

December 12 1941

Mrs. W. E. Anderson
285 Prospect Street
Dover, New Jersey

My dear Mrs. Anderson,

Your good letter of December 8 has just come to hand. I was deeply affected by your letter, and its contents have become to me a matter of great concern. When first your son came to the campus I became acquainted with him both in the class room and in campus life. I noted then that he had need of some adjustments to life as he very quickly became partisan in some of the difficulties ensuing in the athletic department. After that he seemed to get along better. I regret very deeply his becoming involved in this present controversy over theological issues.

I am calling your letter to the attention of responsible individuals for their consideration. I shall greatly appreciate your continued prayers in our behalf for wisdom and guidance in these matters, and of course also for your lad and any others that may be so confused.

With prayer for you all at home, I am

Sincerely yours in Christ,

(Signed) V. R. Edman

Mrs. Anderson also wrote to Schoon on Sept 27 1941. Schoon answered on Dec. 18 1941, & signed himself Assistant to the Dean of Men. Yet the Dean's office kept Wm. A. in our house the year of 41 + 42 & would have let him return for 42 + 43, had we not discovered Mrs. Anderson's protest & insisted that he live elsewhere.

March 14 1942

President V. Raymond Edman
Wheaton College

Dear Dr. Edman,

The following is my analysis of the situation in philosophy. Whatever the decision may be, changes will have to be made in the catalog material.

When the nation is at war, its citizens, in an effort to do something, often waste their energies in useless undertakings and sometimes do more harm than good. This is particularly evident in the general relaxing of standards.

War does not alter the values, and should not alter the standards of a liberal education. Though some young men must postpone their studies, the conditions of a prison camp, for example, by forcing one back upon one's inner resources, reveal the superficiality of a utilitarian program based on principles of economic determinism.

A college should therefore make strenuous efforts not to impoverish its curriculum. If, however, the faculty is drafted, and replacements cannot be made, the necessary reductions in curriculum should be spread evenly rather than imposed on one department to the aggrandizement of others, and the modus operandi should be the combination instead of the annihilation of major subjects.

In the case of philosophy at Wheaton, in which the major requirements have been kept low to further a broad liberal program, it would be a strange irony if the ability of the instructor to use the tools of his subject should be the cause of his being prevented from continuing major work.

There is no objection to teaching four hours of German, French, or Greek. As the number of the faculty

is reduced, each one remaining should be willing to assume a fair share of the burden. The point of the present argument is, however, that assuming four hours of a language does not make a philosophy major impossible.

Because of liberal ideals the required units in a philosophy major number but twenty-one. Six of these are ethics and theism. Ancient, Medieval, Modern, and Contemporary now give thirteen more. There are also offered two two-year cycles amounting to eight units. Besides these, a first term of modern philosophy, courses in the Hellenistic age and in logic are in the purely elective group. Even if all this latter group were omitted, it would still be possible to offer a major in philosophy.

The teaching load for one term, with certain changes in hours from the present schedule, could be as follows:

Ancient or Medieval	3	hours
Modern or Contemporary	3	hours
Two-year cycle	2	hours
One other course	3	hours
Greek	4	hours
	15	hours

Thus it is clear that from the arithmetical as well as from the liberal point of view, the dropping of the philosophy major is not justified.

Yours very truly,

Excerpt from a letter written to Glenn Andreas on
June 27 1942, by Dr. Edman

"Quite possibly there has gone abroad a misconception of the situation in regard to a philosophy major at Wheaton. For some years there has been a rather marked decline in the enrollment in that department. Under the uncertain conditions of war days, we are expecting ~~the~~ teachers to branch out into other fields familiar to them, if there should be need. At the time the catalog was published, it was uncertain as to just how much philosophy could be offered, in view of the fact that Dr. Clark is helping with elementary Greek. As soon as possible, this uncertainty was clarified; and on recommendation of the administration, the philosophy major has been continued.
. . . ."

