proposal:

"The Synod decides to add to the agenda the proposals of the Church at Smithers, after the chairman of the convening Church made it known that, because of a failure on the part of the chairman of the Church at Smithers, these proposals were received by the Synod after the agenda had been adopted."

### **ARTICLE 16: Close**

After Psalm 118:14 is sung and Rev. Stel has led in thanksgiving prayer, this session is closed.

## **SESSION OF SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 6, 1965.**

### **ARTICLE 17: Reopening**

The chairman has the synod sing Ps. 139:14. He then reads 2 Tim. 3:1-14 and leads in prayer.

### **ARTICLE 18: Roll Call**

Roll call takes place. All brothers are present.

### **ARTICLE 19: Press Release**

The vice chairman reads the Press Release, which is adopted. The Executive will come with further proposals regarding the English Translation of the Press Release.

### **ARTICLE 20: Report General Archives. Agenda 8 F**

Advisory Committee II comes with recommendations regarding the General Archives Report. These recommendations, after amendment, are adopted as follows:

- “1. The General Synod has taken note of the report of Rev. G. Van Dooren (dated September 22, 1965), minister of the archiving Church at Burlington.
2. The General Synod decides:
  - a. to appoint the church at Burlington as archiving church, with thankfulness for the work done in this matter for the churches;
  - b. to requests the church at Burlington to find a suitable place for the general archives, until a final place be found for keeping the general archives;
  - c. to authorize the church at Burlington to purchase the necessary steel cabinets and any further materials, and to submit reimbursement requests to the committee mandated by this general synod for facilitating Synod finances (c.o. H.A. Van Spronsen, 11141 - 57 Street, Edmonton, AB).
3. Further, the General Synod decides to declare it is desirable for the churches to continue to cooperate in this, so that all that is relevant with respect to the history of the churches be forwarded to the archiving church.”

***ARTICLE 21: Letter Rev. H. Scholten, telegram Rev. H. Knigge. Agenda 8 H 1***

The Synod adopted the following recommendation made by Advisory Committee II: “

“The General Synod has taken note of a letter from Rev. H. Scholten, dated January 7, 1964, concerning a telegram that was to have been sent by him to Rev. H. Knigge on behalf of General Synod Hamilton 1962. The General Synod decides to instruct its chairman to send a personal, cordial letter on behalf of General Synod to our missionary, testifying to the empathy of this broader assembly of the Churches with our missionary and his labour.”

***ARTICLE 22: Financial report Synod Hamilton 1962. Agenda 8 H 2, 3***

Advisory Committee II presents a brief overview of the financial report and of the report of the church at Smithville appointed to conduct the review. The recommendations of the committee are adopted in the following form:

“The General Synod has taken note of the financial report of the Committee for the Facilitation of Synod Finances 1962, which consisted of brothers M. Kampen and A. L. VanderHout, members of the church at Hamilton.

Further, the Synod took note of the report of the church at Smithville, dated August 17, 1965; this church had been appointed to review the financial records of the committee.

The General Synod decides

1. On the basis of the financial statement and the report of the church at Smithville to receive the report of the costs of General Synod Hamilton 1962, to thank the brothers M. Kampen and A. L. VanderHout heartily for the work they, and to grant them discharge;
2. To give thanks to the church at Smithville for reviewing the books;
3. To add the financial report of the Committee for Synod Finances 1962 as an appendix to the Acts.”

***ARTICLE 23: Eligibility for call of ministers who have served beyond the churches. Agenda 8 A 1, 2***

Discussion begins on the report of Advisory Committee 1 re the eligibility for call of ministers who have served beyond our churches and those in correspondence with us.

***ARTICLE 24: Close.***

After Rev. F. Kouwenhoven has the assembly sing Psalm 145:2 and leads in prayer, the session is closed.

## **SESSION OF MONDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 1965.**

### ***ARTICLE 25: Opening. Roll Call.***

The chairman has the synod sing Ps. 57:6 and 7. He then reads 2 Tim. 3:14-4:9 and leads in prayer. Roll call takes place. It turns out that all the delegates are present.

### ***ARTICLE 26: Acts.***

The Acts are read from art. 9 to art. 26. They are adopted.

### ***ARTICLE 27: Call Rev. Mulder.***

The chairman congratulates Rev. Mulder on the call he received yesterday from the Church at Coaldale, AB. But he also wishes him the wisdom of the Lord to make a decision that will best serve the wellbeing of the Lord's church.

### ***ARTICLE 28: Press Release.***

Regarding the Press Release it is decided, in accordance with the advice of the executive, that it will be drafted and read in English. Important decisions will also be reported in Dutch.

### ***ARTICLE 29: Supplementary Report Governors.***

Rev. Mulder announces that the supplement to the report of the Governors, mentioned under Agenda 8 B 6, has been received. A copy shall be made available to each of the delegates.

### ***ARTICLE 30: Copy letter to br. Werkman.***

A copy of the letter br. M.C. Werkman received from the governors, mentioned in the report of the governors, has been received.

### ***ARTICLE 31: Rev. De Haan. Phone call.***

Rev. Kouwenhoven announces that he received a call on Saturday evening from Rev. C. de Haan of Winnipeg with respect to the letter sent by the Synod to Rev. C. de Haan; he also shares some information from that conversation. The Synod takes note of this.

### ***ARTICLE 32: Copies of appeals.***

It is proposed that copies be made of the appeals from Winnipeg so that each delegate can study them. So decided.

### ***ARTICLE 33: Expanding Advisory Committee IV.***

Rev. Scholten proposes to expand Advisory Committee IV so that this committee can receive some help. It is decided that this committee will first discuss this question among itself.

### ***ARTICLE 34: Advisory Committee meetings.***

The Advisory Committees shall meet until 4.30 p.m., at which time the Synod shall meet in plenary session. It is announced that Rev. F. Kouwenhoven has been added to Advisory Committee IV.

### ***ARTICLE 35: Appeal Cl.K. Oosterveld. Agenda 8 E 2.***

Advisory Committee IV presents a report on the objection of Br Cl.K. Oosterveld in Winnipeg, Agenda 8 E 2. Discussion of this report is begun.

### ***ARTICLE 36: Reopening. Roll call.***

After the meal, the chairman reopens the session at 7.30 p.m. Ps. 33:1 and 2 are sung, after which roll call takes place. All the brothers appear present.

### **ARTICLE 37: Continuation of Discussion**

Discussion of the report referred to in Article 35 continues, after which it returns to the Advisory Committee for further consideration.

### **ARTICLE 38: Data Churches.**

Advisory Committee III presents a report on the proposal of the Regional Synod of Ontario 1965 on the desirability of having data on the Churches made available in the edition of the Acts. It makes the following proposal:

*“The Synod has taken note of the proposal of the Regional Synod of the Churches in Ontario to include in the Acts data providing necessary information about the churches.*

*It decides to include in the edition of the Acts such information as is necessary for information concerning the Churches.”*

The Synod decides accordingly.

### **ARTICLE 39: Calling ministers from outside.**

Advisory Committee 1 again presents its report referred to in Article 23, slightly amended. The Advisory Committee’s recommendation now reads:

*“The General Synod has taken note of*

*1. The proposal of the Regional Synod 1964 of the Churches in the East, which reads:*

*“The Regional Synod 1964 of the Churches in the East proposes to the General Synod 1965 to decide,*

*that ministers from churches which do not belong to the Canadian (American) Reformed Churches and to those churches with which the Canadian (American) Reformed Churches are in correspondence, are to produce evidence of their call to the ministry with a view to being called in the Canadian (American) Reformed Churches;*

*further, they are to have a testimony of a godly walk;*

*finally, these ministers have to submit to a colloquium doctum on doctrine and academia, where the demands shall be those of the preparatory and peremptory examinations for those admitted by the Canadian (American) Reformed Churches.*

*This colloquium doctum will be held by the Classis, assisted by Deputies CO article 49 of Regional Synod.”*

*2. The proposal of the Church at Coaldale, which reads:*

*“The Council of the Canadian Reformed Church at Coaldale proposes that you make a General Ecclesiastical arrangement for the occupation of ministers ministering or serving outside the Canadian Reformed Churches and also outside the churches with which we are in correspondence.”*

The General Synod decides that the following rules shall apply:

A. With respect to those who serve or have served in churches with which the Canadian Reformed Churches do not have correspondence:

1. They will not be called prior to having been declared eligible in the Churches.
2. They can be declared eligible if they
  - a. provide proof of their call to the ministry;
  - b. provide a written statement outlining the reasons which led them to the request to be declared eligible for call;
  - c. provide a good testimony regarding their walk;
  - d. have submitted to an examination, that requires the same degree of development as the preparatory and peremptory exams. This examination will be conducted by the Classis in whose region they live, assisted by Regional Synod Deputies as per CO article 49.

- B. With respect to those who serve or have served in churches with which the Canadian Reformed Churches do have correspondence:
  - 1. They can be called without being declared eligible for call in the Churches;
  - 2. They may be admitted to the ministry in one of the Churches if they
    - a. submit to the Classis to which their call is submitted for approbation:
      - 1. proof of their call to the ministry;
      - 2. proof that they have been called in one of the churches;
      - 3. a statement that they desire to accept this call;
      - 4. a testimony of their confession and walk;
      - 5. proof that they have been orderly discharged from their previous charge;
    - b. submit to a colloquium doctum, which will deal in particular with Reformed doctrine and church government.”

For the sake of time the discussion of this proposal is cut short. (See Article 46)

**Press Release Version: ARTICLE 14: Eligibility for Call.**

*Synod adopts the following rules re: eligibility of ministers from other Churches:*

- A. *With respect to those who are serving or served in Churches with which the Canadian Reformed Churches do not maintain church-correspondence:*
  - 1. *they shall not be called unless they have been declared eligible for a call in the Churches;*
  - 2. *they may be declared eligible for a call only after*
    - a. *they have submitted proof of their ordination as a minister;*
    - b. *they have submitted a written exposition of the reasons why they desire to be declared eligible for call within the Churches;*
    - c. *they submit a good testimony about their conduct;*
    - d. *they submit themselves to an examination on the level of the preparatory and peremptory examinations.*

*The Classis of their domicile shall examine them in the presence and with concurring advice of the Deputies of the Particular Synod, ad art. 49 C.O.*

- B. *With respect to those who are serving or served in Churches with which the Canadian Reformed Churches maintain Church-correspondence:*
  - 1. *They may be called without first having been declared eligible for call in the Churches;*
  - 2. *they may be admitted to the ministry in the Churches if they*
    - a. *submit to the Classis that is asked to approve the call*
      - 1. *proof of their ordination,*
      - 2. *proof that they have been called by one of the Churches,*
      - 3. *a statement that they wish to accept this call,*
      - 4. *a testimony about their doctrine and life,*
      - 5. *proof that they were duly released from their former charge;*
    - b. *submit themselves to a colloquium doctum which will deal especially with the Reformed doctrine and church polity.*

**ARTICLE 40: Close**

After Psalm 34:4 is sung and Rev. Van Oene leads in thanksgiving, the session is closed.

**SESSION OF TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 9, 1965**

**ARTICLE 41: Opening.**

After the chairman has Psalm 119:3 and 4 sung, he leads in prayer. Then he reads 1 Thess. 5: 1-12.

**ARTICLE 42: Rollcall.**

rollcall is held: the delegates are all present.

**ARTICLE 43: Acts.**

The Acts read from Article 26 to Article 43. These were adopted.

**ARTICLE 44: Press Release.**

The Press Release is read and approved.

**ARTICLE 45: Letter Rev C. de Haan.**

As a follow-up to the telephone conversation between Rev. Kouwenhoven and Rev. C. de Haan of Winnipeg referred to in article 31 a letter is received from Rev. de Haan, in which he responds to the announcement, mentioned in article 7, that a letter received before November 15 will still be added to the agenda.

The Synod adopts the following proposal:

“The Synod has taken note of a letter from “The Consistory of the Canadian Reformed Church of Winnipeg”, c.o. Rev. C. de Haan, expressing gratitude for the willingness of the Synod to extend the date for receiving of an appeal to November 15. In this a number of considerations are expressed outlining the difficulties which the brothers face in submitting an appeal before that date, and the possibilities which they see.

The Synod decides, having heard this letter, to inform Rev. de Haan by telegraph that he has until November 15 to submit his objections in writing and, if he so wishes, to further explain them orally.”

Br. L. Toet does not vote, as per CO art. 33.

**ARTICLE 46: Eligibility for call.**

The discussion of the proposal of Advisory Committee I referred to in Article 39 continues. It is adopted by the Synod.

**ARTICLE 47: Reopening.**

After the afternoon has been spent on advisory committee work, the session is reopened by the chairman at 7.30 p.m. Psalm 125:1 and 4 are sung.

**ARTICLE 48: Rollcall.**

rollcall takes place. All the brothers are present.

**ARTICLE 49: Press Release.**

The Press Release is read and adopted.

**ARTICLE 50: Appeal Cl.K. Oosterveld.**

Advisory Committee presents an amended proposal to reply to the appeal raised by br. Cl.K. Oosterveld of Winnipeg, see Article 35. This is discussed at length.

**ARTICLE 51: Close.**

After Psalm 35:13 is sung and Rev. Van Popta leads in thanksgiving, the session is closed.

**SESSION OF WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 1965**

**ARTICLE 52: Opening**

The chairman opens this session. He has Psalm 105: 1 and 2 sung, after which he reads 1 Cor. 3:10 to (the) end (of the chapter). He then leads in prayer.

**ARTICLE 53: Rollcall.**

rollcall takes place. Once again, all delegates are present.

**ARTICLE 54: Call Rev. van Popta.**

The chairman spoke a few words to Rev. Van Popta, who received a call from the Church at Cloverdale, B.C. His prayer for Rev. Van Popta is that he might experience the blessing and assistance of the Lord in the difficulties caused by this call.

**ARTICLE 55: Acts.**

The Acta of art. 43 to 54 were read and adopted.

**ARTICLE 56: Press Release.**

The Press Release is read and approved.

**ARTICLE 57: Reopening.**

Advisory Committees meet, interrupted by mealtimes, until 7.30 p.m. At that time the chairman reopens the session and has Psalm 81:2 and 12 sung.

**ARTICLE 58: Rollcall**

rollcall indicates that all brothers are present.

**ARTICLE 59: English Translation Catechism.**

Advisory Committee II presents a report on agenda items 8 E 1, 2, and 3 re an English translation of the Heidelberg Catechism. After discussion, the matter is referred back to the committee.

**ARTIKEL 60: Theological Education.**

Advisory Committee I presents a report on agenda items 8 B 1, 4, 6. The discussion is interrupted when the hour for closing strikes.

**ARTICLE 61: Close**

Rev. Mulder requests that Psalm 119:83 be sung and leads in prayer. With this the session of this day ends.

**SESSION OF THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 11, 1965**

**ARTICLE 62: Opening.**

At the request of the chairman Psalm 46:1 and 4 are sung. He then reads 1 Pet. 1:3-13, after which he leads in prayer.

**ARTICLE 63: Rollcall.**

rollcall takes place. All delegates are present.

**ARTICLE 64: Acts.**

The Acts are read from art. 55 to 64. These were adopted.

**ARTICLE 65: Press Release.**

The Press Release is read and adopted.

**ARTICLE 66: Theological Education.**

Discussion of the report of Advisory Committee I, referred to in Article 60, is continued. All of it is resubmitted to the committee for further consideration.



**ARTICLE 67: Re-opening.**

The afternoon is devoted to advisory committee meetings, and in the evening at 7.30 p.m., the chairman reopens the session. Hymn 20:2 and 3 are sung.

**ARTICLE 68: Rollcall.**

rollcall takes place.<sup>2</sup>

**ARTICLE 69: Appeal E. ter Mors.**

Advisory Committee IV presents a report re the appeal of br. E. Ter Mors of Winnipeg, Agenda item 8 E 4. The appeal is read and then the report of the committee is read. After discussion, the report is referred back to the committee.

**ARTICLE 70: English Translation Catechism.**

The report of Advisory Committee II on proposals concerning the text of the Heidelberg Catechism, agenda items 8 I 1, 2, 3, is now read out loud. The Synod adopts the committee's proposals in the following form:

A. The General Synod has taken note of:

1. The proposal of Rev. G. Van Dooren dated March 16, 1965, to appoint a study committee to examine the English translation of the Heidelberg Catechism of Dr. T. F. Torrance for its fidelity to the Scriptures and to compare it with other translations, so that if this study proves favourable, this translation could possibly replace the one currently in use.
2. The proposal of the Church at Edmonton dated June 28, 1965, to decide in accordance with the proposal of Rev. G. Van Dooren.
3. The proposal of the Church at Barrhead dated 20 September 1965, to decide in accordance with the proposal of Rev. G. Van Dooren.

In response to these proposals, the General Synod decides:

- a. To appoint a committee to study English translations of the Heidelberg Catechism as the committee considers appropriate.
- b. To instruct this committee to examine the most appropriate of these translations for its use of language and for its rendering of the original German and the Dutch text adopted by our Churches.
- c. To instruct the committee to submit a report (possibly with proposals) to the churches no later than six months before the start of the next General Synod.

Ground: Since the Heidelberg Catechism is primarily a textbook for the youth of the Church, it is good that the English text is as close as possible to contemporary language.

B. Re Rev. Van Dooren's suggestion "that the General Synod leave it for the time being in the freedom of the Churches to use Torrance's translation already now with the intention of becoming acquainted with this translation," the Synod decides not to take a decision."<sup>3</sup>

***Press Release version ARTICLE 15: English Text Catechism***

*Re: the English Text of the Heidelberg Catechism Synod decides to appoint a Committee to study English translations of the Heidelberg Catechism, and to compare those deemed most suited and examine them on their merits of language and their being in accordance with the original German text and the Dutch text which has been accepted by the Canadian Reformed Churches.*

*This decision is made because the Heidelberg Catechism as a document used in the instruction of the youth of the Church and the language of our Creeds should be as close to the daily language as will be possible.*

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<sup>2</sup> The Dutch Acts do not say anything about presence of delegates.

