

APPENDIX I

To the General Synod
Smithville, 1980.

Esteemed Brethren,

The Board of Governors of the Theological College is pleased to present to your assembly its tri-annual report, covering the academic years 1977/1978, 1978/1979, and 1979/1980.

The most important thing which we can mention is that the Lord our God allowed us to see the work continued without interruption. Even though the Faculty was one member short for some time, the lessons could be given and the students could proceed towards their goal.

That goal was reached by four brethren since the Synod 1977, and all four of them are serving already in the office of Minister of the Word. The graduation of one student this past year left us with four more students. We are happy that we can report the arrival of five brethren who commenced their studies, so that the total number of students at present is nine.

The Board did discuss with the Faculty the requirements for admission to our College and came to the conclusion that caution is needed when admitting young men to the studies, and that further "steps should be taken to ensure, as far as can be ascertained, that those who wish to study for the ministry possess the qualities deemed indispensable for one who aspires to that office." Attention to those requirements was paid when a student was interviewed before he commenced his studies at our College.

The Board as well as the Faculty did discuss the question whether or not a maximum age should be set as much as there is a minimum age for those who can be admitted without being in the possession of a Bachelor of Arts degree.

Concerning the conduct and diligence of the students no special remarks have to be made. Some concern was expressed about the fact that students sometimes hold a part-time job. It was feared that such might work adversely with regard to their studies and progress. Ultimately, however, holding a part-time position is the student's own responsibility.

Could the work at the College be continued uninterrupted as such, that can not be said about every member of the Faculty. The Reverend H. Scholten, already handicapped by illness during the previous years, had to submit his resignation as Lecturer in the Ecclesiological Department. As Lecturer-emeritus he continues to follow all the activities at our College with great interest and his advice is never sought in vain. The Board is grateful that, especially during the first years of our College's existence, the Rev. Scholten gave his full cooperation and dedicated himself wholeheartedly to the task laid upon his shoulders by the Churches. It behooves us to express our gratitude also in this report.

In order that the remaining members of the Faculty should not be burdened with too much extra work, the Rev. W.W.J. VanOene was appointed as temporary instructor, such until the time when the General Synod has appointed a successor to the Rev. H. Scholten. Having obtained the advice of the Faculty, the Board will come to Synod with a recommendation concerning such an appointment.

The Board received advice from the Faculty re: the appointment of a successor to the Rev. G. VanDooren, who will have to resign at the end of the academic year 1981/1982. For various reasons the Board, upon the recommendation of the Faculty, took grateful note of the willingness of the Rev. VanDooren to serve until the day of his obligatory retirement. The need to come to your assembly with a recommendation or nomination to fill the expected vacancy was not considered so pressing that a decision had to be made right now. It remains

the intention of the Board and the Faculty to come with proposals to your successor, the Synod 1983, to appoint a fourth full-time professor who is to take over the Diaconological Department. It is our hope and expectation that at that time we shall also be able to propose a man well-qualified for that position.

Another resignation was the one by the Rev. A.B. Roukema who served for some years as Associate Librarian. Health reasons compelled him to terminate that work, and we could not do anything but accept his decision. Also to him we extend our words of gratitude for the work which he did, a work which is not noticed by outsiders but is the more appreciated by all who wish to use the Library of our College.

And, to conclude our remarks about persons working in and for our College, the Board also gratefully recognizes the work that is done by the Administrative Assistant, Miss Anne Van Sydenborgh. Having been appointed originally with the care for the financial administration as an assistant to the Treasurer of our College as her main task, she saw the list of her activities and responsibilities grow to such an extent that she has become involved in almost anything going on in our College, not in the last place the Library-cataloguing.

In compliance with a decision by Synod, the Board of Governors and the Board of Trustees have been looking actively for other properties, but thus far have not been able to come up with something considered altogether suitable for our purpose.

In academic matters the recent move by the Ontario Government to introduce legislation prohibiting conferring of degrees by non-recognized Colleges and Universities and declaring any advertising of courses leading to them illegal has caused concern with the Boards and with the Faculty. Steps have been undertaken to come to a Private Bill which would give recognition to our College and thus would keep the way towards conferring of degrees open. In this connection the question is also being considered whether we should not, at the same time, include the possibility of conferring the degree of Doctor of Theology.

The lectures given were visited by the Governors according to an adopted schedule. This schedule was somewhat upset by the appointment of the Rev. Van Oene as temporary instructor. The dual position as instructor and governor was reason why he did not take part in the visiting of the lectures after he took up the former position.

The reports of visits to the lectures were favourable. The governors could hear for themselves that the instruction given is scholarly and Scriptural. Both qualifications are important and we are happy that we can report that they both were found present. This is the more a reason for gratitude seeing the general apostasy and deterioration which is to be noticed all around us. It is our sincere and heartfelt wish that the Lord may strengthen those called to teach so that our College may become a source of blessing not only for the Churches that maintain and support this institution but also for others from our own and other continents.

About the support of the Churches as far as finances are concerned the Board of Trustees reports to your assembly, and we can therefore refrain from remarks in this respect.

The support otherwise by the Churches and Church members becomes evident every year anew at the College Evenings/Convocations.

It was a fitting celebration of the tenth anniversary of our College when we conducted the ceremony of conferring of degrees at a Convocation in the West. Even though the extra income did not cover by half the extra costs, the Boards have no regrets about the decision to have this evening in British Columbia. From almost every Church in the West members were present, and we are certain that it was greatly appreciated by the brotherhood out West.

The Board met four times since the previous Synod. At each annual meeting officers were chosen, and the outcome of each election confirmed the status quo.

This report does not yet cover the meeting of October 31, 1980, although this report has been adopted at that meeting.

In conclusion, the Board wishes to thank our gracious and faithful God for His unceasing care and mercy upon us. We thank the Lord for the willingness given into the hearts of the members of the Faculty and of the Board of Trustees as well as of the Board of Governors to work in harmony in this great undertaking. We thank Him for the willingness of the membership to continue their support of our institution, and commend the same into His continuous care and favour.

Respectfully submitted,
The Board of Governors,
For the same,
W.W.J. VANOENE, Secretary