

*With minor changes  
sent to Honorable +  
Mc Shane.*

June 5 1942

Rev. William R. McCarrell  
334 S. Grove Ave.  
Oak Park, Ill.

My dear Dr. McCarrell,

The other afternoon I phoned in an attempt to make an appointment with you. Your secretary at the church said it would be better for me to write, and following her suggestion I think it would be as well to lay before you here the matter I have in mind, and then if you care to to discuss it further, I am at your service.

Though this letter may seem long, it will ultimately save time if I begin at the beginning.

When the members of the faculty were preparing the material for the present college catalog, Dr. Thiessen, the chairman of our department, told me that Dr. Edman wanted to see me about the offering of the philosophy major. Apparently war and finances required some retrenchment in the college; and I was already helping out in Greek because one of the young men had been taken by the army. I met Dr. Edman in the hall and he asked me to write him a letter giving my views as to retaining or dropping the major work. In that letter I showed one way in which the major could be retained, and there are other possibilities as well.

The next thing I knew the catalog was published with the philosophy major missing. There had been no departmental recommendation, no committee action, no faculty approval. The copy handed in for the catalog contained the major, but someone had deleted it.

It seems elementary to me that all matters pertaining to the curriculum should pass through the faculty. To say, as has later been said, that no definite method of procedure had ever been adopted for the dropping of a major, is not a satisfactory excuse for ignoring both the department and the faculty. Therefore I asked in the faculty meeting

how a major could be dropped without regular action. The faculty seemed to approve my views and instructed the administration committee to discuss the matter and bring back a recommendation. I have since heard that this secret method of altering the catalog has been used before.

Now a second factor enters the picture. In the administration committee meeting it became clear that the war and the budget had virtually nothing to do with the matter, for I had some eighteen or twenty major students while others had less than five.

The real reason came to light in several accusations made against me. Their common core is that I do not agree one hundred per cent with the theology of Dr. Thiessen. There is no question of my acceptance of the doctrines of the college as printed in the catalog; it is a question of matters on which various denominations have long differed. And yet Dr. Thiessen demanded that I express no disagreement with him.

You may remember that last year Dr. Hoffman was dismissed from the college. I gather that the chief cause of his dismissal was theological disagreement with Dr. Thiessen. Now Dr. Hoffman was an Arminian; I am a Calvinist. Dr. Thiessen is neither. He has a system of his own never adopted by any denomination so far as I know.

This basic charge against me was subdivided into several parts, and I can go into them with you if you care.

At any rate, in the committee meeting I tried to reply. I acknowledged, not with shame but with pride, my acceptance of the Westminster Confession of Faith: I really believe it, it is not just a form with me. Its doctrine is the doctrine of a dozen denominations, and while many of them are modernistic now, they have had a noble history. Further, Wheaton is ostensibly an interdenominational school, and if Calvinism is persistently attacked, as it is, it ought also to have a sympathetic presentation.

Therefore the demand to express no disagreement with Dr. Thiessen is a demand for my resignation. I am unwilling to resign without acquainting some of the trustees with the reasons. If the trustees wish to enforce the views of Dr. Thiessen, that will settle the matter; but it will result in a Wheaton purged of Calvinists and Arminians alike.

These are the facts and issues as I see them, and I am presenting them simply for your information.

Very truly yours,