<sup>3</sup> Translator: There is no opening quotation mark for this closing quotation mark.

*A report is to be sent to the Churches six months before next Synod.*

**ARTICLE 71: Correspondence Foreign Churches.**

The report of deputies for correspondence with foreign churches is read. Agenda item 8 L 2. The reading of this report takes up the rest of the available meeting time for the day.

**ARTICLE 72: Close.**

Some announcements are made regarding the items to be dealt with tomorrow. After br. J. P. Kuntz has Psalm 86:6 sung and has led in thanksgiving prayer, the session is closed.

**SESSION OF FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 1965**

**ARTICLE 73: Opening.**

The chairman has Psalm 138:1 and 3 sung, reads 1 Pet. 1:13 to the end (of the chapter), and then leads in prayer.

**ARTICLE 74: Rollcall.**

The rollcall indicates that all the brothers are present.

**ARTICLE 75: Acts.**

The Acta are read from art. 64 to 75. They are adopted.

**ARTICLE 76: Press Release.**

The Press Release is read and approved.

**ARTICLE 77: Correspondence Foreign Churches.**

The Advisory Committee's report on the report of deputies for correspondence with foreign Churches is currently under discussion, Agenda item 8 L 2.

As per the proposal of this committee, the Synod decides:

“to fulfil the request of the deputies for correspondence with foreign Churches appointed by the Synod of Die Vrije Gereformeerde Kerke in Suid-Afrika, namely, to send them three copies of the reports concerning the (liturgical) forms and confessions.”

The Synod further decides:

“re the request of The Free Reformed Churches of Australia to consult in advance on revision or expansion of the Confession, Church Order and Liturgy (except in cases where changes in the church order are required by the circumstances or customs of the country in which the church is located); to deal with this request as point 8 L 3.”

Part of the report is referred back to the committee, as is the report on the Church of Barrhead's proposal on the Rules for Correspondence, 8 L 1.

**ARTICLE 78: Reopening.**

The afternoon meeting is opened with the singing of Psalm 97:7. Rollcall takes place, which indicates that all delegates are present.

**ARTICLE 79: Correspondence.**

The discussion of the report of Advisory Committee II referred to in Article 77 continues. It is in part referred back to the committee and in part the committee's proposals are adopted.

**ARTICLE 80: Letter Federal Government.**

Advisory Committee II presents a report on agenda items 8 D 1, 2, 3: proposals to send a letter to the Federal Government regarding the trend towards the abolition of the death penalty. The whole report is

referred back to the committee.

**ARTICLE 81: Submission A. de Vries and others.**

The reply drafted by Advisory Committee I concerning the letter by A. De Vries and others of Hamilton, ON, is referred back to the committee.

**ARTICLE 82: Reopening**

After the opening of the evening meeting, rollcall takes place. Rev. Van Oene is absent, with notice to synod, because of a death in the congregation of New Westminster.

**ARTICLE 83: Close.**

During the evening the Advisory Committees meet. At the end of the evening br. L. Toet has Psalm 119:6 sung and leads thanksgiving prayer. The session is closed.

**SESSION OF SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 1965**

**ARTICLE 83b<sup>4</sup>: Opening.**

The chairman has Hymn 8 sung, after which he reads 1 Pet. 2:1-10 and leads in prayer.

**ARTICLE 84: Rollcall.**

At rollcall, the brothers E. C. Baartman and Wm.W.J. Vanoene prove to be absent.

**ARTICLE 85: Press Release.**

The Press Release is read and approved.

**ARTICLE 86: Close**

The remainder of the morning session is devoted to Advisory Committee meetings and closed at around noon, after Psalm 65: 1 and 2 are sung and Rev. De Jong led in thanksgiving prayer.

**SESSION OF MONDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 1965**

**ARTICLE 87: Opening**

From the *Book of Praise* Psalm 5 stanzas 1, 2, 3, 9 and 10 are sung; the chairman reads Psalm 28 and leads in prayer.

**ARTICLE 88: Rollcall.**

Rollcall takes place: all members are present.

**ARTICLE 89: Press Release.**

The Press Release is read and adopted.

**ARTICLE 90: Greetings Rev. Pieffers.**

Rev. De Jong conveys the warmest greetings from Rev. G.Ph. Pieffers and makes some announcements regarding the health of Rev. Pieffers. The Synod receives these announcements with joy.

**Press Release version ARTICLE 17<sup>5</sup>: Rev. Pieffers.**

*Rev. De Jong has visited Rev. G. Ph. Pieffers; he has conveyed the greetings and the sympathy of Synod. He informs the brethren that Rev. Pieffers' condition is so much improved that he may*

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<sup>4</sup> Translator: The Dutch original has two articles 83.

<sup>5</sup> Translator: The numbering is correct. Articles 16 and 17 of the Press Release are in a different order to the parallel articles in the Acts (articles 92 & 93, and article 90 respectively).

*go home again after one more week in the hospital; also that it might be possible for him afterwards to take up certain activities.*

### **ARTICLE 91: Incoming Correspondence.**

Two letters have been received: one from Br H. Tams of Edmonton (see Article 13) and one from “The Canadian Reformed Church of Winnipeg” c.o. 729 Hoskin Avenue, Winnipeg, Manitoba (see Articles 7, 45). These documents are placed in the hands of Advisory Committee IV.

### **ARTICLE 92: Correspondence Foreign Churches.<sup>6</sup>**

Advisory Committee II’s report on correspondence is discussed again. The committee’s proposals are now adopted in their entirety, implying the following decision is taken:

“The General Synod, through the report of deputies for correspondence with foreign Churches, has taken note of the amendment of Article 70 of the Church Order by the Free Reformed Churches of Australia.

The Synod observes that this article in the Order of these churches now reads as follows:

“As it is proper that marriage is solemnized or confirmed before Christ’s congregation, using the form adopted for that purpose, the consistories shall see to this.”

“The General Synod has taken note of the request to continue correspondence.

The Synod declares that it considers it acceptable that the Australian Churches have amended CO article 70 as above, and decides to have the churches in Australia informed of this by Deputies for Correspondence with Foreign Churches.”

“The General Synod resolves not to accede to the request of The Free Reformed Churches of Australia to consult in advance on revision or expansion of the Confession, Church Order and Liturgy (except in cases where changes in the church order are required by the circumstances or customs of the country in which the church is located) for the following reasons:

1. The established rules for correspondence should not be changed and/or expanded if this is not strictly necessary. The churches in Australia have not demonstrated that the existing rules are incorrect and inadequate and that a change and addition is necessary.
2. The proposed rule is not an improvement, since complying with it would mean that if a General Synod decides to deem an amendment desirable or necessary, this decision could not be enacted by a subsequent General Synod, which could harm the scriptural progress of the life of the Churches.
3. Of course, the Churches have the freedom to consult in advance with foreign sister churches about changes deemed necessary, if they deem it desirable and necessary.”

### **ARTICLE 93: Rules for Correspondence.**

As proposed by Advisory Committee II, the following is decided re the proposal from the Church at Barrhead, Agenda item 8 L i:

“<sup>7</sup>The General Synod has taken note of the request of the Church at Barrhead, AB, dated August 11, 1965, the rules for correspondence with foreign Churches, last established by the Synod Hamilton 1962 (Acts art. 139), in particular the provisions in points (a) and (e<sup>8</sup>).

- A. With regard to the judgment of the Church at Barrhead, that what is stipulated in the rules of correspondence under (a) may be removed (namely, paying attention to each other, that there

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<sup>6</sup> Translator: See Press Release Article 16, which combines Articles 92 & 93 into one article.

<sup>7</sup> Translator: Closing quotations are missing in the acts.

<sup>8</sup> Translator: the acts have (e) in the first reference and (c) in the second reference. Given the Press Release, the correct reference is “(c)”.

is no deviation from the Reformed confession in doctrine, ministry/worship<sup>9</sup>, church government and discipline), the Synod declares that no sufficient reasons have been given for revising the adopted rules for correspondence with foreign churches in this matter.

Grounds:

1. It has not yet been shown that this rule cannot be implemented in practice, as stated by the Church at Barrhead.
  2. The Church at Barrhead has not demonstrated that it is not necessary for this rule to be observed for correspondence.
  3. The judgment of the Church at Barrhead, that in God's Word (e.g. in 1 Cor. 5 and Rev. 2 and 3) no indication is given of what is stipulated in line a., is not a sufficient ground for this rule to be removed.
- B. With regard to the judgment of the Church at Barrhead, that what is stipulated in the rules of correspondence under (c) (second part) may be removed (namely: while the corresponding Churches undertake to expressly express their opinion on the acceptability thereof), the Synod declares that no satisfactory reasons have been given for revising the adopted rules for correspondence with foreign Churches in this matter.

Grounds:

1. The Church at Barrhead incorrectly argues that this rule entails interference with the ministry of another, since this rule deals with the ministry of its own Churches in connection with their recognition of foreign Churches as true Churches of our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom correspondence is maintained.
2. The Church at Barrhead incorrectly states that in this way foreign Churches determine what will be on the agenda of our General Synods. This is not a matter of foreign churches determining the agenda of the General Synod, as the fact of the matter is that the exercise of correspondence belongs to the agenda of the General Synod.

**Press Release version ARTICLE 16: Correspondence Foreign Churches.<sup>10</sup>**

*The Free Reformed Churches of Australia informed Synod about their decision to change Article 70 C.O. which, in their Church Order, now reads, "Since it is proper that the marriages be solemnized or confirmed before*

*the Church of Christ, according to the Form for that purpose, the consistories shall attend to it."*

*Synod considers that this change is no reason why church-correspondence should no longer be maintained with these Churches, and declares that it considers this change acceptable with the Australian sister-churches.*

*Synod decided to grant the request of the sister-churches in South Africa to send them three copies of the reports of the Committees re: Creeds and Liturgical Forms.*

*Synod did not agree with the suggestion of the Free Reformed Churches of Australia to consult with each other beforehand in case changes in Confession, Church Order or Liturgy are deemed necessary and before they are effectuated (changes necessitated by the conditions of the own country excepted).*

*Synod rejects an overture from the Church at Barrhead to delete rule a. of the Rules for the Maintenance of Correspondence (a. to see to it that there be no deviation from the Reformed Confession in doctrine, liturgy, church government, and discipline}. Barrhead claims that this is an unworkable rule. Synod is not convinced by the arguments brought forward by the Church at Barrhead.*

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<sup>9</sup> Translator: The Dutch word "dienst" could apply to either.

<sup>10</sup> Translator: This article covers Articles 92 and 93.

*A proposal to delete the second part of rule c. (while the corresponding Churches bind themselves to expressing their opinion whether they deem these changes acceptable) is rejected.*

*Synod is convinced that this rule does not mean a busying oneself with someone else's service, as is claimed, since this rule deals with the duty of the own Churches in connection with their acknowledgment of foreign Churches as sister-churches; further Synod considers that the matters concerning the church-correspondence belong to the synodical agenda and that for this reason it is wrong to claim that keeping this rule would mean that foreign Churches determine what shall be dealt with at a General Synod.*

**ARTICLE 94: Letter Federal Government.**

Advisory Committee II presents an amended proposal on Agenda item 8 D I, 2, 3 (Letter to Federal Government on capital punishment). The committee will consider this further.

**ARTICLE 95: Orthodox Presbyterian Church (OPC).**

The following is read:

- a. The proposal of the Regional Synod of Ontario 1965 re contact with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, Agenda item 8 N 2.
- b. The "Report regarding possible contact with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church", commissioned by the Regional Synod of Ontario June 17, 1964, Agenda item 8 N 1.
- c. A submission from the Church in Toronto on the same matter, Agenda item 8 N 3.
- d. The Advisory Committee's report and its proposals.

The reading of these pieces takes up the available time.

**ARTICLE 96: Reopening.**

The afternoon meeting is spent in committees. At 7.30 p.m. the chairman opens the session. He has Psalm 19:7 sung.

**ARTICLE 97: Rollcall.**

Rollcall is held: the delegates are all present.

**ARTICLE 98: Acts**

The Acts are read from Articles 75 to 98. They are adopted.

**ARTICLE 99: Theological Training.**

Advisory Committee I presents new proposals on training for the Ministry of the Word.

The Synod decides

"To give the Governors an amount of \$6000 for setting up a library. This includes the amount which was made available for this purpose by the previous Synod but which has not been used."

The other proposals, in so far as they have been discussed, will first be reconsidered by the committee.

**ARTICLE 100: Close.**

Br P. H. Wildeboer has Psalm 25:2 sung, whereupon he leads in prayer and the meeting is closed.

**SESSION OF TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 1965**

**ARTICLE 101: Opening.**

After the chairman has Psalm 100 sung and read Matthew 5:1-17 he leads in prayer.

**ARTICLE 102: Rollcall.**

Rollcall is held. None of the delegates is missing.

**ARTICLE 103: Acts.**

The Acts are read from Articles 98 to 103. They are adopted.

**ARTICLE 104: Press Release.**

The Press Release is read and approved.

**ARTICLE 105: Letter H. Tams.**

Advisory Committee IV presents a proposal re a letter received from br. H. Tams of Edmonton. The Synod adopts the committee's proposal as follows:

"On November 13 the Synod received a letter by br. H. Tams of Edmonton, postmarked Calgary, November 12, 1965, 9:00 p.m.

This brother had been informed of the synodal decision that he had the opportunity to submit his objections in writing to the Synod before 13 November, Acts, Article 13.

Since the letter of br. Tams was received after November 12, the Synod decides not to consider br. Tams' letter."

**Press Release version ARTICLE 18: Letter H. Tams.**

*Synod received a letter from br. H. Tams of Edmonton on Nov. 13th. This brother had been informed that Synod granted him the opportunity to submit his complaints about the suspension of Rev. C. de Haan in writing before November 13th. Since this letter of br. H. Tams was received after Nov. 12th, Synod decides not to deal with it.*

**ARTICLE 106: Theological Training.**

Advisory Committee I presents its further proposals on training for the Ministry of the Word and related matters. In part the proposals are referred back to the Committee for further consideration.

**ARTICLE 107: Letter Rev. L. Selles.**

A decision on the letter from Rev. L. Selles, in which he requests to be relieved of his teaching assignment, is postponed until the item "Appointments" is discussed.

**ARTICLE 108: Address for Reports.**

The Advisory Committee's proposal on the request from the church at Barrhead, agenda item G, will be considered by the Committee.

**ARTICLE 109: Dutch text Church Order.**

The proposal of the Church at Barrhead concerning the Dutch text of the Church Order, Agenda item P 1, is discussed. The following decision is taken:

"The General Synod has taken note of the proposal from the Church at Barrhead "to include as an appendix to the Acts to be issued of the Synod: the text of the church order as it is in force in our Churches after the last amendments".

The Synod decides to accede to this request."

**Press Release version ARTICLE 20: Dutch Text Church Order.**

*Synod decides to publish the Dutch text of the Church Order, as accepted by our Churches, together with the Acts.*

**ARTICLE 110: English text Church order.**

After discussion, a proposal on Agenda item P 2 (proposal Regional Synod Ontario 1965 concerning an English text of the Church Order) is referred back to the Committee.

**ARTICLE 111: Regulations CO article 8**

The proposal of the Church at Carman, Agenda item P 3, concerning the general arrangements for procedures with respect to persons who present themselves for ministry "according to Art. 8" is discussed.

An amendment to the Advisory Committee's proposal to insert 'and of the Classis' in point 1 after 'church council of their congregation' is rejected.

The Synod then decides as follows:

"The General Synod has taken note of the proposal of the Church at Carman, MB, to adopt a general regulation for procedures with respect to persons who present themselves for ministry "according to art. 8".

The General Synod adopts the following regulation:

1. Those who present themselves to be examined with a view to the presence of the singular gifts mentioned in C.O. article 8 shall submit to the Regional Synod which is to examine them a testimony of the Consistory of their congregation concerning these gifts.
2. The Regional Synod itself will then examine them in more detail. If the presence of the said gifts proves to be beyond all reasonable doubt, it will admit them to the preparatory examination.
3. This preparatory examination shall be administered to the examinee by the Classis of their residence, which shall execute the remainder of C.O. article 8; and when he has successfully completed the practicum period, shall declare him eligible for call.

The preparatory examination (and any subsequent peremptory examination) differs from that of the theologically trained only in that knowledge of the original languages of Holy Scripture is not required."

**Press Release version ARTICLE 22: Article 8 C.O.**

*Re: Article 8 of the Church Order Synod decides the following:*

1. *Persons who present themselves to be examined on the presence of the gifts mentioned in Art. 8 C.O. shall submit to the Particular Synod that is to examine them a testimony from their Consistory as to these gifts;*
2. *The Particular Synod shall examine them, and if the presence of these gifts appears beyond reasonable doubt admit them to the preparatory examination.*
3. *The Classis of their domicile shall conduct the preparatory examination and shall further deal with them according to the other regulations of Article 8 C.O., and shall declare them eligible for call if at the end of the trial period they shall be found satisfactory.*

*The preparatory examination (and the eventually following peremptory examination) shall differ from that to which those who received a theological education must submit themselves only in this that knowledge of the original languages of the Holy Scripture shall not be required.*

**ARTICLE 112: General Fund CO article 19.**

The Advisory Committee's proposal on Agenda item 8 C (Proposal from the Church of Edmonton concerning the general fund for needy students) is referred back to the Committee for rephrasing.

**ARTICLE 113: Opening. Letter Winnipeg.**

During the afternoon the Committees meet until the chairman convenes the Synod in plenary session at 5:25 p.m., following a telephone conversation which Rev. Kouwenhoven had with Rev. C. de Haan of Winnipeg, regarding the opportunity given to the latter, if he wished, to explain orally his appeal submitted in writing.

It is decided to read the letter received (see Article 91) tomorrow morning after the opening of the session.

**ARTICLE 114: Reopening.**

At 7.30 p.m. the meeting is reopened by the chairman. Psalm 124 is sung. rollcall is held: all the brothers are present.

**ARTICLE 115: Acts**

The Acta are read from Article 103 to 115. They are adopted.



