

[Minority Report]

Grand Rapids, Michigan

May 18, 1953

To the Classis East of the Protestant Reformed Churches convening May 19, 1953

Esteemed Brethren:

We, the undersigned, members of the committee appointed to study the protests of the Rev. Hoeksema and the Rev. Ophoff against their Consistory in re its action with the Rev. DeWolf cannot agree with the necessity nor with the contents of the long document which precedes the advice given by the other members of our committee. Neither can we sign the advice that they have drawn up. Instead, as our minority report we present the following:

1. We cannot agree that the Consistory should maintain its former stand that the statement “God promises every one of you that if you believe you will be saved” is not a concise statement of the truth. In our opinion both the statements which the protestants condemn are literally heretical regardless of what the Rev. DeWolf meant by them, regardless of how he explains them and regardless of however much we may rejoice that his examination shows that he does not believe the heresy implied in them. We take this stand:

a. because the protestants have clearly shown from the Scriptures and the Confessions that the literal statements are heretical.

b. and because we believe this is necessary for us to state in the light of our past experiences and history with the Liberated Churches who use these Arminian expressions.

2. As far as the making known to the congregation is concerned we believe:

a. that the statements which the Rev. DeWolf himself made at his examination should be announced to the congregation. We have in mind the following: in regard to the expression “God promises everyone one of you . . .” this statement found on page 4 of the examination, “I didn’t realize that I shouldn’t have used the word ‘promise’ there because of the implications which it might have.” And in regard to the expressions, “our converting ourselves is a prerequisite to entering into the kingdom,” this statement found on page 23 of the examination, “I will frankly admit that I said more on the pulpit than what I now realize I said. I didn’t realize all the implications.”

b. The way in which this is to be announced we leave to the discretion of the Consistory—whether by an announcement that is read or by the Rev. DeWolf himself personally—as Art. 75 of the Church Order also allows.

c. This action we feel is necessary lest a very dangerous precedent be set in our churches that public statements which in their literal form are heretical are explained in private and the unskilled in the congregation who never hear the explanation are left to believe all and any of the implications in the statements. This is all the more so necessary when, as was the case with these two statements of the Rev. DeWolf, there was such an abundance of protest made over against the statements he made.

Wishing you the Lord’s blessing and guidance,

w.s. R. Newhouse
 P. Lubbers

See *For Thy Truth’s Sake*, 502–503, Hanko, RFP

Also, the majority report, found on pages 481–501, should not be ignored by us today. For a powerful and incisive application of the majority report to our controversy today, read Rev. Nathan Langerak, “The Majority Report,” in the March issue of *Sword and Shield*, found [here](#). How necessary is his instruction (“God is always first”) for us today! (16).