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Understandable Worry, Understandable Frustration: The Christian Reformed Church's Long Journey from One College to Multiple Colleges: 1916-1962



by Nicholas Davelaar

Any observer of Christian Reformed Church matters—much less matters of the Church universal—will likely conclude without any influence that denominations do not change smoothly; except for wonderful exceptions, most changes are messy and require a good measure of grace from both those who effected the change and those who vigorously opposed the change. Such an observation holds

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true in an examination of the Christian Reformed Church's long and frustrating journey from one college to multiple colleges, beginning with the establishment of Grundy College in 1916 and more or less ending with the compromise of the Synod of 1962, which allowed other colleges to receive part of the denominational quotas that previously went solely to Calvin College. That journey took nearly 50 years, two failed colleges, and a hefty amount of worry and frustration. In retrospect, the worry of the one side and the frustration of the other are completely understandable.

Unlike some authors, who either look back on the failed colleges and see only a trail of broken promises¹ or refer to those attempts at starting additional colleges as “fiascos” in order to bolster a Calvin-alone position,² this paper intentionally rejects an adversarial argument and instead seeks to examine the various issues and positions that the Christian Reformed Church worked through in its journey from one college to multiple colleges.³

Principles of Reformed Ecclesiology

The debate—even argument—surrounding the question of whether to have one college or multiple colleges in the Christian Reformed Church (henceforth CRC) has typically begun with a discussion of a discrepancy between principle and practice: societies, not churches, should own and operate colleges. The CRC has naturally discussed this principle in regard to its own ownership and control of Calvin College. The debate at the synod-

ical level of the CRC began with the Synod of 1898, followed by a barrage of subsequent discussions until the Synod of 1972, when Synod most recently reaffirmed ecclesiastical control of the college.

CRC synods throughout the years have acknowledged that, in principle, societies ought to own and operate colleges. In fact, the CRC twice attempted to transfer ownership of Calvin College to a society, first in 1898 and then again in 1912. The fact that both attempts failed within a few short years suggested to many people that the denomination should content itself with its less-than-ideal relationship to Calvin College.⁴ In line with those experiences and the conclusion that the principle at hand does not necessarily forbid ecclesiastical ownership of a college, synods have declared that the church can own and operate a college, even though it is not the most ideal arrangement.⁵

Even more importantly, time and again the CRC has been forced to consider this discrepancy between principle and practice in light of groups of Christian Reformed members who have wanted to start additional colleges. Namely, does Calvin College's existence rule out additional Christian Reformed colleges, even though they would be more in harmony with Reformed principles? The answer seems to be an obvious "no" as far as principle is concerned, but various Synods have declared that the answer is "yes" when other issues are considered.⁶

In short, both sides of the issue appear to have principle on their side: the one, inasmuch as the principle affirms society-control as the ideal option, and the other, inasmuch as the principle does not deny church-control. Yet in spite of how thoroughly debated the issue of principle has been, this issue seems to have been invoked only to make a stronger case for an additional, society-controlled college. Accordingly, principle appears to have paled in comparison with the other issues involved in the journey from one to multiple Christian Reformed colleges.

The Church's Duty to Train Ministers of the Word

Today this consideration would never come into play when discussing the question at hand, namely whether to have one or multiple Christian Reformed

colleges. However, readers need to remember that there was no Calvin College as it exists today during the early years of Calvin College's alleged history. Calvin College claims March 15, 1876, as its birthday, which is the day that traditionally marks the establishment of Calvin Theological Seminary (as it is called today). However, at that time the school only trained students to become ministers of the Word; the fledgling immigrant denomination had founded the school solely for that purpose. In 1894 the school divided its curriculum into two departments: literary and theological. Accordingly, that year saw the first non-seminarians admitted into the school. Ten years later the Synod of 1904 approved the establishment of Calvin College (albeit with a slightly different name), which became a full four-year institution in 1920.⁷

From this exceptionally brief history of Calvin College and Seminary, two things stand out: first, the close relationship between the college and seminary, and second, the foundational drive to train ministers of the Word. Accordingly, those who argued for Calvin College as the only Christian Reformed college supported their position by pointing to the CRC's duty to train ministers. In their estimation, other Christian Reformed colleges (junior colleges in particular) would weaken Calvin College's pre-seminary program, and therefore the denomination would suffer. Even the synodical study committee that reported to the Synod of 1934 related the problem of a weakening pre-seminary program to its concern about students attending the then-extinct Chicago Christian Junior College.⁸ Such concerns lingered even into the 1950s.⁹

On the other side, those who argued for multiple Christian Reformed colleges apparently did not provide an answer to assuage the concerns of those who feared a deteriorating pre-seminary education for the future ministers of the CRC. From their silence it would appear as if most of the denomination did not consider this much of an issue. If they did, they considered it an issue that paled in comparison to the others at hand.

Denominational Expansion (Geographical Issues)

With the relatively minor concerns of principle and training of pastors out of the way, this paper fi-

nally can touch upon an issue at the heart of the debate from 1916 to 1962: denominational expansion. Not only had the CRC grown in membership over time, but it had also grown in size geographically.¹⁰ Were it the case that the CRC had remained limited to Michigan and its neighboring states, it would be reasonable to limit the denomination to one college and expect college-bound students to attend that particular college. However, the CRC had grown to include congregations on both the East Coast and the West Coast, with numerous congregations throughout Canada and on the prairies and plains of the Midwest United States. Accordingly, many Christian Reformed students found it more feasible, either practically or financially, to attend public universities or other Christian colleges than to attend Calvin College.¹¹ Others simply did not go on to pursue higher education.¹²

In response, many voices in the CRC rightly made an effort to point out the increasing ease of transportation. These people, mostly advocates of a Calvin-only position, believed that the other side was making an issue out of a non-issue; in their minds, geographical difficulties had little importance for a CRC constituency committed to *their school*. Additionally, Calvin College adjusted its tuition for those students who had to travel great distances from home to school.