**ARTICLE 116: Press Release.**

The Press Release is read and approved.

**ARTICLE 117: Letter from Winnipeg.**

A letter from "The Canadian Reformed Church of Winnipeg", signed by C. de Haan and E. ter Mors, has been received, informing them that, following the letter referred to in Articles 91 and 113, these brothers have been appointed to provide any explanations of this letter.

This last letter is passed on to Advisory Committee IV.

**Press Release version ARTICLE 23: Letter Winnipeg.**

*Synod is informed that a letter is received from "The Canadian Re-formed Church of Winnipeg, Man.", address 729 Hoskin Ave., Winnipeg 15, Man. This letter states that Rev. C. de Haan and Br. E. Ter Mors have be-en appointed as delegates "to explain any point of our letter. if so wanted or desired by your meeting". Committee IV shall advise Synod in this matter.*

**ARTICLE 118: Orthodox Presbyterian Church (OPC).**

The report of Advisory Committee III on Agenda item 8 N, Contact with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, is read again.

After discussion, this report is returned to the Committee.

**ARTICLE 119: Christian Reformed Church.**

The documents listed under Agenda item 8 M, Christian Reformed Church are read. The report of the Advisory Committee which was entrusted with this matter for preparation is also read. The discussion was cut short because time ran out.

**ARTICLE 120: Close.**

Br H. Van Veen asks to sing Psalm 98:4, whereupon he leads in prayer and the meeting is closed.

**SESSION OF WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 1965**

**ARTICLE 121: Opening.**

At the request of the chairman, Psalm 139:12 and 13 are sung. The chairman then reads Eph. 1:3-15 and leads in prayer.

**ARTICLE 122: Rollcall.**

Rollcall is held. None of the delegates are missing.

**ARTICLE 123: Acts.**

The Acts are read from Articles 115 to 123. They are adopted.

**ARTICLE 124: Press Release.**

The Press Release is read and approved.

**ARTICLE 125: Letter Winnipeg.**

Advisory Committee IV presents a proposal re the letter from The Canadian Reformed Church of Winnipeg, address 729 Hoskin Ave., Winnipeg. The result of the discussion of this proposal is that the Advisory Committee will consider this letter in more detail and is happy to receive proposals from members.

**ARTICLE 126: Christian Reformed Church.**

The discussion referred to in Article 119 on documents received and the report of Advisory Committee III re contact with the Christian Reformed Church is continued.

**ARTICLE 127: Reopening.**

After the lunch break, the Committees meet until the chairman at 4.15 p.m. reconvenes the Synod again in plenary session. rollcall is held; all the delegates are present.

**ARTICLE 128: Letter Winnipeg,**

After discussion, the following Advisory Committee IV proposals on the letter referred to in Article 125 were adopted:

“1. The Synod observes that on November 5 a letter was sent to the brothers and sisters in Winnipeg, in which the Synod informed them that it decided to add a letter received before November 15 to the agenda.

In view of this promise, the Synod decides to add the letter received on 14 November to the agenda.

2. The Synod observes that a letter from the church council, address 729 Hoskin Avenue, Winnipeg, dated November 15, has been received, informing the Synod that Rev. de Haan and br. Ter Mors have been appointed by the church council to explain the letter of the church council in more detail if the Synod so requests.

The Synod decides to receive this letter for information.”

Br. L. Toet abstains from voting, as per C.O. article 33.

**ARTICLE 129: Reopening.**

After the evening meal, the chairman reopens the session at 7.30 p.m. Psalm 133:1 and 2 is sung.

**ARTICLE 130: Rollcall.**

Rollcall is held; none of the brothers is missing.

**ARTICLE 131: Christian Reformed Church.**

Discussions on contact with the Christian Reformed Church (see Article 126) continue. The Advisory Committee requests time to further consider its proposals.

**ARTICLE 132: Excommunication of “non-communicant<sup>11</sup> members”.**

Advisory Committee II presents a report on the documents listed under Agenda item 8 K: Forms for the excommunication of non-communicant members. This committee will also further consider its proposals on this matter.

**ARTICLE 133: Close**

After some announcements have been made about procedures for the next morning, Psalm 42:1, 5 and 7 are sung, and Rev. L. Selles has led in thanksgiving prayer, the session of this day ends.

## **SESSION OF THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 1965**

**ARTICLE 134: Opening.**

The chairman has Psalm 150 sung. Then he reads Ephesians 2:1-11 and leads in prayer.

**ARTICLE 135: Rollcall.**

Rollcall is held; all the brothers prove to be present

**ARTICLE 136: Acts.**

The Acts are read from Articles 123-136, after which they were adopted.

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<sup>11</sup> Translator: The Dutch expression translates literally as “baptized members”.

**ARTICLE 137: Press Release.**

The continuation of the Press Release is read and approved.

**ARTICLE 138: Letter Winnipeg.**

Advisory Committee IV announces that it is not proposing that the letter referred to in Article 128 point 1 be declared inadmissible. There are no proposals in this regard from the assembly itself either, and so the assembly proceeds to deal with it.

On behalf of Advisory Committee IV, the following proposal is presented to the Synod, which is adopted:

“In view of the fact that, the telegram sent on behalf of the Synod, can be understood to say that Synod gives Rev. de Haan the opportunity to explain on behalf of the brothers and sisters at Winnipeg the points of appeal, if he so wishes, the Synod decides to ask Rev. de Haan if he wishes to avail himself of this opportunity.”

Following this decision, the chairman then asks Rev C. de Haan, who is present in the room, if he would like to take advantage of the opportunity offered to him. Rev. de Haan answers this question in the affirmative.

**ARTICLE 139: Explanation Rev. C. de Haan.**

It is proposed to give Rev. C. de Haan immediately the opportunity to provide an oral explanation of the points of appeal. The Synod agrees with this proposal.

The chairman welcomes Rev. C. de Haan to the assembly and gives him an opportunity to speak.

After Rev. de Haan has spoken, it is decided to continue with other matters and proposals on the agenda, and to give Advisory Committee IV an opportunity at a later point in time to continue considering the letter and explanation given and then to come with proposals in this regard.

**ARTICLE 140: Excommunication of “non-communicant members”.**

Advisory Committee II proposes some changes to its most recently issued proposals on forms for the excommunication of non-communicant members. These proposals are adopted by the Synod in the following form:

“The General Synod has taken note

1. of the proposal from the Regional Synod of the Churches in Ontario, dated September 22, 1965, to adopt the draft forms for the excommunication of non-communicant members sent by this Regional Synod;
2. of a letter from the Church at New Westminster, B.C., dated October 28, 1965, containing a proposal not to adopt the forms proposed by the Regional Synod of Ontario but to appoint a study committee for this matter.

The Synod considers that for the introduction of new liturgical forms

- a. a united sentiment in the Churches is desirable;
- b. a practice similar to that followed in the foreign Reformed Churches is recommended.

The Synod decides

1. To appoint two deputies with the mandate
  - a. examine which forms should be adopted for the excommunication of church members, who have not yet made profession of faith, and, bearing the name Christian, display unchristian doctrine or conduct;
  - b. to report the result of their research to the Churches at least six months before the next General Synod.
2. a. to submit to these deputies the draft forms sent by the Regional Synod of the Churches in Ontario;
- b. to inform these deputies of the existence of a report by deputies for the investigation of

guidelines and forms concerning the discipline of non-communicant members, appointed by the Synod Launceston 1964 of The Free Reformed Churches of Australia (Acts Synod Launceston 1964, art. 59)".

**ARTICLE 141: Orthodox Presbyterian Church (OPC).**

Advisory Committee III now presents a finalized proposal on possible contact with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church (OPC), Agenda item 8 N. See Articles 95 and 118.

The Synod adopts them as follows:

I. The Synod took note of

A. The proposal of the Regional Synod of the Churches in Ontario 1965

“1. To appoint deputies for contact with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church;

2. To request the General Assembly of The Orthodox Presbyterian Church to do the same: in order to clarify whether the differences in Confession and Church Government between the Canadian Reformed Churches and The Orthodox Presbyterian Church are of such a nature, that correspondence with the latter Churches according to the Word of the Lord is impossible.”

B. The report attached to this proposal on possible contact with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church;

C. The proposal of the Church at Toronto “to establish contact with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church by means of Deputies, in order that in due time correspondence with this Church be established”;

II. The Synod judges:

Correspondence with Churches abroad should not be entered into until a careful and serious examination has shown that these Churches have not only officially accepted the Reformed confession and church government, but maintain it in deed.

III. The Synod considers

A. that with a view to the Orthodox Presbyterian Church such a careful and serious examination makes sense,

1. because the report indicates that The Orthodox Presbyterian Church

a. as a Presbyterian Church is the fruit of the Calvinist Reformation;

b. has confessional writings and a church government that are Calvinistic in character;

c. in this century has decisively chosen for Orthodoxy and against Modernism;

2. because maintaining correspondence with these Churches would be practical given distance and language;

B. that with a view to the Orthodox Presbyterian Church engaging in such a careful and serious examination is necessary,

1. because the report has shown Synod that there are differences in confession and church government between the Orthodox Presbyterian Church and our Churches;

2. because there are differences between the Orthodox Presbyterian Church and our Churches with a view to correspondence with other church communities;

IV. The Synod decides:

A. to appoint three deputies for contact with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church (OPC);

B. to request the General Assembly of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church that deputies be appointed to receive our deputies;

C. to instruct our deputies as follows:

1. to inform the Orthodox Presbyterian Church via its deputies concerning our confession and our church government and ask it if it can accept the Canadian Reformed Churches on the ground of this confession and this church government as true Churches of the Lord Jesus

- Christ;
2. to discuss frankly with the deputies of The Orthodox Presbyterian Church the differences in confession and church government which exist between the Orthodox Presbyterian Church and our Churches, and to test these differences against the Word of the Lord;
  3. to show to the Orthodox Presbyterian Church via its deputies what correspondence means to our Churches by means of the rules laid down for this purpose, and to inform themselves of the views of The Orthodox Presbyterian Church in this regard;
  4. to speak with deputies of The Orthodox Presbyterian Church about existing correspondence with other church communities, which the Orthodox Presbyterian Church and our Churches maintain;
  5. to keep the Churches informed of what is being done in the exercise of this contact and to submit a report to the next General Synod;
- D. to include the historical portion of the "Report on Possible Contact with The Orthodox Presbyterian Churches" in the publication of the Acts of this Synod."

**ARTICLE 142: Letter Federal Government.**

The finalized proposals of Advisory Committee II concerning a communication to the Federal Government on the death penalty, Article 94, Agenda item 8 D 1, 2, 3, are adopted, so that:

"The General Synod has taken note of the request of Rev. G. Van Dooren of Burlington, ON, dated September 13, 1965, "to submit a testimony to the Minister of Justice with the urgent request that he maintain the death penalty in cases of premeditated murder."

Rev. G. Van Dooren states in his submission:

- a. this is a matter for the Churches in common as it concerns a letter to the Federal Government;
- b. that as such this is a matter in which a Synod can act without any proposal from a minor assembly.

The Synod considers that CO article 30 determines

that in major assemblies only such matters shall be dealt with as could not be finished in minor assemblies, or such as pertain to the Churches of the major assembly in common.

The Synod considers that Rev. G. Van Dooren has not demonstrated

- a. this is a matter for the Churches in common as it concerns a letter to the Federal Government;
- b. that as such this is a matter in which a Synod can act without any proposal from a minor assembly.

The Synod therefore decides not to accede to this request."

**ARTICLE 143: Reopening.**

Advisory Committees meet after the lunch break. The chairman reopened the session at 7.30 p.m. He has Psalm 111:4 and 5 sung.

**ARTICLE 144: Rollcall.**

Rollcall is held.

**ARTICLE 145: Acts**

The Acts are read from Articles 138 to 144. They are adopted.

**ARTICLE 146: Press Release.**

The Press Release is read and approved.

**ARTICLE 147: Fund CO Article 19.**

Advisory Committee I presents a proposal for the creation of a general fund for needy students.

The following decision is taken:

"The General Synod has taken note of the Proposal of the Church of Edmonton, "to decide to set up a general fund for needy students and to ask the Churches for an annual contribution for this."

The Synod considers that the way in which the training for the ministry of the Word is now arranged poses certain difficulties in determining costs and providing support, since students have to travel from one place to another.

The Synod considers that it is fair that, until the training is established in a particular location, the assistance to students be arranged generally.

The Synod decides:

- a. to appoint five deputies, who will manage a to be formed fund and will assess applications from students and possibly grant them.
- b. to authorize these deputies to hold one or more collections or annually, to ask for the equivalent amount per year for this general fund.”

#### **ARTICLE 148: Address for Reports**

The following proposal is also adopted:

“The General Synod has taken note of the request of the Church at Barrhead “to determine explicitly that Governors and further all deputies appointed by the Synod shall send their reports and proposals to the Churches. They shall do in a timely manner so that the Churches can consider them before the next Synod.”

The Synod considers that the nature of the matter is that deputies report to the body mandating or to the next meeting of a similar sort, and that therefore deputies appointed by a General Synod report to the next General Synod.

The Synod judges that it is not desirable to state as a general rule that Governors and all deputies appointed by a General Synod shall also send any reports and proposals in advance to the Churches, “so that they can consider them”, since this would give the impression that this is the task of the Churches.

The Synod, therefore, declares that it cannot accede to the request of the Church at Barrhead.”

#### **Press Release version ARTICLE 21: Address Reports.**

*Synod rejects an overture that Synod decide that the Governors and all other synodical deputies shall send their reports and proposals to the Churches at such a time before a General Synod is held that the Churches will be able to study them.*

#### **ARTICLE 149: English text Church order.**

The Advisory Committee’s proposal re the request of the Particular Synod of Ontario 1965 “to decide to have the Church Order translated into English” is, after discussion, withdrawn by the Committee for further consideration.

#### **ARTICLE 150: Announcement.**

It is announced that advisory committees will meet tomorrow morning after the opening.

#### **ARTICLE 151: Close.**

Br. H.J. Wildeboer has Psalm 118:1 and 9 sung and leads in prayer, whereupon the meeting is closed.

### **SESSION OF FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 1965**

#### **ARTICLE 152: Opening.**

The chairman opens today’s session, has Psalm 142 sung, reads Ephesians 4:1-17 and leads in prayer

#### **ARTICLE 153: Rollcall**

Rollcall is held.

**ARTICLE 154: Acts.**

The Acts are read and adopted from Articles 144 to 154.

**ARTICLE 155: Press Release.**

The Press Release is read and approved.

**ARTICLE 156: Advisory Committee Meetings.**

The morning is devoted to Advisory Committee meetings; also part of the afternoon, at which time the report of Advisory Committee IV on the letter from "The Canadian Reformed Church of **Winnipeg**", address 729 Hoskin Ave., Winnipeg, referenced in article 128 is distributed for consideration.

**ARTICLE 157: Reopening.**

At 3.55 p.m. the chairman reopens the session. Psalm 25:2,4, and 6 are sung.

**ARTICLE 158: Rollcall.**

Rollcall is held; all brothers indicate they are present.

**ARTICLE 159: Winnipeg Report.**

The report referred to in Article 156 is now under discussion. The result of this discussion is that the Committee will further consider the comments made.

**ARTICLE 160: Reopening.**

The evening meeting opens with the singing of Psalm 147:4 and 6. Following this rollcall is held.

**ARTICLE 161: Request Rev. C. de Haan.**

Rev. C. de Haan has asked to be allowed to add to the explanations he has given on the appeals submitted, see Article 139. He considers that further additions are necessary. No one objects to granting the requested opportunity.

**ARTICLE 162. Welcome Visitors.**

The chairman welcomes the brothers and sisters who show their interest concern through their presence. The fact that he does not always welcome interested parties should not be understood to mean that their presence is not greatly appreciated.

**ARTICLE 163: Book of Praise.**

The matter of the Book of Praise is now before us, Agenda item 8 J 1, 2, 3. The relevant documents are read, as is Advisor Committee II's report on this matter. At the end of the discussion, it is referred back to the Committee.

**ARTICLE 164: Close.**

After singing Hymn 4:1 and 10, the meeting is closed with thanksgiving by Br C. Ouwensloot.

**SESSION OF SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 1965**

**ARTICLE 165: Opening.**

The chairman opens the session of this day. Psalm 116:1, 5, 9 and 10 is sung, and Ephesians 6:10 to the end (of the chapter) is read. Thereupon the chairman leads in prayer.

**ARTICLE 166: Rollcall.**

Rollcall is held; again, all the brothers are present.

**ARTICLE 167: Acts.**

The Acts are read from Articles 154 to 167. They are adopted.

**ARTICLE 168: Press Release.**

The Press Release is read and approved.

**ARTICLE 169: Explanation Rev. de Haan.**

Rev. C. de Haan now has the opportunity to give the further explanation referred to in Article 161. After this explanation has been given, Advisory Committee IV meets to discuss whether there are any outstanding points on which further information is required. The result is that another question is put on behalf of the Committee, while two more questions arise from the Synod itself. These are answered by Rev. C. de Haan.

**ARTICLE 170: English text Church order.**

The proposal on the English version of the Church Order referred to in Agenda item 8 P 2 is dealt with. The following decision is taken:

“The General Synod has taken note of the request of the Regional Synod of Ontario 1965 to “decide to have the Order of the Church translated into English in order to arrive at an official text thereof; and to have that text included in the Book of Praise in due course.”

The Synod considers

- a. it is indeed necessary to adopt and publish an English text of the Church Order in force among us;
- b. that the present Church Order has been adopted from the sister churches in the Netherlands, which is in tune with Dutch relations and situations;
- c. that the present Church Order contains several words and refers to matters and conditions which we do not know exist here (e.g. Art. VI ‘private manors, institutions of mercy’; Art XXVI “visitors to shut-ins or other Almoners”; Art. LI, which talks about the relationship of Reformed Churches of Europeans in the Dutch East Indies with the Churches in this country).