August 21 1942

President V. R. Edman
Wheaton College.

Dear Dr. Edman,

In accordance with your request that I comment on the representation of my theology given in the report of the committee to the Trustees, I take the privilege of mentioning three points in paragraph four, page one.

First, I cannot agree with the statement that John Calvin originated the views under discussion.

Second, the report reads, "he frankly states that God is the author of evil." I did not state, but on the contrary explicitly denied that God was the author of evil. The statement of the report is a misrepresentation agitated by a certain member of the faculty whose oral and written language fall short of a Christian regard for truth, and whose conduct in this matter has been in violation of Biblical standards. He made this false statement in a meeting of the Administration Committee last spring, and I immediately contradicted him, as the members of that committee must remember. I must therefore suppose that the composition of this report to the trustees has been influenced by ideas previously planted by that faculty member, for my language and thought was in conformity with the words and doctrine of the Westminster Confession. This Confession, one of the best expressions of historic Protestantism, to which every Presbyterian minister, elder, and deacon solemnly subscribes, denies, and with it I deny that God is the author of sin. Therefore I object most emphatically to this falsification of my views.

Third, the beliefs itemized at the end of the paragraph are not merely particularizations, but are too partial to avoid being misleading. For example, the third and fourth could be better stated in the language of the Confession: "There is but one only living and true God,

who is infinite in being and perfection, a most pure spirit, invisible, without body, parts, or passions, immutable . . ."

e It ought not to be difficult for anyone to frame a statement of my views, since they can always be found accurately and very fully expressed in the several standards of the various Presbyterian and Reformed churches.

As the remainder of the report is not an expression of my views, but of those of the committee, it is not within my province to suggest changes. May I be permitted, however, to point out that the first recommendation on page two has not to this time been a policy applying to everyone alike. A certain member of the faculty constantly advocates beliefs controversial among orthodox Christians and uses falsehood in doing so. It is my humble opinion that every policy should be administered impartially.

Very respectfully yours,

OFFICE OF
THE PRESIDENT



WHEATON COLLEGE

"For Christ and His Kingdom"

WHEATON, ILLINOIS

August 24, 1942

Dr. Gordon H. Clark
College

My dear Dr. Clark:

Your good letter of August twenty-one was awaiting my return to the office after the Summer Convocation. In the rush of many affairs demanding very immediate attention, I was unable to give it due time and thought there; whereupon I took it with me to Bethany Camp. I have written Mr. Fischer to make whatever corrections are suggested, in the final letter to the Board of Trustees.

I would be of the very strong impression that the letter was drafted entirely upon the interview held with the Committee of the Trustees and was in no wise affected by the views of any member of the Faculty. I would be of the impression that the members of the committee gathered that "the author of evil" and "the originator of evil" were used synonymously. I trust I have made it clear that there is not, on the part of the administration, the slightest intention to falsify any of your views or those of any other member of the faculty.

As to your final paragraph, to the effect that in your opinion a certain member of the faculty constantly advocates beliefs controversial among orthodox Christians and uses falsehoods in doing so, I am unfamiliar with that situation. Again may I assure you that every effort will be made, within human limits, that every policy shall be administered impartially.

Please be assured also of my continued intercession and deep interest in you, and for all of the will of God for Ruth and you.

With warmest greetings, I am

Yours in Christ,

Y. R. Edman

Dictated at Bethany Camp, Winona Lake, Indiana

VRE/rl

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

February 2, 1943

Dr. G. H. Clark
The College

My dear Dr. Clark:

The minutes of the Executive Committee meeting of January twenty-five have just come to my hand. I find therein action of the Committee approving the report of the special sub-committee of the Trustees. Earlier action regarding your tenure was rescinded in view of the fact that the report had not received official action until this time. The actions of the Executive Committee are subject to the approval or disapproval of the Board at its stated meetings. The next meeting of the Board of Trustees will be on Saturday, February thirteen, in Wheaton.

