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Deputy for Correspondence
with Churches Abroad

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(3 pages)

General Synod New Westminster 1971
c/o Canadian Reformed Church
of New Westminster
New Westminster, B.C.

Esteemed Brethren:

As Deputy for Correspondence with Churches Abroad I am faced with a regrettable fact. My name has appeared under a Report, part of which did not have my approval. It has to be mentioned to the honour of Mr. P. VanderSchaaf that from the beginning on he did his work with ambition, and his aim was to have the Report in the mail "on time". He, indeed, lived up to his objective, but did not allow sufficient time for me to have my objections in writing. Rev. D. VanderBoom was supposed to be asked to act as "advisor", but without mentioning his name in the Report, as was agreed upon, I received the Report in the mail. I had given my consent for stencilling the pages 1 to 8, up to "V. De Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland". Since I do not agree with the Report as it has been put at your table, I deem it necessary to inform you through an "additional" Report. The result of my studies are as follows, concerning

V. DE GEREFORMEERDE KERKEN IN NEDERLAND.

A. Correspondence with Churches Abroad.

The General Synod of De Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland, Hoogeveen 69/70, decided to maintain the correspondence with the Canadian Reformed Churches. (Art. 412).

Although there exists a different opinion on part of the Rules for Correspondence as adopted by the Canadian Reformed Churches (General Synod - Orangeville 1968 - Art. 109), the General Synod Hoogeveen 69/70 expressed its willingness to respect and reckon with the existing rules in our churches.

Other aspects regarding the Correspondence will be dealt with in the subjects to follow.

B. Correspondence with The Presbyterian Church in Korea.

It is a fact that De Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland have established a sister-church-relationship with the Presbyterian Church in Korea, and as a consequence have correspondence with this church (Art. 380/381). They do regret that the sister-churches were not informed about this relationship (Art. 412).

Deputies would as yet inform the Canadian Reformed Churches about the particulars of this matter, apologizing for not having done so. However, it was discovered later that communications had been mailed to Deputies for Correspondence in Canada, but we seem to have no information on file.

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C. Struggle for the true value of the Creeds and Church Order.

General Synod Hoogeveen 69/70 had to deal with many gravamina regarding many persons, churches and situations.

It is well-known among you that all these gravamina had to do with matters that originated long before, but found their "revelation" in the "Open Brief".

Since you are familiar with the "Acta" of the General Synods 1964 and 1967 of the Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland, it will not be necessary to write many pages with quotes and/or decisions. It is exactly as stated by Mr. P. VanderSchaaf, "Synod Hoogeveen affirmed Synods 1964 and 1967".

General Synod Orangeville 1968 has given ample attention to these decisions. Therefore, it is not difficult to form an opinion.

The main objective, to maintain the Reformed Creeds and the Church Order (unless it could be proven that they were not in accordance with the Word of God) was reached, and the decisions were all directed to that end.

Of course, someone may have doubts about certain thoughts and happenings. Circumstances always differ. Does everybody agree wholeheartedly with Edmonton 1965?

But it is clear that General Synod Hoogeveen 69/70 has done "peacemaker's" work: they have preserved the Church of our Lord from persons who wanted to deviate from the creeds, and from sympathizers with deviators.

The "Acta" Hoogeveen 69/70 are very clear in the decisions concerning Rev. B.J.F.Schoep (Art. 87), Open Brief (Bijlage 10 - pages 516 - 522), and "Attestenbesluit" (Art. 103).

The Committee to be appointed by your meeting will undoubtedly check these matters, which are too extensive to report, even in its essentials.

D. Heidelberg Catechism.

The Deputies, appointed by General Synod Amersfoort-West 1967, with a mandate to transform the text of the Heidelberg Catechism into present-day Dutch, reported at Synod Hoogeveen that they were unable to complete their Report in time. Synod appointed again Deputies. (Art. 334).

E. Psalmberijming.

The General Synod Hoogeveen 69/70 decided (Art. 419) to forward the Report of Committee IV of General Synod Orangeville 1968, plus Article 87 of the Acts of G.S. Orangeville 1968 to their Deputies, since it deemed it worthwhile information for the Deputies for its own "Psalmberijming".

F. Baptism of Adopted Children.

The decision of General Synod Hoogeveen 69/70, concerning the baptism of Adopted Children, differs from the practices in the Canadian Reformed Churches.

As the Civil Laws in The Netherlands are not comparable with the Canadian Legislation on this matter, it is understandable that they may come up with other decisions. (Art. 376).

However, it should not effect our sister-relationship with the Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland.

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G. South-Africa.

The General Synod Hoogeveen 69/70 decided (Art.314) that De Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland will not maintain a sister-church-relationship with "Die Vrye Gereformeerde Kerk te Pretoria"(clerk M.J.Boersema), as long as this church has not returned from the deviations of the pure doctrine and a true maintaining of the Church Order.

Correspondence with "Die Vrye Gereformeerde Kerk te Pretoria"(clerk H.J. Nauta) will be maintained.

At a later date (Art. 414) Synod decided, "dat zij de te benoemen Deputaten voor Correspondentie met Buitenlandse Kerken zal opdragen de raad van de kerk te Pretoria (scriba M.J.Boersema) te blijven zoeken".

H. Japan.

Correspondence with The Reformed Church in Japan has been discussed at the General Synod Hoogeveen 69/70, but in view of the standing of this Japanese Church, being a member of the Reformed Ecumenical Synod, and having correspondence with three churches in America and Canada, the appointed Deputies received a restricted mandate.

Herewith I should like to conclude my "Report". Our activities as Deputies have culminated in the reported facts, reason why we did not submit a complete statement of our labours. Correspondence regarding the standing of visitors from The Netherlands, and requests for information were not mentioned for example, as we consider this type of activities the regular workload (we are not complaining; it isn't that bad) that goes with the appointment as Deputies.

All in all, you will have understood that my conclusion and advice is to maintain the Sister-Church-Relationship with De Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland, and as a consequence to maintain the Correspondence.

May the Lord furnish you as delegates with the wisdom of His Word in all your deliberations and decisions!

With brotherly greetings,

Yours Respectfully,



C. Ouwersloot