The Synod decides

to appoint three deputies with the task of translating the present Order of the Church as far as possible and sending the result of their work to the next Synod, with a copy of their report to the Churches, at least six months before the next Synod.”

**ARTICLE 171: Training.**

The Advisory Committee’s proposals on training will be considered again by the Committee.

**ARTICLE 172: Close.**

Psalm 138:1 and 4 is sung, after which the meeting is closed with thanksgiving by Br J. VanderLinde.

**SESSION OF MONDAY, NOVEMBER 22, 1965**

**ARTICLE 173: Opening.**

After the chairman has Hymn 10 sung and reads 2 Peter 1 he leads in prayer.

**ARTICLE 174: Rollcall.**

Rollcall is held.

**ARTICLE 175: Acts**

The Acts are read from Articles 167 to 175. They are adopted.



### **ARTICLE 176: Letter D.P. Dijkhuis.**

A letter was received from br. D.P. Dijkhuis of Grand Rapids. This letter is sent to Advisory Committee II for its advice.

### **ARTICLE 177: Christian Reformed Church.**

Advisory Committee III proposes a different version of the proposals on Agenda item 8 M, Contact Christian Reformed Church. The Synod adopts them in the following form:

"A. The Synod took note:

1. Of the letter of the Contact Committee of the Christian Reformed Church, dated March 13, 1965, in which it informs us that the Synod of the Christian Reformed Church 1964 appointed a special contact committee "to communicate with the Canadian Reformed Churches with a view to establish a closer relationship with these churches", and requests that a committee be appointed to discuss the question, how a closer relationship can be established between their and our Churches.
2. Of the proposal of the Church of Edmonton, to appoint, in accordance with the request of the Synod of the Christian Reformed Church, a committee with specific instructions on the matters which it considers need to be discussed.
3. Of the proposal of the Regional Synod of the Churches in Ontario 1965, to appoint deputies with the mandate to take up contact on with the "Special Contact Committee", appointed by the Synod 1964 of the Christian Reformed Church, to discuss with this Committee those matters which in the past have stood in the way of unity according to the Word of the Lord; and of what presently stands in the way of unification, with the aim of removing the obstacles to scriptural unity.
4. Of the letter of the Church at Barrhead, September 20, 1965, in which it asks the Synod to decide in accordance with the proposal of the Church of Edmonton.

B. The Synod considers:

1. It is the Son of God, who, by his Spirit and Word, gathers, defends, and preserves a church in the unity of faith. It is the calling of all believers to gather with Christ, by maintaining together the unity of the Church in the unity of faith and the knowledge of the Son of God in the concrete situation of today.
2. As far as the Christian Reformed Church and our Churches are concerned, this situation is shaped by, among other things, the following circumstances:
  - a. The Christian Reformed Church and our Churches have adopted the same confessional writings as Forms of Unity: the Belgic Confession, the Heidelberg Catechism, and the Canons of Dort.
  - b. The Christian Reformed Church has also accepted:  
The Decisions of Utrecht (1905/1908) and an official interpretation thereof (1962).  
The Three Points of Kalamazoo (1924) and an official interpretation thereof (1959 /1960).  
Where the doctrine of the Church is concerned, our Churches have not accepted any other declarations besides the Three Forms of Unity.
  - c. The Christian Reformed Church maintains correspondence with the synodically bound Reformed Churches in the Netherlands. Our Churches maintain correspondence with the liberated Reformed Churches in the Netherlands.
  - d. The Christian Reformed Church has adopted a new Church Order. Our Churches still have the Order of the Church of Dort/Utrecht (1619/1905).

C. The Synod decides:

To appoint four deputies with the mandate:

1. To examine with the contact committee of the Christian Reformed Church how their and our

Churches should enter into and maintain with each other on the foundation of the apostles of the Lamb the unity of the Church in the unity of faith and knowledge of the Son of God  
and

therefore, with the aforementioned committee, to examine the concrete situation, as shaped by the differences mentioned under B 2, in the light of the Three Forms of Unity.

2. To keep the Churches informed of what has transpired in the exercise of this (mandate) and to submit a report to the next General Synod.

**Press Release version ARTICLE 31: Christian Reformed Church**

*Committee III reports about the request of the Synod of the Christian Reformed Church that Synod appoint a Committee "which could meet with our Committee, to discuss together how closer relationship can be established between our Churches".*

*Synod considers*

1. *It is the Son of God Who by His Spirit and Word gathers, defends, and preserves for Himself a Church in the unity of faith. It is the duty of all believers to gather with Christ by maintaining together the unity of the Church in uniformity of faith and knowledge of the Son of God in the concrete present-day situation.*
2. *This situation, as far as the Christian Reformed Church and our Churches are concerned, is determined by, among other, the following conditions:*
  - a. *The Christian Reformed Church and our Churches have adopted the same confessional forms as Forms of Unity: the Heidelberg Catechism. the Belgic Confession, and the Canons of Dort;*
  - b. *besides, the Christian Reformed Church has adopted The Conclusions of Utrecht (1905/1908) and an official interpretation of them (1962); The three Points of Kalamazoo (1924) and an official interpretation of them (1959/1960). Our Churches have not adopted any other declarations concerning the doctrine of the Church beside the, Three. Forms of Unity.*
  - c. *The Christian Reformed Church maintains correspondence with the "synodical" Gereformeerde Kerken in the Netherlands. Our churches maintain correspondence, with the "liberated" Gereformeerde Kerken in the Netherlands.*
  - d. *The Christian Reformed Church has adopted a new Church Order: our Churches do still abide by the Church Order of Dort/Utrecht (1619 / 1905).*

*Synod decides to appoint four deputies with the mandate*

1. *to examine, together with the Contact Committee of the Christian Re- formed Church, how their and our Churches are to enter into and to maintain together the unity of the Church in the unity of faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God on the foundation of the apostles of the Lamb, and therefore to examine, together with the said Committee, the concrete situation, as it is also determined by the differences mentioned under B 2, by the light of the Three Forms of Unity.*
2. *to keep the Churches informed about the matters dealt with in their contact with the said Committee, and to submit a report to the next General Synod."*

**ARTIKEL 178: Appeal A. De Vries.**

With regard to the appeal referred to in 8 E 1 by br. A. de Vries of Hamilton, the Synod takes the following decision:

"The Synod has understood from your writing dated October 22, 1965, that you are complaining that the Acts General Synod 1958 do not indicate discussion of and a response to "The letter sent by us in the

ecclesiastical way to the broader assembly, Classis dated July 24, 1957, in which we requested your esteemed College, to open, by means of visitors, ways to reconciliation in the very serious condition of the Church of Hamilton.”

The Synod reviewed the agenda of the General Synod of Carman 1958 but could not find in this agenda a reference to an objection sent by you to this Synod.

The Synod concludes that your complaint about the lack of treatment and response is not justified, as you apparently did not submit anything to the Synod 1958.

The Synod observes that the whole matter, concerning the Church at Hamilton, was dealt with at the Synod of Carman 1958.

The Synod further notes that the Synod of Hamilton 1962 did reply to a letter sent by you to that Synod.

Finally, the Synod notes that the letter you have sent to it is almost verbatim the same letter you have sent to the Synod 1962.

On the basis of the above conclusions and observations, the Synod cannot help you further, but can only direct you to the Church and Church Council of Hamilton.’

### ***ARTICLE 179: Extra note A. De Vries.***

With regard to an extra note by Sr A. De Vries attached to the letter referred to in the previous article, the Synod takes the following decision:

“From the extra note attached to the letter you have received, dated October 21, 1957 from the Council of the Church of Hamilton, the Synod has understood that you complain about having received this letter after a six-month stay abroad.

The Synod may only deal with such complaints when they concern a ruling of a Regional Synod. That is not the case with the complaint you submitted to the General Synod. Therefore, the Synod cannot comment further on your writing.

If you cannot convince the Church Council of the correctness of your complaint, you need to take your complaint to classis.”

### ***ARTICLE 180: Subscription Form Professors***

The Synod then adopts a FORM OF SUBSCRIPTION FOR DOCENTS AT THE THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE OF THE CANADIAN REFORMED CHURCHES.<sup>12</sup>

“We, the undersigned, docents at the Theological College of the Canadian Reformed Churches, do hereby, sincerely, and in good conscience be fore the Lord, declare by this our subscription that we heartily believe and are persuaded that all the articles and points of doctrine, contained in the doctrinal standards of the Canadian Reformed Churches: the Belgic Confession, The Heidelberg Catechism, and ‘ the Canons of Dort, do fully agree with the Word of God.

We therefore diligently promise to ‘teach and faithfully to defend the aforesaid doctrine, without either directly or indirectly contradicting the same, by our public teaching or writing. We declare, moreover, that we not only reject all errors that militate against this doctrine, but that we are disposed to refute and contradict these and to exert ourselves in keeping the Church free from such errors. And if hereafter any difficulties or different sentiments respecting the aforesaid doctrine should arise in our minds, we promise that we will neither publicly nor privately propose, teach, or defend ‘the same, either by teaching or writing, until we have first revealed such sentiments to the Governors, that the same may be examined by them, being ready always cheerfully to submit to their judgment under the penalty in case of refusal to be, by that very fact, suspended from our office.

And further, if at any time the Governors, upon sufficient grounds of suspicion and to preserve the uniformity and purity of doctrine, may deem It proper to require of us a further explanation of our

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<sup>12</sup> Translator: The text that follows was inserted in English into the Dutch acts, and thus has been left unedited. The term “docent” would have been more accurately rendered “professor”.

sentiments respecting any particular article of the above mentioned doctrinal standards, we do hereby promise to be always willing and ready to comply with such requisition, under the penalty above mentioned, reserving for ourselves, how ever, the right of appeal in case we should believe ourselves aggrieved by the sentence of the Governors, and until a decision is made upon such an appeal, we will acquiesce in the determination and judgment already passed.”

**ARTICLE 181: Advisory Committee meetings.**

Advisory Committees meet until the chairman reopens the meeting at 4:25 p.m.

**ARTICLE 182: Rollcall.**

Rollcall is held. The brothers are all present.

**ARTICLE 183: Letter Winnipeg**

Advisory Committee IV now proposes a final draft of its proposals in response to the letter from “The Canadian Reformed Church of Winnipeg,” address 729 Hoskin Ave., Winnipeg, MB.

The committee’s proposals are adopted as follows:

“The Synod has taken note of a letter dated November 13, 1965 from “the church council of the Canadian Reformed Church of Winnipeg”, address 729 Hoskin Ave., Winnipeg, Man.

Since the appellants did not, in their view, receive a satisfactory response from the Classis and Regional Synod, to which they turned with their appeals, they now turn to the General Synod with the request to judge, in an unbiased and serious manner, their appeal against the suspension of Rev. de Haan.

They express their hope that members may come to the conclusion with them that this suspension should be rejected. It is apparent from the oral explanation by Rev. de Haan of this letter, given at this Synod, that the appellants were forced, by lack of time, to refrain from extensively renouncing and contesting the judgments of the Regional Synod, but confined themselves to the suspension of Rev de Haan by the Church Council of Winnipeg.

The suspension decision taken by the Church Council dated 8/9 April 1965 was:

“The Church Council of the Canadian Reformed Church in Winnipeg has decided to ratify the decision of the Classis that the ministers will subscribe to the Three Forms of Unity at a Classis, in accordance with the Form referred to by the November Classis 1952 and expressly adopted by the March Classis 1963.

It has asked Rev. de Haan to express openly and heartily that he declares his willingness to subscribe before the church council and therein before the congregation and the sister churches, the form added in CO article 53, translated and adopted by the March-classis 1963.

Rev. de Haan then declared that he could not give the declaration of willingness requested by the church council for the sake of God and His Christ, for the sake of the Gospel and for the sake of the confession of the churches and the unity of faith.

Rev. de Haan was asked by the council to explain himself further, which he refused.

The council **observes** that Rev. De Haan states that he is unable to give the declaration of willingness requested by the Council, namely that he cannot sign the form of subscription placed before him as per CO article 53.

The church council **decides**:

- a. given its responsibility as overseers of the Church of Christ at Winnipeg, that Rev. de Haan may not and cannot continue under these circumstances in his ministry in the midst of the church;
  - b. on the basis of the aforementioned, and after hearing the judgment of the church council at Carman, MB, as per CO article 53, to suspend Rev. deHaan from his office as Minister of the Word to art. 53 until such time as he has explained himself completely.”
- I. The first objection of the appellants is that the Church Council added to the ratification of the decision

of the Classis, “that the ministers will subscribe to the Three Forms of Unity at a Classis, in accordance with the Form referred to by the November Classis 1952 and expressly adopted by the March Classis 1963”, the request to Rev. de Haan “to express openly and heartily that he declares his willingness to subscribe before the church council and therein before the congregation and the sister churches, the form added in CO article 53, translated and adopted by the March-classis 1963”.

According to Appellants, the Church Council should not have done this because:

1. The classical decision demanded signing at a classis, **the consistory** asked signing at the **consistory**.
2. In the classical decision and considerations was the, point of question the position of a minister in his relationship to the **Sisterchurches** in general.

On April 6. 1965 the position of the minister in the **Church of Winnipeg** was at stake.<sup>13</sup>

The Synod considers the following:

- A. Ratification of the relevant classis decision meant that the Council acknowledged the right of the Classis to request the ministers within the classis to sign the form adopted by classis for this purpose at a classis.
  - B. It would have sufficed for the Council of the Church to inform the next Classis that it had ratified the classis decision in question, leaving it to the Classis to settle the matter of subscribing.
  - C. Knowing the conscientious objections of its minister had to subscribe **at Classis**, and in order to meet the objections of Rev. de Haan, the church council asked whether he would be willing to subscribe the form for subscription adopted by the Classis.
  - D. It is **morally** not proper, **after the fact**, to argue that Church Council’s request for a subscription – granted by the Church Council as a way to meet the conscientious objections of its minister regarding subscribing at Classis – is a reason for Rev. de Haan’s refusal to subscribe the form adopted by the Classis and to reject the suspension that followed.
  - E. It is also **legally** not proper to do so. Rev. de Haan did not cite as a reason for his refusal to sign that the Church Council asked him to do so at the Church Council, or that with the willingness to do so<sup>14</sup> his position in the Church of Winnipeg rather than his position in the midst of the sister churches would be in question, but he refused, according to his own words, “for the sake of God and His Christ, for the sake of the Gospel, and for the sake of the confession of the Churches and the unity of faith.”
  - F. The Church Council did not present its **own** form, but the form adopted by Classis, to Rev. de Haan for signing, and requested it be subscribed before the church council and therein before the congregation and the sister churches. The rights of the sister churches continued to be recognized, and thus the position of Rev. de Haan as minister in the midst of the sister churches remained in question.
  - G. The position of Rev. de Haan as minister of the **Church of Winnipeg** was not jeopardized by the request for a declaration of willingness to sign the form adopted by the Classis at the Church Council, but by the refusal of Rev. de Haan to give this declaration of willingness.
- On the ground of these considerations, the Synod rejects the first objection of the appellants.
- II. The second objection of the appellants is that the signing of the form adopted by the Classis saw the church council, which in the suspension decision speaks of this form as “the form added to CO article 53,” make this a matter of CO article 53, whereas the Classis, on the other hand, never based the

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<sup>13</sup> Translator: These points 1 & 2 are inserted in English into the Dutch text, and thus have not been edited. For the sake of correctness, it should be noted that “consistory” should be understood, given the Church Order, to imply “consistory with the deacons”, for which these days the term “council” is commonly used.

<sup>14</sup> Translator: the vagueness here reflects the Dutch text. To make sense of the text, “willingness” should be understood to mean “willingness to refuse to subscribe”.

requirement for subscription on CO article 53 but on the rights of sister churches.

The Synod considers the following:

- A. In the decision to suspend, the Church Council wrongly referred to the Dort Form as “the form, added in CO article 53”, since CO article 53 does not reference a form.
- B. The Church Council, however, was correct in treating subscribing as a matter of CO article 53. For this article speaks of the power of the Church Council or the Classis, to suspend *de facto* ministers from their ministry, when they refuse to subscribe to the Three Forms of Unity. This authority implies, pursuant to CO article 53, the right of the Church Council and of the Classis to draft, adopt, and present to the ministers its own form of subscription.
- C. The rights of the Churches, of which the Classis spoke, is therefore no different from the rights laid down in CO article 53 for the preservation of the unity of faith within the church federation.

On the ground of the foregoing considerations, the Synod rejects the second objection of the appellants.

- III. The third objection of the appellants is that the use made of form of subscription, that is, by connecting suspension as per CO article 53 to the refusal to subscribe, this form of subscription “was made of at least equal value with the Word of God.” Appellants argue, that in the event of a suspension of a pastor “it must be clear that God does or can no longer speak through him.”<sup>15</sup>

The Synod considers the following:

- A. It was not **the church council** that connected suspension to the refusal to sign the form adopted by the classis, but **CO article 53** links the suspension of a minister to his refusal to sign.
- B. The suspension of ministers who refuse to subscribe to the Three Forms of Unity, does not make the form for subscription of at least equal value to the Word of God, but underscores the absolute authority which the Word of God, to which the Form binds the ministers, ought to have in the midst of the Churches.
- C. Appellants have neither proved nor attempted to prove that the form for subscription adopted by the Classis promotes a subscription different from subscription to the Three Forms of Unity, and therein to the Word of God.
- D. The demand of CO article 53 that a minister, who refuses to sign the Three Forms of Unity, be suspended does not imply that God no longer speaks or can speak through him; it means that the Churches, who are bound to the Word of the Lord, may no longer receive as an envoy of the Lord a minister who, in the refusal to sign, refuses this binding.

On the ground of these considerations, the Synod rejects the third objection of the appellants.

- IV. The fourth objection of the appellants is that the battle in Winnipeg was fought over signing the form adopted by the Classis, while the issue is actually objections to the preaching of Rev. de Haan, which existed with members of the Church Council.