Very sincerely yours,

V. R. Edman

VRE:ah

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

February 26, 1943

Dr. G. H. Clark
The College

My dear Dr. Clark:

Your letter of February fifteen addressed to the Trustees of the College and to me was presented at the latest meeting of the Executive Committee. By vote of that Committee, your resignation to be effective at the end of the 1942-1943 school year (August thirty-one) was accepted. The action of the Committee refers solely to the resignation and does not imply acceptance of the reasons therein stated.

Very sincerely yours,

V. R. Edwin

VRE:ah

C O P Y

March 16, 1943

Dr. J. Oliver Buswell, Jr.
340 West Fifty-fifth Street
New York, New York

My dear Dr. Buswell:

Pressure of duties and possibilities of government programs keep me quite largely in this part of the world, so that there has not been opportunity for a visit with you all in your busy part of the world.

Your Ruth is a great joy and delight to us as she is developing into a very excellent and enthusiastic spiritual leader among the girls. You would have rejoiced with us to have heard her testimony during the days of awakening on the campus.

Dr. Clark has raised some questions relative to the conditions under which he was employed by the College. He implied that the material was familiar to me. We have gone into the files to secure such information, but find nothing relative to his coming or conditions of his tenure. We note that in the catalog of personal files that you took in the summer of 1940, there is one on Dr. Clark. Quite possibly that would contain the information that I should have. I should greatly appreciate your considering loaning it to me for the time being.

Mrs. Edman adds her warmest greetings to mine for Mrs. Buswell and you.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

(signed) V. R. Edman

VRE:ah

3552 Elmley Ave.
Baltimore 13, Md.
March 24, 1944

Dr. V. R. Edman, President
Wheaton College
Wheaton, Illinois

Dear Dr. Edman:

Would you do me the favor of allowing me to quote, perhaps in print, from your letters of last September and October? These letters suggested that certain suspicions I had regarding the orthodoxy of Dr. Cairns were unfounded, and that you would be glad to present Dr. Cairns with a list of questions, and forward to me his answers. I would have been only too glad to see Dr. Cairns get a clean bill of health in this matter. When the list arrived, you acknowledged it, but said that the business of Homecoming was pressing, and that things would be delayed somewhat.

If the ASTP program is canceled at Wheaton, would Dr. Cairns be retained? This question is beside the main point, but if he were to leave, no doubt the storm concerning him would blow over. But the real point is this: can Wheaton afford to allow suspicions regarding the soundness of a professor remain unchallenged? The man's case history is all I have to go on right now, but he has taught without apparent friction at an institution where his fellow professors in theology have thrown sound doctrine to the winds. He might be personally sound, but unwilling to speak out for the Lord at Omaha. Again, he might have repented of such a course since coming to Wheaton. If so, I would like to hear about it. A history professor is not a neutral somebody. Nor are soldiers to be regarded as beyond the reach of the gospel in a history classroom.

There is an unhealthy fog over the East wing which I would like to see dispelled. You are in excellent position either to anoint my eyes or dispel this. The panoply of Ephesians is equal to this task. We should have no zeal but that which is founded on the Word. What is the good name of the college compared to this? A curriculum which has a strange foundation should not be eyed with complacency.

In 1857 there was a split in the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A. Two churches of the same name continued side by side until 1870. One was the "Old School", and the other was the "New School". Both churches had the same constitution, and the same subscription formula. But there was a huge difference. The men in the Old School actually meant it when they subscribed to the confessional statement. This was not always true in the New School. After the Southern church split off from the Old School, the two Northern Schools of thought made the mistake of uniting. Hinc illae lacrimae. The New School, further corrupted into modernism, captured the church, and their method of subscription is now the rule. It takes close questioning to observe a man's position. Of what school is Dr. Cairns? And what if he did subscribe to Wheaton's standards? He has subscribed even to better standards, doubtless. Can you clear this matter?

Sincerely yours,