The Synod considers the following:

- A. The question of signing **at Classis** has not been raised by or in the Church Council of Winnipeg, but arose at Classis. It was not raised at Classis because of objections to the preaching of Rev. de Haan or any other preacher, but because of the question of a newly arrived minister who asked whether he ought to sign a subscription form at Classis.
- B. The signing of the form **at the Church Council** was granted to Rev. de Haan to meet his conscientious objections regarding doing so at Classis.
- C. This willingness of the Church Council to meet objections of Rev. de Haan clearly shows that, even though there were objections to his preaching, the Church Council was by no means concerned with getting rid of its minister, but with maintaining the unity of faith with the sister

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<sup>15</sup> Translator: in the original Dutch acts the two quotes in this paragraph are in English and have been left unedited.

churches.

On the ground of the foregoing considerations, the Synod rejects the fourth objection of the appellants.

The Synod declares that it cannot join the appellants in the conclusion that the suspension of Rev. de Haan should be rejected, since this suspension was applied as per CO article 53 in order to preserve the unity of faith within the church federation.”

Br L. Toet abstains from voting as per CO article 33.

The Synod also takes note of an announcement by Rev. L. Selles that some brothers will endeavour to send an English translation of this statement as an addition to the authentic Dutch Text.

**Press Release version ARTICLE 33: Letter Winnipeg.**

*Re: Letter of Appeal from the “Canadian Reformed Church of Winnipeg, Man.”, address 729 Hoskin Avenue, Winnipeg 15, Man., the following decision is made.*

*“Synod has taken note of the communication dated November 13, 1965 from “The Consistory of the Canadian Reformed Church of Winnipeg, Man.”, address 729 Hoskin Avenue, Winnipeg, Man.*

*Inasmuch as complainants, in their opinion, did not receive a satisfactory reply from Classis and Particular Synod to their appeals, they now petition Synod to give an unbiased and sincere appraisal of their objections against the suspension of Rev. De Haan.*

*Complainants express their hope that the delegates may share their conclusions to hold the suspension of Rev. De Haan to be unjustified. Complainants were unable, by lack of time, to deal extensively with the decisions of the Particular Synod and they now appeal the suspension of Rev. De Haan by the Consistory of Winnipeg only.*

*The Consistory decided as follows:*

*“De Kerkeraad van de Canadian Reformed Church te Winnipeg heert besloten het besluit der Classis, dat de predikanten op een Classis de Drie Formulieren van Enigheid zullen ondertekenen, overeenkomstig het door de novemberclassis 1952 bedoelde en door de maartclassis 1963 uitdrukkelijk Vastgestelde formulier, te ratificeren. Hij heeft ds De Haan verzocht open en hartelijk uit te spreken, dat hij zich bereid verklaart ten overstaan van de Kerkeraad en daarin ten overstaan van de gemeente en de zusterkerken. het formulier, toegevoegd in artikel 53 K.O. en door de maartclassis 1963 vertaald en vastgesteld, te ondertekenen.*

*Ds De Haan heeft hierop verklaard de door de Kerkeraad gevraagde bereidverklaring niet te kunnen geven terwille van God en Zijn Christus, terwille van het Evangelie en ‘terwille van de belijdenis der kerken en de enigheid des geloofs. Aan ds. De Haan is door de kerkeraad verzocht zich nader te verklaren wat door hem geweigerd werd.*

*De kerkeraad constateert dat ds. De Haan zegt de door de kerkeraad gevraagde bereidverklaring niet te kunnen geven, namelijk niet te kunnen tekenen het ondertekeningsformulier naar artikel 53 K.O. door de kerkeraad hem voorgelegd.*

*De kerkeraad besluit:*

- a. gezien zijn verantwoordelijkheid als opzieners van de kerk van Christus te Winnipeg, dat ds. De Haan onder deze omstandigheden zijn dienst in het midden der gemeente niet verder kan en mag verrichten;*
- b. op grond van het bovenstaande en na gehoord te hebben het oordeel van de kerkeraad te Carman, Man., ds. De Haan naar artikel 53 K.O. te schorsen in zijn ambt als Dienaar des Woords, tot ter tijd toe dat hij zich geheellijk verklaard zal hebben.”<sup>16</sup>*

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<sup>16</sup> Translator: The English Press Release retained the Dutch original. As it has been translated in the Acts, it has been left in the Dutch here.

- I. *The first objection of complainants is that the consistory, as part of its decision to ratify the Classical decision “that the ministers at Classis subscribe to the Three Forms of Unity, according to the form, indicated by the Classis held in November 1952 and adopted by the Classis held in March 1963” made mandatory the request that Rev. De Haan “sincerely declare his complaisance to subscribe to the form. added in article 53 C.O., translated and adopted by the Classis held March 1963, before the consistory and as such before the congregation and the sisterchurches”.*

*Complainants protest this action of the consistory on these grounds:*

- 1. The classical decision and considerations demanded subscription at **Classis**; the consistory, however, asked subscription at the **consistory**;*
- 2. In the classical decision and consideration was the point in question the position of a minister in his relationship to the **sisterchurches** in general. On April 6, 1965 the position of the minister in the **church of Winnipeg** was at stake.*

*Synod considers the following:*

- A. The recognition of the, right of the sisterchurches that the ministers of the Classical resort at Classis subscribe to the Classical subscription form is a direct result of the ratification of the Classical decision concerned by the consistory.*
- B. It would have been quite adequate if ‘the consistory had registered its ratification of the Classical decision at the next Classis, leaving it to that Classis to settle the issue of the subscription.*
- C. The consistory, however, knowing the conscientious objections of its minister to sign at Classis and trying to accommodate him, requested his complaisance to subscribe to the Classical form at the consistory.*
- D. It is **unethical** to use this concession from the part of the consistory as a belated argument for Rev. De Haan’s refusal to subscribe to the Classical subscription form and for the rejection of his suspension.*
- E. It is also **unjustified** to do so. Rev. De Haan has, at no occasion, given any evidence that he refused subscription on the ground that the consistory requested **him** to do so at the consistory. Rev. De Haan has, at no occasion, stated that by his complaisance to sign at the consistory his position as minister of Winnipeg instead of his position as minister in the midst of the sisterchurches would be at stake. Rev. De Haan refused to sign “for the sake of God and His Christ, for the sake of the Gospel and for the sake of the Confession of the churches and the unity of faith.”*
- F. The consistory did not request Rev. De Haan to subscribe to its own private subscription form, but to the form adopted by Classis: moreover it requested Rev. De Haan to subscribe to that form before the consistory and as such before the congregation and the sisterchurches. The issue at stake was not Rev. De Haan’s position as minister of the church of Winnipeg, but the right of the sisterchurches and Rev. De Haan’s position in the midst of the sisterchurches.*
- G. Rev. De Haan’s position as minister of Winnipeg was not at stake when the consistory requested him to comply with their wishes to subscribe to the Classical subscription form at a meeting of the consistory. **Rev.** De Haan’s failure to comply with the request of the consistory jeopardized his position as minister of the church of Winnipeg.*

*On the ground of the above mentioned considerations Synod rejects the first complaint of appellants.*

- II. *The second complaint is that the consistory dealt with the subscription of the Classical subscription form as a matter ad Article 53 C.O. - the consistory refers to this subscription form as “the form added in Article E3 C.O.” - whereas Classis never founded its demand for*



*subscription on Article 53 C.O. but on the right of the sisterchurches.*

*Synod considers the, following:*

- A. The consistory erroneously refers to the form as “the form added in Article 53 C.O.”. This Article does not mention any subscription form specifically.*
- B. The consistory, however, rightly dealt with the subscription as a matter of article 53 C.O. This article deals with the authority of the consistory or the Classis to suspend de facto a minister who refuses to subscribe to the Three Forms of Unity. It is this article which provides the consistory and the Classis with the right to draw up their own subscription forms, to adopt the same and to request the ministers to subscribe to them.*
- C. The right of Classis. referred to in the Classical decision and considerations is the right, embodied in Article 53 C.O., and given for the sustenance of the unity of faith within the confederacy of churches (“kerkverband”).*

*On the ground of the above-mentioned considerations Synod rejects the, second complaint of appellants.*

- III. The third complaint is that the subscription form was “at least made of equal value with the Word of God” since suspension was made mandatory in case of refusal to sign this form. Appellants assert that when a minister is suspended “it must be clear that God does not and cannot speak any longer ‘through him’”.*

*Synod considers the following:*

- A. It was not the **consistory** which as part of the refusal to sign made suspension mandatory, but it is **Article 53 C.O.** which makes the suspension of a minister mandatory in case he refuses to subscribe to the Three Forms of Unity.*
- B. The fact that Article 53 C.O. refers to a de facto suspension of a minister who refuses to subscribe to the Three Forms of Unity does not give this form a status equivalent to the Word of God; the de facto suspension of a minister underlines the absolute authority of the Word of God. By the subscription form ministers are bound to the Word of God.*
- C. Complainants have not proved nor endeavoured to prove that the Classical subscription form requires a binding different in nature from the binding to the Three Forms of Unity and as such to the Word of God.*
- D. It does not consequently follow ‘that God does no longer speak through a minister suspended ad Article 53 C.O. Suspension ad Article 53 C.O. does, however, mean that the churches which are bound by the Word of God no longer may receive such a minister who refuses to be bound by the Three Forms of Unity and as such by the Word of God, as an ambassador of God.*

*On the ground of the above mentioned considerations Synod rejects the third complaint of appellants.*

- IV. The fourth complaint of appellants is that the issue at stake was not the subscription to the Classical form, but the objections against the preaching of Rev. De Haan. objections which existed in the bosom of the consistory.*

*Synod considers the following:*

- A. The matter of subscription **at Classis** is not brought up by or in the consistory of Winnipeg, but it originated at Classis. It was not brought up at Classis because of objections against the preaching of Rev. De Haan or any other minister; it was brought up by an incoming minister who wondered whether he was not supposed to sign a Classical subscription form.*
- B. Subscription **at the consistory** was a concession to Rev. De Haan from the part of the consistory; this concession was made in order to accommodate his conscientious objections against subscription at Classis.*

C. *This concession from the part of the consistory to Rev. De Haan presents adequate proof that, though there might have been objections against his preaching the consistory never meant to do away with its minister, but tried to maintain the unity of faith with the sisterchurches.*

*On the ground of the above mentioned considerations Synod rejects this fourth complaint of appellants.*

*Synod decides it does not share the conclusion of appellants to hold the suspension of Rev. De Haan to be unjustified, since Rev. De Haan was suspended according to CO Article 53 by a consistory intent to sustain the unity of faith with the sisterchurches."*

#### **ARTICLE 184: Reopening.**

After the meal, the session reopens at 7:30 p.m. Hymn 14:1 and 2 are sung. This is followed by rollcall.

#### **ARTICLE 185: Acts**

The Acta are read and adopted from Articles 175 to 184.

#### **ARTICLE 186: Letter Cl.K. Oosterveld.**

Advisory Committee IV presents revised proposals for replying to the letter from br. Cl.K. Oosterveld of Winnipeg, Agenda item 8 E 2.

After discussion, the proposals are referred to the committee for further consideration.

#### **ARTICLE 187: Letter E. ter Hors.**

There are newly formulated proposals from the same Advisory Committee to reply to an appeal submitted by Br. E. Ter Mors of Winnipeg.

The Synod adopts them as follows:

"The Synod has taken note of the letter of Br E. Ter Mors, Winnipeg, MB, dated October 30, 1965, in which he announces that he is addressing this meeting because of the seriousness of the possible impact resulting from decisions and rulings of Classis Alberta/Manitoba and Regional Synod of the West respectively.

The Synod observes that, despite rulings and decisions of Classis Alberta/Manitoba and Regional Synod of the West, Br. Ter Mors maintains his objections, again expressed in many and various ways in his letter to the Synod, that Classis Alberta/Manitoba has gone beyond its jurisdiction by asking ministers already bound to a local Church to sign the subscription form adopted by the Classis, since

- 1) "signing is a matter for the congregation and not for the Classis" and "that the Classis at most can advise a local church to request its minister to sign this form".
- 2) "A minister comes to Classis because a church has delegated him and this ought to be a sufficient guarantee as regards purity in doctrine of the concerned minister", which was also recognized through the National Synod of Homewood, 1954, which decided not to seek from the delegates agreement to the Three Forms of Unity;
- 3) "Everything done is what one reasonably believes in the congregation of the Lord with respect to a Minister of the Word, when a preacher has answered in the affirmative when he was ordained into his ministry to specific well written Reformed questions, and moreover has signed a form in which he declares his agreement with the Reformed confession."

On the basis of this and other matters, the major complaint of Br Ter Mors is that the Classis Alberta/Manitoba of the Canadian Reformed Churches has abandoned the foundation it should have and has become contract-churches instead of confession-churches<sup>17</sup> to be; that in their statements these

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<sup>17</sup> Translator: The expression "confession-churches" sounds odd in English but is precise, as the Dutch expression is to be distinguished from "confessional churches" and "confessing churches".

churches are moving toward a sectarian organization; and that human words are presented as the Word of the Lord.

The Synod considers:

- re 1) that Br. Ter Mors incorrectly states that signing the Three Forms by ministers is only a matter for the congregation and not for the Classis, since CO article 53 mentions Classis alongside the Church Council as a body which has the authority to suspend in his service a minister who refuses to sign the Three Forms of Unity. This clearly shows that the subscribing the Three Forms is also a matter for the Classis;
- re 2) that Br. Ter Mors mistakenly compares what the National Synod of Homewood 1954 decided with regard to the assent of the delegates to the Three Forms and the signing of the Three Forms at a Classis by ministers within the Classis. The Regional Synod of the West rightly declared in its response to the first conclusion of br. Ter Mors in his objection to the Synod, that the subscribing at Classis is not “about a re-acceptance of the confessional scriptures at each meeting, but about a ‘one-off’ act when they begin their ministry in a Church within the classis.”
- re 3) that Br Ter Mors is incorrect in stating that C.O. article 53 has been complied with by signing the Three Forms at the Church Council, since C.O. Article 53 implies the right of the Classis to request the signing of the Three Forms.

On the ground of the foregoing, the Synod rejects

1. the appeal of Br. Ter Mors, that the Classis Alberta/Manitoba went beyond its jurisdiction by asking ministers already bound to a local Church to sign the subscription form adopted by the Classis;
2. The appeal of Br. Ter Mors, that the Classis Alberta/Manitoba has left the foundation which it should have, and are contract-churches instead of confession-churches; that these churches themselves move in the direction of a sectarian organization in their statements; and that human words are presented as the Word of the Lord, in view of the fact that requesting subscription to the Three Forms at Classis of Ministers of the Word is serving a right of the Lord with a view to preserving the unity of faith in the church federation.”

Br L. Toet abstains from voting as per C.O. article 33.

**Press Release version ARTICLE 34: Letter E. Ter Mors**

*Re: Letter of appeal from br E. Ter Mors, Winnipeg, Man., d.d. October 30th, 1965.*

*The following decision is made:*

*“Synod has taken cognizance of a letter from br E. Ter Mors, Winni- peg, Man. d.d. October 30th, 1965, in which he informs Synod that he approaches it because of the seriousness of the possible effect, resulting from the decisions and judgments respectively of Classis Alberta/Manitoba and the Particular Synod of the West.*

*Synod finds that in spite of the judgments and decisions of Classis Alberta/Manitoba and of the Particular Synod of the West, br Ter Mors persists in his objections, now again brought to the fore in many and various ways in his letter to this Synod, that Classis Alberta/Manitoba has exceeded its authority by requiring from ministers who already are attached to a local church, to sign the form of subscription adopted by Classis, since*

- 1. this signing is a matter pertaining to the congregation and not to Classis and that Classis at the most could advise the local church to ask her minister to sign this form;*
- 2. a minister comes to the Classis because a church has delegated him, and this must be considered to be sufficient guarantee of the purity in doctrine of ‘that minister concerned, which also has been recognized by the National Synod of Homewood 1954, which decided not to demand from the delegates to express their agreement with the Three, Forms of Unity;*
- 3. everything is done what reasonably can and may be done to a minister of the Word in*

*the congregation of the Lord when a minister, at his ordination has answered in the affirmative to certain well-defined, reformed questions, and in addition to this, also has signed a form in which he expresses his agreement with the Reformed confession.*

*On the ground of all this the big complaint of br Ter Mors is that Classis Alberta/Manitoba of the Canadian Reformed Churches has forsaken the foundation it must have, and have become contract-churches instead of being confession-churches; that in their judgments these churches are moving towards becoming a sectarian organization; and that they introduce the word of men as the Word of the Lord.*

*Synod considers*

- ad 1. That Br. Ter Mors wrongly states that the signing of the Three Forms of Unity by ministers is only a matter of the local church and not of Classis, since in Article 53 C.O. Classis is mentioned beside the consistory as a body which has the authority to suspend a minister who refuses 'to sign the Three Forms of Unity; from which it appears that the signing of the Three Forms is also a matter of Classis;*
- ad 2. That Br. Ter Mors wrongly makes a comparison between the decision of the National Synod of Homewood 1954 in the matter of express agreement of the delegates with the Three Forms and the signing of the Three Forms at Classis by ministers of the classical district. The Regional Synod of the West rightly stated, in reply to the first conclusion of br Ter Mors in his letter of appeal to the Synod that with the signing at Classis the point is not "that at each Classis anew agreement with the confessional forms is expressed, but that it is an act to be done only once, to be done by ministers when they commence their service in a church in the classical district;*
- ad 3. That br Ter Mors wrongly states that with the signing of the Three Forms of Unity in the Consistory Article 53 C.O. has been complied with, since Article 53 C.O. includes the right of Classis itself to demand the signing or the Three Forms.*

*On the ground of the above Synod rejects*

- 1. the objection of br Ter Mors that Classis Alberta/Manitoba exceeded its authority by requiring of ministers who are already attached to a local church that they shall sign the form adopted by Classis;*
- 2. the complaint of br Ter Mors that Classis Alberta/Manitoba has forsaken the foundation it must have, and have become contract-churches instead of being confession-churches; that in their judgments these churches are moving towards becoming a sectarian organization; and that they introduce the word of men as the Word of the Lord since in the requirement that ministers of the Word shall sign the Three Forms of Unity at a Classis a right of the Lord is administered with respect to the maintenance of the unity of faith within the bond of churches."*

#### **ARTICLE 188: Close.**

After some announcements have been made about the matters which will be dealt with tomorrow morning, and Psalm 87 has been sung, the meeting is closed with thanksgiving prayer by Br. E.C. Baartman.

### **SESSION OF TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 23, 1965**

#### **ARTICLE 189: Opening.**

The chairman opens the session. He has Psalm 145:1 and 5 sung, then reads 1 John 4 and leads in prayer.

#### **ARTICLE 190: Rollcall.**

Rollcall is held.

## **ARTICLE 191: Acts.**

The Acts are read from Articles 184 to 191. They are adopted.

## **ARTICLE 192: Rhymed Psalter.**

Advisory committee III presents a new draft of the proposals on the rhymed Psalter, Agenda item 8 J 1, 2, 3. They are adopted by the Synod as follows:

“The General Synod has taken note of

1. the report of deputies for an English Calvinist psalter, appointed by the Synod of Hamilton, 1962;
2. the proposal of the Regional Synod 1965, “that deputies for a Calvinistic Psalter” be authorized to include in the “Book of Praise” hymns which are faithful to the Scriptures, preferably a rhymed version of specific sections of Holy Writ”;<sup>18</sup>
3. the letter of the Church in Toronto, dated October 4, 1965, expressing the desire “that we should as much as possible try to get a Psalter, that speaks as much the language of our neighbours as is possible without losing our Reformed character”.<sup>19</sup>

The Synod decides

1. To express great thanks and appreciation to the deputies for the Rhymed Psalter for the many and comprehensive labors they have done in the service of the churches.
2. To appoint new deputies for the Rhymed Psalter, on the understanding that their number is increased to six.
3. To instruct these deputies:  
To revise the *Book of Praise* - where necessary - and to further develop it so that a complete collection can be offered to the churches in the foreseeable future.  
In this work, deputies will
  - a. pay particular attention to scriptural fidelity and understandability of the rhymed version, singability and church musical content of melodies;
  - b. will try to keep the Psalms now included in the Book of Praise, rhymed by Mr. D. Westra, provided that Mr. D. Westra is willing and able to make improvements to it as deemed necessary by deputies and no significantly better rhymed versions become available before the next edition of the *Book of Praise*;
  - c. For the development of the Psalm collection, not to limit oneself to Psalms rhymed by Mr. Westra, but make all use of other possible “sources” so that a complete Psalm collection may be ready in the foreseeable future;
  - d. Be authorized to include in the *Book of Praise*, in addition to Psalms, hymns which are faithful to Scripture, preferably rhymed versions of appropriate Scriptures, especially of poetic content;
  - e. Be authorized to attempt to have certain confessional passages, rhymed or not, set to melody and included in the Book of Praise;
  - f. With regard to the melodies of Psalms, are not limited themselves to the “Genevan tunes”, but can also use other ways of singing, which are in accordance with the purpose of congregational singing in the worship service: the praise of the Lord;
  - g. By way of exception, two rhymes of the same Psalm (one set on a Genevan, one set on a different melody) may be included in the Psalm collection, if not including one of these would be a clear loss, especially as far as the melody is concerned;
  - h. Be authorized, if it proves impossible in the near future to offer a complete Psalm collection

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<sup>18</sup> Translator: In the original Dutch acts, the quote is in English, and so has been included here unedited.

<sup>19</sup> Translator: In the original Dutch acts, the quote is in English, and so has been included here unedited.

- to the Churches, to issue a "Supplement" in order to fill the gap between the present *Book of Praise* and the complete Psalm collection;
- i. Where possible, consult with "Deputies on the Church Book in the English Language", appointed by the Synod of The Free Reformed Churches in Australia;
  4. To authorize deputies to use the assistance of a Publication Committee to take care of the technical, administrative and financial work associated with the publication of the *Book of Praise*; this committee operates under the responsibility of deputies.
  5. To instruct deputies to submit a financial report to the next General Synod in good time, also for the years 1962-1965.
  6. To request the Church at Bampton, Ont., to review the financial records of the deputies for a Calvinist Psalter and to report on this to the next General Synod.
  7. To instruct deputies to send a report of their work to the next General Synod and to forward a copy of this report to the Churches in good time for their information.
  8. To authorize deputies, if they need to have financial resources for the progress of their work, to call directly on the Churches.
  9. Authorize deputies to conclude the necessary contracts.
  10. To urge the Churches to forward to deputies any corrections, improvements, and the like deemed necessary in the *Book of Praise* and the "supplement" that might be published.

**Press Release version ARTICLE 35: Book of Praise Deputies.**

*Re: Calvinistic Psalter.*

*Synod has taken cognizance of*

1. *the report of the deputies for an English Calvinistic Psalter, appointed by the Synod of Hamilton 1962;*
2. *the overture of the Regional Synod 1965 "that deputies for a "Calvinistic Psalter" be authorized to include in the "Book of Praise" hymns which are faithful to 'the Scriptures, preferably a rhymed version of specific sections of Holy Writ";*
3. *the letter of the church at Toronto, d.d. October 4, 1965, in which the desire is expressed "that we should as much as possible try to get a Psalter that speaks as, much the language of our neighbours as is possible without losing our Reformed character".*

*Synod decides*

1. *to express its sincere gratitude and appreciation to the deputies for a Calvinistic Psalter for the extensive and comprehensive work done by them for the churches;*
2. *to appoint new deputies for a Calvinistic Psalter, on the understanding that their number be increased to six;*
3. *to give to these deputies the following mandate:*  
*to review the "Book of Praise" where necessary, and to extend it, that within a measurable space of time a complete collection can be presented to the churches.*

*In this work deputies shall*

- a. *pay special attention to the faithfulness to the Scriptures and intelligibility of the rhymed versions; also that the melodies are suitable for singing and of good quality as church-music;*
- b. *try to keep the Psalms, rhymed by Mr. D. Westra, in the "Book of Praise", on the understanding that Mr. D. Westra is willing and able to make improvements deemed necessary by the deputies, and provided that in the meantime no considerably better rhymed versions have become available before the next publication of the "Book of Praise";*
- c. *for the extension of the Psalter not confine themselves to Psalms rhymed by Mr. D. Westra, but make all possible use of eventual other "sources", that within a*

- measurable space of time a complete, Psalter become available;*
- d. *be authorized to include in the "Book of Praise" beside the Psalms also hymns that are scriptural, preferably rhymings of parts of Scripture, especially of poetic character, which are considered suitable;*
  - e. *be authorized to try to have certain parts of the confession, either rhymed or not rhymed, set to music and to include them in the "Book of Praise";*
  - f. *as to the melodies of the Psalms not be restricted to the "genevan tunes", but be authorized to use other melodies which are in harmony with this purpose of congregational singing in the church services: the praise of the Lord;*
  - g. *be authorized to publish, by way of exception, two different rhymings of 'the same Psalm (one on a genevan tune, one on a different tune) in the Psalter, in cases when omission of one of these would clearly mean a loss, especially with regard to the melody;*
  - h. *be authorized, if it appears impossible to submit to the churches a complete Psalter in the near future, to publish a "supplement", to fill the gap between the present "Book of Praise" and a complete Psalter;*
  - i. *as much as possible consult with "Deputies for a Church-Book in the English language", appointed by the Synod of the Free Reformed Churches in Australia;*
4. *to authorize deputies to avail themselves of the help of a "Publication Committee" for the technical, administrative, and financial activities, connected with the publication of the "Book of Praise", which committee shall work under the authority of deputies;*
  5. *to instruct deputies to submit to the next General Synod a financial report in time, which shall also cover the years 1962-1965.*
  6. *to request the church at Brampton, Ont. to audit the financial records of the Deputies for An English Calvinistic Psalter, and to report to the next General Synod;*
  7. *to instruct deputies to submit to the next General Synod a report about their activities, and to send a copy of it betimes to the churches for their information;*
  8. *to authorize deputies to call directly on the churches, if for the progress of their work 'they are to have money at their disposal;*
  9. *to authorize deputies to conclude the necessary contracts;*
  10. *to stimulate the churches to send to the deputies "whatever corrections, improvements, and such-like are deemed necessary in the "Book of Praise" and the eventual "Supplement", to be published."*

**ARTICLE 193: Letter K. Esselink.**

Advisory Committee IV submits to the Synod its amended proposal in response to the appeal submitted by Br. K. Esselink of Winnipeg.

After discussion, it is sent back to the committee for further consideration.

**ARTICLE 194: Reopening.**

At 4.10 p.m. the chairman reopens the meeting. Rollcall is held.

**ARTICLE 195: Appeal K. Esselink.**

Advisory committee IV again presents its proposals regarding the response to the appeal of Br. K. Esselink of Winnipeg, MB, in a slightly modified form. The following judgment is made:

"The General Synod

has taken note of the appeal dated October 31, 1965 written by Br. K. Esselink of Winnipeg, MB.

His objections are:<sup>20</sup>

- 1a. The suspension of Rev. de Haan “pursuant to CO article 53” when “Rev. de Haan had complied with CO article 53, when he was ordained as minister of Winnipeg, among others.”
- 1b. “Whether Rev. de Haan should have the right to refuse has not been investigated by any assembly, neither church council, nor classis, nor regional synod.”
- 1c. “Being a minister in our churches depends on his signature under the Dort Form, and only there.”
- 1d. “Rev. Van Popta and Rev. Mulder advised to ask Rev. de Haan to sign before the church council and then the church council can pass this on to the classis” is “acting pragmatically”<sup>21</sup>.
2. The fact that Rev. van Popta abstained when some delegates at Classis submitted the proposal “to reject CO article 53 as a ground for suspension, because Rev. de Haan had complied with it, namely in 1958 among others,” proves “that the church order was used as a crooked stick to get rid of Rev. de Haan.”
3. The ratification of the decision of Classis by the church council was necessary for the unjustified suspension of Rev. de Haan.
4. Suspension on the grounds of a refusal to subscribe by a minister who has served the churches for seven years is “utterly false, even unreformed, and contrary to God’s Word, confession and Church Order (BC article 29) “.
5. “With the liberation of 1944/45, it was properly Reformed not to hold decisions to be settled and binding, if they were not in accordance with God’s Word or the Three Forms of Unity.” “If you do that now, you’re suddenly unreformed and erring.”
- 6a. In the suspension of Rev. de Haan, “thoughts expressed during the church council meeting” about the preaching of Rev. de Haan played a role.
- 6b. “That in this matter the keys of the kingdom of heaven have been used with regards to Rev. de Haan and various members of the congregation. Are those people now outside the Kingdom of Heaven?”

The Synod observes:

The matters referred to in paragraphs 1, 5 and 6b were not presented by the appellant as an appeal to<sup>22</sup> the decisions of Regional Synod 1965, while the matters referred to in paragraphs 2 and 6a were submitted by him to Regional Synod 1965 in his appeal, but were not dealt with directly by it.

The Synod considers:

- ad 1a. Br Esselink may state that Rev. de Haan has complied with CO article 53 when he was ordained as pastor of Winnipeg, among others, and was therefore unlawfully suspended “pursuant to C.O. article 53”,  
but does not take into account that in CO article 53 the Classis, in addition to the church council, is mentioned as a body which has the power to suspend from ministry a minister who refuses to sign the Three Forms of Unity, which clearly shows that the signing of the Three Forms is not only a matter for the church council, but also a matter for the Classis.
- ad 1b. Br Esselink may state that no assembly has made an inquiry into the right of Rev. de Haan to refuse to sign,

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<sup>20</sup> Translator: The structure of this portion of article 195 does not make complete sense in the original Dutch, which is reflected in the English translation. It would make more sense if the introductory phrase was “His objections concern”.

<sup>21</sup> Translator: the Dutch term here is “schipperen” which means “to make things in order by acting according to circumstances, not principles.”

<sup>22</sup> Translator: The Dutch here has “appél op” (“appeal to”) while it would make more sense if the Dutch had “appél tegen” (“appeal against”).



but does not take into account that such an inquiry is not necessary, as there is an obligation to sign as per CO article 53.

- ad 1c. Br Esselink incorrectly states that being a minister in our churches depends on the signature of Dort's form, and only it, since being a minister in our churches depends on being bound to the Three Forms of Unity, as proof of which classis, as per C.O. article 53, asks of ministers the promises found in the Dort Form of Subscription.
- ad 2. Br Esselink incorrectly states that Rev. Van Popta's abstention proves that the order of the church, and in particular C.O. article 53 has been used as a crooked stick to get rid of ds de Haan, as this abstention as such in no manner provides evidence for his statement
- ad. 3. Br Esselink may state that the ratification of the Classis decision by the church council was necessary for the unlawful suspension of Rev. de Haan, but he fails to provide evidence for this statement from official documents.
- ad 4. Br Esselink may state that suspension on the ground of a minister who has served the churches for seven years refusing to sign is totally false, unreformed, and contrary to God's Word, confession and church order, but he does not take into account that Regional Synod 1965 considered "that the appellants wrongly emphasize that it was only after seven years of service in Winnipeg that Rev. de Haan was asked to sign the Dort Form for Subscription, since this is something which should have happened on the first classis after Rev. de Haan's ordination in Winnipeg, which (through no fault of his own) did not happen."
- ad 6a. Br Esselink may state that in the suspension of Rev. de Haan thoughts expressed during the church council meeting about the preaching of Rev. de Haan played a role but it does not appear from the decision of suspension that those thoughts led to the suspension.

The Synod concludes:

On the ground of the foregoing, to dismiss the appeal of Br. Esselink."

Br L. Toet abstains from voting as per CO article 33.

**Press Release version ARTICLE 36: Letter K. Esselink.**

*Re: Letter of appeal br K. Esselink of Winnipeg, Man.*

*"The General Synod has taken cognizance of the letter of appeal, d.d. October 31, 1965, received from br K. Esselink of Winnipeg, Man.*

*His objections are:*

- 1a. the fact that Rev. De Haan was suspended "on the ground of Article 53 C.O. whereas "Rev. De Haan has complied with Article 53 C.O. when he was installed into his office as minister of Winnipeg, a.o.";*
- 1b. "that Rev. De Haan would have the right to refuse has not been investigated by any assembly, neither by the consistory, nor by the classis, nor by the Particular Synod";*
- 1c. "to be a minister in our churches depends on his signature under the Form of Dort, and on this only";*
- 1d. "Revs. Van Popta and Mulder advised to ask of Rev. De Haan that he should sign before the consistory and then the consistory could pass it on to Classis" and this is "compromise";*
- 2. the fact that Rev. Van Popta abstained from voting, when it was moved by some delegates at Classis "to reject Article 53 C.O. as ground for suspension, because Rev. De, Haan did comply with it, namely in 1958 a.o." proves "that the Church Order has been used as a pretext to get rid of Rev. De Haan";*
- 3. the ratification of the classical decision by the consistory was needed for the purpose of the unlawful suspension of Rev. De Haan;*

4. *suspension of a minister, who has served the churches for seven years, on the ground of his refusal to sign is "altogether incorrect, even un-reformed and conflicting with God's Word, the confession, and the Church Order (Article 29 B.C.)";*
5. *"At the liberation in 1944/ 45 it was good reformed not to hold decisions for settled and binding, if they were not in accordance with God's Word, or the Three Forms of Unity". "When one does this now, then all of a sudden you are unreformed and erring";*
- 6a. *opinions "voiced in the consistory-meeting" about the preaching of Rev. De Haan played a prominent part in the suspension of Rev. De Haan;*
- 6b. *"That here the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven are used in respect to Rev. De Haan and several members of the congregation. Are these people now standing outside the Kingdom of Heaven?"*

*Synod states:*

*The matters mentioned under 1d, 5, and 6b have not been sent in by appellant as an appeal against the decisions of the Particular Synod 1965, while the matters mentioned under 2 and 6a were indeed put before the Particular Synod 1965 in his letter of appeal, but were not directly dealt with by that Synod.*

*Synod considers:*

- ad 1a. Br Esselink puts that Rev. De Haan complied with Article 53 C.O. when he was installed as minister of Winnipeg a.o., and therefore was wrongly suspended "on the ground of Article 53 C.O.", but does not bring into account that in Article 53 C.O. Classis is mentioned beside the Consistory as a body which has the authority to suspend from office a minister who refuses to sign the Three Forms of Unity, which shows clearly that the signing of the Three Forms is also a matter of Classis;*
- ad 1b. Br Esselink puts indeed that no assembly whatsoever has investigated the right of Rev. De Haan to refuse to sign, but he leaves out of account that such an investigation did not have to be made, since according to Article 53 C.O. there is an obligation to sign;*
- ad 1c. Br Esselink puts wrongly that to be a minister in our churches depends on the signature under the Form of Dort, and on this only, since to be a minister in our churches depends on the faithfulness to the Three Forms of Unity, in proof whereof Classis, in accordance with Article 53 C.O., asks of the ministers the promises, contained in the Subscription Form of Dort;*
- ad 2. Br Esselink puts wrongly that Rev. Van Popta's abstaining from voting proves that 'the Church Order, particularly Article 53 C.O., was used as a pretext to get rid of Rev. De, Haan, since this abstention as such does not give any proof at all for this statement;*
- ad 3. Br Esselink puts indeed that ratification of the classical decision by the consistory was needed for the in his opinion unlawful suspension of Rev. De Haan, but he fails to adduce proof for this statement from the official records;*
- ad 4. Br Esselink puts indeed that suspension of a minister who has served the churches for seven years, on the ground of his refusal to sign, is altogether incorrect, unreformed, and contrary to God's Word, the Confession, and the Church Order, but he leaves out of account that the Particular Synod 1965 considered "that appellants wrongly stressed that Rev. De Haan not until after having fulfilled seven years of service in Winnipeg, was asked to sign the Subscription Form of Dort, since this is something which should have been done at the first Classis after Rev. De Haan's installation in Winnipeg, which was not done (through no fault of Rev. De Haan's)*

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*ad 6a. Br Esselink puts indeed that opinions voiced in the consistory-meeting about the preaching of Rev. De Haan played a prominent part in the suspension of Rev. De Haan, but from the decision to suspend it does not appear that these opinions have led to the suspension.*

*Synod decides,*

*on the ground of the above mentioned considerations to dismiss the objections of br Esselink."*

### **ARTICLE 196: Appeal Cl.K. Oosterveld**

The same advisory committee presents the final draft of the proposals to answer the objection of Br. Cl.K. Oosterveld of Winnipeg, MB. They were adopted by the Synod in the following form:

"The complaint of Br Cl.K. Oosterveld is:

that the church council of Winnipeg could not suspend Rev. de Haan on ground of C.O. article 53.

He bases this complaint on the fact that

- I. when Rev. de Haan in 1958 signed the form adopted by the church council of Winnipeg the requirements of CO article 53 were satisfied;
- II. the Winnipeg church council in 1963 informed Classis that it did not consider it necessary for Rev. de Haan to sign the Dort Form of Subscription "because the ecclesiastical position of a minister is a matter which can be adequately regulated by the Church, of which he is the minister", but in 1965 the church council ratified the Classis decision, which required the signing of the Dort Form, and suspended Rev. de Haan, when he refused to sign the Dort Form.

The Synod considers

ad I. that Br. Oosterveld may state that with the signature of the form of subscription adopted by the Church Council of Winnipeg by Rev. de Haan, the requirements of C.O. article 53 were satisfied, but that Br. Oosterveld does not take into account that the Classis of the West in 1952 decided to adopt the Dort Form of Subscription, and the Classis of the West of March 1963 decided to present this form for signing to Ministers of the Word within its jurisdiction.

The Classis was allowed to do this. After all, C.O. article 53 grants the Classis, in addition to the church council, the authority to suspend Ministers of the Word who refuse to sign the Three Forms. This power implies the right of the Classis to adopt a form of subscription and to request its subscription from the ministers who serve and will serve within the Classis.

No church has proven that this decision is contrary to Scripture, confession, or church order.

Given this state of affairs, the requirements of C.O. article 53 were not satisfied until the form adopted by classis was signed.

The Synod concludes that Br. Oosterveld is in error when he states that the signing of the form adopted by the Church of Winnipeg by Rev. de Haan satisfied the requirements of C.O. article 53.

The Synod considers

ad II. that the Winnipeg Church Council in 1963 may have written to the Classis that it did not consider it necessary for Rev. de Haan to sign the Dort Form of Subscription "because the ecclesiastical position of a minister is a matter which can be adequately regulated by the Church, of which he is the minister", but, given this communication, overlooked that the Church Order in Art. 53 also grants the Classis its own right with respect to the signing of the Three Forms by the Ministers of the Word within its jurisdiction.

Therefore, the Church Council should not have sent this communication, and the Classis should not have accepted this communication from the Church Council for notification.

This same Classis of March 1965 corrected this error by requesting the signing of the form

Classis had adopted. And the Church Council of Winnipeg did so, by holding the decision of the Classis in April 1965 for settled and binding,<sup>23</sup> and by asking Rev. de Haan to sign the Form of Subscription adopted by the Classis.

When Rev. de Haan refused to sign, the Church Council had the right, as per C.O. article 53, to suspend Rev. de Haan *de facto*.

The Synod concludes that br Oosterveld incorrectly appeals to the dual attitude of the Church Council of Winnipeg, in order to show that the suspension of Rev. de Haan by the Church Council is contrary to the Church Order.

On the basis of all the foregoing, the Synod declares that the Church Council of Winnipeg not only did not act contrary to the Church Order when it suspended Rev. de Haan for his refusal to subscribe the Dort Form and to give further explanation about this provision, but that the Church Council acted in full compliance with CO article 53.

The Synod therefore decides to dismiss the appeal of Br. Oosterveld.”

Br. L. Toet abstains from voting as per C.O. article 33.

**Press Release version ARTICLE 37: Letter Cl.K. Oosterveld**

*Re: Letter of Appeal of br Cl.K. Oosterveld, Winnipeg, Man.*

*“The complaint of br Oosterveld is that the consistory of Winnipeg could not suspend Rev. De Haan on the ground of Article 53 C.O.*

*He founds this complaint on the fact that*

- I. with the signing by Rev. De Haan in 1958 of the form, adopted by the consistory of Winnipeg, Article 53 C.O. was complied with;*
- II. the consistory of Winnipeg informed Classis in 1963 that it did not deem it necessary that Rev. De Haan sign the Subscription Form of Dort, “because the ecclesiastical position of a minister is a matter which should be properly regulated-by the Church of which he is the minister”, but ratified in 1965 the classical decision which required the signing of the Form of Dort, and suspended Rev. De Haan when he refused to sign the Form of Dort.*

*Synod considers*

*ad I that br Oosterveld puts indeed that with the signing of the subscription form, adopted by the consistory of Winnipeg, Rev. De Haan had complied with Article 53 C.O.*

*but that br Oosterveld does not take into account that Classis West March 1952 decided to adopt the Subscription Form of Dort, and that Classis West March 1963 decided to put this Form before the Ministers of the Word within its district, to be signed by them.*

*Classis had the right to do this. For, Article 53 C.O. ascribes to a Classis, beside the consistory, the authority to suspend ministers of the Word who refuse to sign the Three Forms of Unity. This authority implies the right of the Classis to adopt a subscription form and to request signing of it by the ministers who serve or shall serve in the classical district.*

*Not one of the churches has proved this decision to be contrary to the Scriptures, the Confession, or the Church Order.*

*With this state of affairs, only by the signing of the subscription form, adopted by Classis, Article 53 C.O. was complied with.*

*Synod comes to the conclusion that Br Oosterveld wrongly puts that with the signing of the form, adopted by the Church of Winnipeg, Rev. De Haan had complied with Article 53 C.O.*

*Synod considers*

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<sup>23</sup> Translator: in the Dutch text there is a switch here from the “synodical” language of “ratify” (ratus facere) to the “liberated” language of “hold for settled and binding” (ratus habere).

*ad II. that the consistory of Winnipeg indeed in 1963 wrote to Classis not to deem it necessary that Rev. De Haan should sign the Subscription Form of Dort "since the ecclesiastical position of a minister is a matter which should be properly regulated by the church whose minister he is", but - as appears from this information - overlooked that the Church Order in Article 53 ascribes to Classis also a separate right in respect to the signing of the Three Forms of Unity by the ministers of the Word within its district.*

*The Consistory therefore was not allowed to make that communication, and Classis was not allowed just to take note of that communication from the consistory.*

*The same Classis of 1963 rectified this mistake by requesting the signing at Classis of the form which it had adopted.*

*And the consistory of Winnipeg did it by holding for settled and binding the decision of Classis April 1965, and by asking of Rev. De Haan to sign the subscription form, adopted by Classis.*

*When Rev. De Haan refused to sign, the consistory, according to Article 53 C.O. did have the right to suspend Rev. De Haan de facto.*

*Synod comes to the conclusion that Br Oosterveld wrongly appeals to the "dual attitude" of the consistory of Winnipeg, to prove by this that the suspension of Rev. De Haan by the consistory is contrary to the Church Order.*

*On the ground of all the above mentioned Synod holds that not only the consistory of Winnipeg did not come into conflict with the Church Order when suspending Rev. De Haan upon his refusal to sign the Form of Dort, and his refusal to explain himself with regard to this refusal, but that the consistory acted in this in complete accordance with Article 53 C.O.*

*Synod therefore decides to dismiss the objections of Br Oosterveld."*

#### **ARTICLE 197: Statement Rev. J. Mulder**

Rev. J. Mulder requests that the following statement be included in the Acts:

"Rev. J. Mulder declares that he abstained in all decisions taken regarding the appeals received from Winnipeg, because, as chairman of the Council of the neighbouring Church he has been so closely involved in this matter."

#### **ARTICLE 198: Statement Rev J.T. Popta**

Rev. J.T. Van Popta requests that the following statement be included in the Acts:

"Rev. J.T. Van Popta declares that he abstained in all decisions taken regarding the appeals received from Winnipeg because, as a delegate to the June Class 1965 of the Alberta/Manitoba Churches, he had already ruled on objections to the suspension of Rev. de Haan."

#### **ARTICLE 199: Theological Training**

Advisory Committee I presents the final edition of proposals re Training for the Ministry of the Word.

In addition to the decisions already mentioned in the field of Training (art. 99: the provision of \$6,000.00 for the library; Art. 180: Subscription Form for Docents) the committee's proposals are adopted, so that all further decisions on Training are:

"With regard to the Governors' Report, the Synod decides

1. To appoint three Governors from the jurisdiction of the East and three from the jurisdiction of the West, with alternates.
2. To authorize the Governors to compensate current docents for the work they perform or to be performed.
3. Since the Synod, in the absence of sufficient insight, cannot take responsible decisions on various proposals submitted by Governors, to request the Governors to examine the whole matter of a

Theological College in all aspects, together with the Board of Docents<sup>24</sup>, and with respect to this matter, to send a joint report to the next General Synod.

Furthermore, to request Governors to send a copy of this report to the Churches for information at least six months before that Synod.

4. To authorize the Governors to purchase an estate in the Province of Ontario. They shall not make such a purchase until they have received prior favourable expert opinion and final approval from the Regional Synod of Ontario. Among the conditions that will have to be met is that there is a considerable area for possible further expansion and that affiliation with a University is possible.
5. Persons over the age of 30 can be admitted to the lessons and examinations of the Training without possession of a B.A. degree or equivalent degree, provided they have passed an admission examination, the requirements for which will be determined by the Board of Docents, subject to further approval by Governors; however, in such a way that they will not exceed what is required for the degree of Bachelor of Arts.
6. The following provisions of the Rules and Regulations proposed by Governors are now already adopted:
  - I. The Churches provide Training for the Ministry of the Word through Governors, who are appointed and mandated by the General Synod. Governors are nominated by the minor assembly. Each Regional Synod nominates three Governors with alternates.
  - II. Governors will meet together at least once a year. Docents will have the right to attend these meetings as advisers. Governors will issue a Press Release of their meetings.
  - III. Governors will supervise the teaching in order to ward from it anything that is not in accordance with Scripture and the Confessions of the Churches.

They, with the advice of the docents, draw up a curriculum.
  - IV. Governors will submit to the General Synod a nomination for the appointment of docents to fill existing vacancies. The General Synod shall not be bound by this nomination.

Governors will draft up a separate regulation for the interruption or termination of a Docent's service.
  - V. A Docent must be a member of a Canadian Reformed Church or of a Church with which the Canadian Reformed Churches maintain correspondence. Before beginning their service, teachers will sign the "Form of Subscription for Docents at the Theological College of the Canadian Reformed Churches", drafted by the General Synod of Edmonton, 1965.

Docents shall submit in their work to the supervision of the Governors, but shall at all times retain the right to appeal to the General Synod.
  - VI. Governors will advise the General Synod as to the number of Docents deemed necessary.
7. In response to his request, to send to Br. M.C. Werkman of Edmonton a copy of the decision under 5.
8. The contribution of the Churches for the Training for the Ministry of the Word is set at \$7.00 per professing member per year."

The Synod further decided:

- "1. To express its gratitude to Governors for the work done by them.
2. Regarding Rev. L. Selles' request to be relieved of his teaching assignment in New Testament subjects, to postpone a decision to the (agenda) item Appointments.
3. Regarding the suggestions of Rev. G. Van Dooren regarding contact with future Theological Students the following:

The Synod expresses the desirability of contact with students who intend to study theology, but does not consider it to be within its jurisdiction, to take a decision in that direction.

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<sup>24</sup> Translator: later known as the Senate.

With regard to the question raised by Rev. G. Van Dooren as to whether there is a possibility that we may benefit from setting up an institution, proceeding from the Association for Reformed Scientific Studies, the Synod replies that, even if there is such a possibility, it could not go beyond expressing the wish, that future students in theology will make use of it.

4. Re the financial report of Br H. Leffers, the Synod decides
  - a. to thank Br. Leffers for the work he has done in this capacity;
  - b. given the report of the Church at Coaldale, to grant Br. H. Leffers discharge with respect to these;
  - c. to ask Governors to give due consideration to Br. H. Leffers' suggestion of better investment of the available funds;
  - d. to append the financial report when the Acts are published;
  - e. to request the Governors to point out to the Churches, that the General Synod of Hamilton, 1962, decided to ask for an amount of \$1.00 per soul per year for the matter of Training and to request those Churches, which failed to contribute, to supplement their assessment with their arrears.

With respect to decision 2, the Docents present at synod abstained from voting as per C.O. article 33.

**Press Release version ARTICLE 19: Financial Report Theological College**<sup>25</sup>

*A financial report is presented by Br. H. Leffers, treasurer for the Education for the Ministry. Some Churches did not send in any contributions for the year 1964. Up until now only four Churches contributed for 1965. At October 30th, 1965 the funds amounted to \$31,681.72.*

**Press Release version ARTICLE 38: Theological College.**

*Re: Theological College.*

*Synod makes the following decisions concerning the report of the Governors.*

1. *To appoint three governors from Western Canada and three from Eastern Canada with alternates;*
2. *To authorize the governors to compensate the present Docents for their work, already done, or still to be done;*
3. *To request the governors to study the whole matter of the Theological College in all its aspects; to do this together with the college of Docents; and to submit a joint report about the matter to the next General Synod, since Synod, for lack of sufficient knowledge of these matters, cannot at present make warranted decisions with respect to several proposals made by the governors;*
4. *To authorize the Governors to purchase an estate in the Province of Ontario. Such a purchase shall be made only upon preceding favourable advice of experts and upon definite approval of the Particular Synod of Ontario.*

*Among the conditions which have to be met are these, That a fair-sized plot be available for possible further extension; and that affiliation with a university be possible.*

5. *Persons over 30 years of age may be admitted to the courses and ex-aminations of the College without being in the possession of a B.A. degree or its equivalent, if they pass successfully an admission-examination, the requirements for the which shall be set up by the College of Docents with concurrent approval of the Governors; on the understanding that these requirements shall not exceed what is required for a Bachelor of Arts degree.*
6. *To adopt at this moment already the following provisions from the "Rules and Regulations" which were proposed by the Governors:*
  1. *The Churches shall take care of a Theological College through Governors, who shall be appointed and instructed by the General Synod. Governors shall be nominated by the Minor Assembly. Each Particular Synod shall nominate three Governors with alternates.*

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<sup>25</sup> Translator: There appears to be no Acts article equivalent to this Press Release article.

- II. *The Governors shall meet at least once a year; Docents shall have the right to attend these meetings in an advisory capacity. The Governors shall publish a brief report of their meetings.*
- III. *The Governors shall exercise supervision over the instruction given in order that may be barred whatever is not in accordance with the Scripture and the Creeds of the Churches.*
- IV. *The Governors shall submit to the General Synod a nomination to appoint Docents for existing vacancies. The General Synod shall not be bound by this nomination.*

*The Governors shall draw up separate regulations covering leave of absence and the termination of the service of Docents.*

- V. *A Docent shall be a member of a Canadian Reformed Church or of one of the Churches with which the Canadian Reformed Churches maintain Church correspondence.*

*Before entering upon their service Docents shall subscribe to the "Form of Subscription for Docents at the Theological College of the Canadian Reformed Churches", drawn up by the General Synod of Edmonton, 1965. (See Dutch Text of Acts, Article 180).*

*Docents shall submit themselves in their work to the supervision of the Governors, but shall always retain the right of appeal to the General Synod.*

- VI. *The Governors shall advise the General Synod about the number of Docents which is deemed necessary.*
- 7. *To send to Mr. M. C. Werkman of Edmonton, in reply to his request, a copy of the decision mentioned under 5.*
- 8. *To set the contribution of the Churches for the Theological College at \$7.00 (seven dollars) per communicant member per year.*

*Further did Synod make the following decisions:*

- 1. *To express its gratitude towards the Governors for the work which they did.*
- 2. *Re: Request of the Rev. L. Selles to be relieved from his task to teach the New Testament courses: to postpone a decision till Agenda point 10: Appointments.*
- 3. *With respect to the suggestions of the Rev. G. Van Dooren concerning contact with future students of theology the following:*  
*Synod expresses the desirability of contact with students who are planning to study theology, but does not judge it to be in its province to make a decision in that direction.*  
*As to the question of the Rev. G. Van Dooren whether there is a possibility to benefit from an institution which is in the process of being set up by the Association for Reformed Scientific Studies, Synod answers that even if such possibility exists, it could not possibly go any further than eventually express the desirability that future students of theology make use of it.*
- 4. *Re: Financial Report of Br H. Leffers, Synod decides*
  - a. *To express its thanks to Br H. Leffers for the work he did;*
  - b. *To give Br H. Leffers honourable discharge on the ground of the report of the Church at Coaldale;*
  - c. *To request the Governors to pay due attention to Br H. Leffers' suggestion for a better investment of the moneys available;*
  - d. *To include the Financial Report as a Supplement in the publication of the Acts;*
  - e. *To request the Governors to remind the Churches that the General Synod of Hamilton 1962 requested the sum of \$1.00 per member per year for the Theological College, and to ask the Churches which failed to pay this amount during the past years, to pay the arrears as yet.*

*With decision 2 concerning the report of the Governors, the Docents who were present at Synod, were not allowed to vote, in accordance with Article 33 C.O.*

## **ARTICLE 200: Letter D.P. Dijkhuis**

Advisory Committee II presents its advice with respect to a response to the letter from br D.P. Dijkhuis



at Grand Rapids, Mich., U.S.A., mentioned in article 176. Discussion of this is interrupted by the meal.

**ARTICLE 201: Reopening.**

After the chairman reopened the assembly and had it sing Psalm 119:1 and 3, rollcall is held. All the brothers prove to be present.

**ARTICLE 202: Acts.**

The Acts are read from Articles 192 to 196. They are adopted.

**ARTICLE 203: Press Release.**

The continuation of the Press Release is read and approved.

**ARTICLE 204: Letter D.P. Dijkhuis**

Discussion of the advisory committee's proposals on the letter referred to in Article 176(200) continues. The following decision is taken:

"The General Synod has taken note of a letter from Br. D.P. Dijkhuis of Grand Rapids, Mich., U.S.A., dated November 17, 1965.

The Synod observes

1. that the agenda of the General Synod was adopted on November 4, 1965 (Acts Article 7)
2. that, according to Br. Dijkhuis's letter, the reply to the appeal submitted by him to the Regional Synod came into his possession on November 17, 1965.

The Synod considers

that it has been impossible for Mr Dijkhuis to announce a possible appeal before the adoption of the agenda of the Synod.

The Synod decides

As yet to deal with the letter from Br D.P. Dijkhuis of Grand Rapids, November 17, 1965 and received on November 22, 1965.

The Synod observes that the letter referred to in Article 176, 200 of the Acta is not an appeal, but merely contains a request for assistance, which the Synod cannot respond to without exceeding its jurisdiction as an appellate body.

The brother will be informed of this."

**Press Release version ARTICLE 39: Letter D.P. Dijkhuis**

*Re: Letter from Br D.P. Dijkhuis, of Grand Rapids, Mich., U.S.A. The following decision is made.*

*"The General Synod has taken cognizance of a letter from Br D.P. Dijkhuis of Grand Rapids, Mich., U.S.A., d.d. November 17, 1965.*

*Synod states:*

1. *that the definite agenda of the General Synod was adopted November 4, 1965 (See Dutch Text of the Acts, Article 7);*
2. *that according to Br Dijkhuis' letter the, answer to his objections, submitted by him to the Particular Synod, came into his possession on November 17, 1965.*

*Synod considers:*

*that it was impossible for Br Dijkhuis to announce an eventual appeal before the definite adoption of the agenda by Synod.*

*Synod decides:*

*as yet to discuss the letter from Br D.P. Dijkhuis of Grand Rapids, d.d. November 17, 1965, and received November 22, 1965.*

*Synod states:*

*that the letter of Br D.P. Dijkhuis is not a letter of appeal, but only contains a request for help; into which Synod cannot enter without going beyond its authority as an appeal-*

*resort.*

*This brother shall be informed accordingly."*

**ARTICLE 205: Reformed Ecumenical Synod**

A start is made with the discussion of Agenda item 8.O: Reformed Ecumenical Synod. The documents relating to this matter are read, as is the report of Advisory Committee III on this matter. The discussion had to be cut short for the sake of time.

**ARTICLE 206: Organization Committee.**

The chairman now gives an opportunity to Br H.A. Van Spronsen to make some announcements on behalf of the Committee for the arrangements for this Synod (See Article 7, Procedure, point 8).

It is clear from these announcements that it can be assumed that the cost of this Synod will not exceed what was budgeted.

The chairman expresses the heartfelt thanks of the Synod to these brothers for the hard work they have been able and willing and required to do.

**ARTICLE 207: Close**

Some arrangements are made for tomorrow, Psalm 101: 1, 2, 3 and 4 are sung, after which the meeting is closed with thanksgiving prayer by Rev. Vanoene.

**SESSION OF TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 23, 1965**

**ARTICLE 208: Reopening.**

The chairman opens the meeting. Hymn 15 sung. The chairman then reads Revelation 1:9 to the end (of the chapter), whereupon he leads in prayer.

**ARTICLE 209: Rollcall.**

Rollcall is held. All delegates are present.

**ARTICLE 210: Acts**

The Acts are read from Articles 196 to 210. They are adopted.

**ARTICLE 211: Press Release**

The Press Release is read and approved.

**ARTICLE 212: Reformed Ecumenical Synod**

As its proposals on the Reformed Ecumenical Synod (Article 205) are dealt with, Advisory Committee III responds in more detail to comments made.

The following proposals are adopted:

- “1. To inform Dr. Paul G. Schrottenboer, Secretary-General of the Reformed Ecumenical Synod, that the invitation to send an observer to the Fifth Reformed Ecumenical Synod was received too late, so that it could not be considered and answered by a General Synod of our Churches before that Reformed Ecumenical Synod held in 1963.
2. To offer our apologies to Dr. Schrottenboer of the Edmonton Church’s failure to communicate this to the Calvin Christian Reformed Church.
3. Not to accede to the proposal of the Church at New Westminster, because it is not the calling of this Synod to explain why the Synod of Hamilton 1962 should have decided not to send delegates or observers to the Fifth Reformed Ecumenical Synod, if that request had been directed to the Synod of Hamilton.
4. Not to deal with the suggestion of the Church at Burlington to consider if we, for the Lord’s sake,

should consider the question whether to accept this invitation, since the invitation received does not and because there is no request to send an observer to the Reformed Ecumenical Synod to be held in The Netherlands in 1968.”

**Press Release version ARTICLE 40: Reformed Ecumenical Synod.**

*Re: Reformed Ecumenical Synod. Synod decides:*

- “1. To inform Dr Paul G. Schrotenboer, Secretary-General of the Re- formed Ecumenical Synod, that the invitation to send an observer to the Fifth Ecumenical Synod has been received too late, as a result of which it could not be dealt with and answered by a General Synod of our Churches before that Reformed Ecumenical Synod of 1963.*
- 2. To apologize to Dr. Schrotenboer for the fact that the Church at Edmonton failed to inform the Calvin Christian Reformed Church about this fact.*
- 3. Not to comply with the request of the Church at New Westminster, since it is not the duty of this Synod to explain why the Synod of Hamilton 1962 should have decided not to send delegates or observers to the Fifth Reformed Ecumenical Synod, if that request had be m sent to the Synod of Hamilton.*
- 4. Not to carry into effect the suggestion of the Church at Burlington, to consider the question whether for the Lord’s sake we have to accept this invitation, since the received invitation cannot be accepted, and since there is no invitation to send an observer to the Reformed Ecumenical Synod which is to be held in The Netherlands in 1968.”*

**ARTICLE 213: Address Reply Winnipeg**

The question of the address to which a reply should be sent to the appeal of The Canadian Reformed Church of Winnipeg, Manitoba, referred to in Article 183, addresses 729 Hoskin Avenue, Winnipeg, Manitoba.

The Synod takes the following decision on how the answer shall be addressed:

“The Synod decides that the response to the appeal against the suspension of Rev. C. de Haan, received from “The Canadian Reformed Church of Winnipeg, Manitoba”, address 729 Hoskin Avenue, Winnipeg 15, Manitoba, be addressed to “Rev. Mr. C. de Haan and those with him”.

The Synod cannot recognize the group represented by Rev. Mr. C. de Haan and Mr. E. Ter Mors as The Canadian Reformed Church of Winnipeg, Manitoba.

Ground: The Synod has rejected an appeal by “The Canadian Reformed Church of Winnipeg, Manitoba” c/ o 729 Hoskin Avenue, against the suspension of Rev. C. de Haan as pastor of The Canadian Reformed Church in Winnipeg,

by this decision the Consistory of The Canadian Reformed Church in Winnipeg, Man., c.o.

Mr. L. M. Toet, 352 Victoria Avenue W, Winnipeg 25, Manitoba, is recognized as the lawful Church Council of The Canadian Reformed Church at Winnipeg, Manitoba.

The Synod resolves to send a copy of this decision to the Church Council of The Canadian Reformed Church in Winnipeg, Manitoba.”

Br. L. M. Toet abstains from voting, as per CO article 33.

**Press Release version ARTICLE 41: Address Letter Winnipeg.**

*Concerning the address to which a reply shall be sent to the appeal received from “The Canadian Reformed Church of Winnipeg, Manitoba”, address 729 Hoskin Avenue, Winnipeg, Manitoba, the following decision is made:*

*“Synod decides to address the reply to the appeal against the suspension of Rev. C. De Haan, received from “The Canadian Reformed Church of Winnipeg, Man.”. address 729 Hoskin Avenue, Winnipeg 15, Man., to: “Rev. Mr. C. De Haan c.s.”.*

*Synod cannot recognize the group which is represented by Rev. Mr. C. De Haan and Mr. E. Ter Mors as the Canadian Reformed Church of Winnipeg, Man.*

*Ground: Synod declined an appeal of “the Consistory of the Canadian Reformed Church of*

*Winnipeg, Man.” c.o. 729 Hoskin Avenue, Winnipeg 15, Man. against the suspension of Rev. C. De Haan as minister of the Canadian Reformed Church at Winnipeg, Man.; recognizing by this decision the Consistory of the Canadian Reformed Church at Winnipeg, c.o. Mr. L.M. Toet, 352 Victoria Ave., West, Winnipeg 25, Man. as the legitimate Consistory of the Canadian Reformed Church at Winnipeg, Man.*

*Synod decides to send a copy of this decision to the Consistory of the Canadian Reformed Church at Winnipeg.”*

#### **ARTICLE 214: Reports**

With respect to the (agenda) item “Reports”, the Synod notes that at the Synod of Edmonton 1965 there is no copy of the report to the Churches of deputies appointed by the Synod of Hamilton in 1962 for the “examination of the desirability of a central postal address (Acts Article 75)”.

The Synod decides to appoint two deputies on this subject and to instruct them to report to the next General Synod.

#### **ARTICLE 215: Reopening**

After the lunch break, the chairman reopens the meeting. He has Psalm 97:1 and 7 sung, after which rollcall is held.

#### **ARTICLE 216: Appointments.**

The following appointments are made

English Text Heidelberg Catechism, Article 70.

G. C. Kouwenhoven, Rev. W. Loopstra (convenor), Rev. H. Scholten.

Dutch text church order, article 109.

Br J. De Koning, Toronto, Rev. M. Van Beveren (convenor).

English Text Church Order, Article 170.

Revs. H. A. Stel (convenor), Wm.W.J. Vanoene and J.T. Van Popta.

Governors

The Synod observes that, partly because of the decisions taken by this Synod, the nominations of the Regional Synod of Abbotsford no longer fits the situation that has arisen :

The following are appointed as Curators:

From Region East: Revs. W. Loopstra, A.B. Roukema, D. Vander Boom (convenor).

From Region West: Revs. L. Moes, J. Mulder, H. A. Stel.

As alternate Governors: Revs. M. Van Beveren and P. Kingma.

Br H. Leffers of Coaldale, AB, is appointed Treasurer of Training.

Archival Church:

The Church at Burlington, ON.

English Calvinistic Psalter

M. M. de Groot, J. J. Knecht, Rev. F. Kouwenhoven, S. R. Smilde, Rev. D. VanderBoom, Rev. G. Van Dooren (convenor).

Correspondence Foreign Churches:

C. Ouwensloot, Rev. H. Scholten (convenor), P. Vander Schaaf.

Contact Committee of Christian Reformed Church, Article 177.

Revs. F. Kouwenhoven, M. Van Beveren, D. Vander Boom and G. Van Dooren (convenor).

Contact the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, Article 141.

Revs. D. De Jong, A. B. Roukema, L. Selles (convenor), and Br. W. Wildeboer.

Re C.O. article 19, Article 147.

Brs E. C. Baartman, M. Louwerse, M. Van Grootheest, H. Van Veen, and A. J. Ytsma, Chatham, ON. Secretary-Treasurer.

Church for Control of the Finances for Training:

Coaldale, AB.

Forms for Excommunication of non-communicant members, Article 140.

Revs. J. Mulder and J.T. Van Popta.

Church for Control of the Finances of the Deputies for an English Calvinistic Psalter:

Brampton, ON.

Days of Fasting and Prayer:

Churches of Burlington and Edmonton.

For research into the desirability of a central address:

Revs. D. De Jong (convenor) and M. Van Beveren.

For the Control of the Finances of the Synod 1965:

Church at Barrhead, AB.

For the Care of Acts:

the two clerks.

For Data of the Churches for publication in the Acts, Article 38.

Rev. H. A. Stell.

Deputies-Dozent:

Rev. F. Kouwenhoven: Biblical Geography, Biblical Archaeology, Hebrew, Exegesis O.T., Canonics O.T., Hermeneutics O.T.

Rev. H. Scholten: Church History.

Rev. L. Selles: Exegesis N.T., Canonics N.T., N.T. Greek, Hermeneutics N.T.

Rev. G. Van Dooren: Dogmatics, Symbolics, Apologetics, New Theology.

Rev. Wm.W.J. Vanoene: Church Polity, Ethics, Sacred History.

Rev. J.T. van Popta: Diaconiology, Philosophy, History of Revelation, O.T. and N.T.

Latin Examiner for the Admission Exam: Rev. J. Mulder.

### ***ARTIKEL 217: Acts edition.***

Regarding the publication of the Acta, it is decided:

1. To have the Acts sent to:
  - a. all Churches according to the number of families and/or single persons in each congregation;
  - b. deputies for correspondence with foreign Churches, a sufficient number of copies;
  - c. the archiving church, a sufficient number of copies.
2. To include the following Reports as appendices to the Acts:
  - a. Report of the Committee on proposals concerning the Reformed Ecumenical Synod.
  - b. Report of Deputies for correspondence with foreign Churches.
  - c. Report of Governors.
  - d. Historical portion of the Attached Report on the Orthodox Presbyterian Church.
  - e. The financial report of the Treasurer for Training, Br H. Leffers.

### ***ARTICLE 218: Funding Deputies***

The Synod decides that deputies appointed by this Synod, who may not have funds available from this deputation and who are required to incur expenditure for the performance of their tasks, shall be able to apply to the Committee referred to in Article 7, procedure point 8, receive from the funds still available what they need.

### ***ARTICLE 219: Convening Church***

The Church at Orangeville, ON.

***Press Release Version ARTICLE 42: Arrangements***

*The necessary deputies are appointed.*

*The Financial Committee shall keep the balance that they may re-imburse appointed deputies for expenses incurred by them, in so far these deputies have no funds already allotted to them.  
The convening Church for the next Synod shall be the Church at Orangeville, Ont.  
The Acts and the Press Release are read and adopted.*

**ARTICLE 220: Censure CO article 43**

Censure as per CO article 43 was not deemed necessary.

**ARTICLE 221: Acts**

The Acta are read and adopted to Article 215.

**ARTICLE 222: Press Release**

The Press Release is read and approved.

**ARTICLE 223: Closing remarks**

The chairman then speaks the following final word:

“Dear Brothers,

We have come to the end of this Synod.

A few more moments and this Synod will once again be a thing of the past. It no longer exists and our task as representatives of the Churches is over.

Then the task and calling of the Churches has come to subject our work to its judgment, that is, to subject it to the judgment of **Scripture** and to the agreements we have made on its basis.

That determines the nature of my closing words.

I am not allowed to enter into the assessment of the work we have done. We will have to leave that assessment to those who gave us our task, the Churches, who sent us here. We will not overreach.

I have a different task.

I may and must express the great gratitude that lives in the hearts of all of us to the Father of lights, who has day by day given the strength for the large amount and often difficult work that the Churches placed on our shoulders.

No one was prevented from doing his job by illness. No one has been taken away by Him. We were allowed to start this Synod together with Him, He now also grants that we may end this Synod together. His gracious hand has laid itself protectively over us from moment to moment.

However, there is more.

In His great goodness, the Lord has wanted us to experience the loving care of the brothers and sisters of the Church in Edmonton. For the sake of the progress of the work of our exalted King, much work has been done by them.

Houses were hospitably opened to us, so that we could rest from our daily labor. During and between the sessions of the Synod, we were exceptionally welcomed and cared for by the sisters in the kitchen. Some brothers have shown great zeal in taking care of the finances of this Synod and arranging the travel arrangements for us brothers delegates. All this will not be quickly forgotten by us.

However, there is more.

In His great grace, the Lord has permitted us to do our work in the unity of faith, in which the Son of God gathers, defends, and preserves His Church.

Many matters were placed before us.

Many have been the struggles to come to responsible decisions. We discussed, tested each other's arguments. We have considered and weighed. In all this it was clear that we are bound by the one binding to the Word of our God and to the Three Forms of Unity and the Church Order we have adopted, which underscore that binding to the Word of the Lord .

As servants of the Most High, we then acted in faithfulness to that one valid binding in the Churches

of Christ. Decisions were taken to preserve the Churches in this country by that precious commodity, the unity of faith. In this, the Lord has strengthened us and comforted us extraordinarily.

It has been the most beautiful thing we have experienced here.

We can't help but lay all our thanks and worship before Him, Who sits on the throne and the Lamb. God be the honor and the glory and the power for all eternity.

I would like to mention one more thing.

Decisions have been made in connection with the difficulties in the Church at Winnipeg. I express the wish and prayer that these decisions, after review, may be blessed by the Lord for the salvation of His Church, which has been purchased by the precious blood of His own dear Son. That peace and pleasant rest and mild blessing may bring her joy.

And now we're going home.

We won't see each other again for the time being. With homesickness we will sometimes think of the pleasant days we had here.

But we find our support and strength in one thing: I believe a holy, catholic, Christian Church, the communion of saints.

In all this, we will not forget one thing.

The admonition given to us at the opening of this Synod: Therefore, my brothers, be steadfast, unshakable, abundant at all time in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not vain in the Lord.

Then the future is ours, because it is the Lord's.

Then we will also be able to see Him one day, whom we cannot see now, but still love wholeheartedly. Brothers, the Lord be with you.

I ask that you now read with me Revelation 5: 8-14.

Then Rev. H. A. will lead us in thanksgiving prayer, after we have sung Psalm 89:1, 7, and 8."

After this, Rev. Scholten reads the indicated verses, and the verses of Psalm 89, mentioned by him, are sung.

### ***ARTICLE 224: Close***

After Rev. H.A. Stel leads in thanksgiving prayer, the chairman closes the Synod of Edmonton, 1965.

#### ***Press Release version ARTICLE 43: Closing***

*The chairman speaks some closing words.*

*Rev. H. A. Ste! leads in thanksgiving and prayer.*

*Synod is closed.*

By order of the Synod,

The Executive

Rev. H. Scholten, chair.

Rev. H. A. Stel, assessor.

Rev. Wm. W. J. Vanoene, First Clerk.

Rev. F. Kouwenhoven, Second Clerk.