Consequently, there were those who argued that multiple Christian Reformed colleges were not needed. This group firmly believed that Calvin College sufficiently provided for the higher educational needs of the denomination. They even went so far as to cite the failure of Grundy College in support of this claim.¹³

However, both the increasing ease of transportation and tuition adjustments still could not overcome the distance for many CRC families, especially during times of personal or national financial trouble, most notably the Great Depression.¹⁴ Even though most CRC families faithfully supported Calvin through their quotas and prayers, many would still send their children to public universities or area Christian colleges. Some synodical study committees noted this trend, as did those who worked toward establishing additional Christian Reformed colleges, but Synods and critics alike most often ignored this simple, practical observation.¹⁵

Changes in American Culture

Changes in American culture also played a key role in the CRC's journey from one college to multiple colleges. In fact, these changes more or less forced the discussion at hand, with the exception of some of the unique motivations behind the establishment of Grundy College.

Especially during the later years of the time period 1916-1962, the United States was undergoing a widely recognized growth in education, at least in terms of years in school. An increasing number of students not only completed high school but also wanted to continue studying beyond high school graduation. This trend only intensified with the end of World War II and the relative prosperity that followed.¹⁶

Naturally, the CRC could not escape these cultural forces; in conjunction with the geographical issue, the denomination could deny the need for multiple Christian Reformed colleges for only so long. That said, Synod denied that need to the very end, even to the point of replacing a study committee when it definitively acknowledged the need for regional colleges.¹⁷

Accordingly, any Christian Reformed societies that wanted to start a college would be on their own, with maybe a recommended offering to help them in their effort.¹⁸ Two of the colleges that emerged—Grundy College and Chicago Christian Junior College—ultimately failed, but not for lack of enthusiasm or students. A third, what is today called Dordt College, succeeded. The crucial difference between the failure of the former colleges and the success of the latter hung primarily on one historical event: the Great Depression. Those who argued for multiple colleges saw these colleges, in spite of the dramatic failures, as undeniable proof of the growing need for multiple Christian Reformed colleges; in their minds, these colleges illustrated the powerful ability of regional colleges to draw and subsequently train Reformed students, with little, if any, detriment to Calvin College.¹⁹

Not surprisingly, those who argued a Calvin-only position emphasized the failures of Grundy College and Chicago Christian Junior College. In doing so, they used these colleges as examples to prove that the denomination should not divide its support among a myriad of equally unstable

colleges but instead should support Calvin fully *and solely* in order to ensure the future success and strength of the cause of Christian Reformed higher education.²⁰

Concern for Denominational Unity

Even more importantly, the combination of denominational expansion and changes in American culture seems to have worked together to inflict the hearts of many devout Christian Reformed members with fear over the future of their denomination. This passionate concern for denominational unity seems to be first among all of the reasons that compelled Christian Reformed members to hold and argue a Calvin-only position. From editorials in *The Banner* to statements in synodical reports, many clearly saw Calvin College as a unifying element for the CRC. Not only did the

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college-bound youth of the denomination come to Calvin to receive a decidedly Reformed higher education, but Calvin also provided a cause—a unifying cause—around which the immigrant denomination had overwhelmingly rallied, almost since the denomination’s inception.²¹

With that perspective, it comes as no surprise that a good number of people in the denomination argued to defend their school when proponents of multiple colleges began to talk about starting another Christian Reformed college; these concerned members were arguing, not merely to save Calvin but also to save their denomination. Now this effort does not suggest that those concerned CRC members were in denial, frantically trying to hold

together a tightly knit, primarily Dutch denomination in the face of geographical and cultural forces that threatened to tear their churches apart. However, the historical record does indicate that a large number truly viewed Calvin as an institution that tied the CRC together. Accordingly, they tried to do everything possible to convince their Christian Reformed brothers and sisters not to split the denomination; one author argued that the mushrooming of junior colleges in the CRC indicated a trend toward factionalism.²²

As expected, those who argued for multiple Christian Reformed colleges formulated a response in regard to the concern for denominational unity. Even though it failed to address the practical and historical aspects of the concern of their opponents, they countered with ecclesiological doctrine: colleges do not unite Christians. Some of them criticized their opponents rather backhandedly by pointing out that the CRC was in sorry shape if it needed a college to unite it; they tried to correct their opponents’ ecclesiology by pointing out that the preaching of the Word and sacraments bind Christians far more than a college does.²³

Ironically, a synodical study committee that reported to the Synod of 1948 argued that the CRC should establish regional colleges (junior colleges to be specific) in order *to preserve* denominational unity. The study committee did report concern about dividing the CRC, but it also declared that such division would come about only if Synod were averse to starting junior colleges and were thereby more or less forcing certain communities to establish colleges on their own. They believed that such a multiple-college plan would only strengthen the Christian Reformed educational system and bring about greater commitment to the CRC.²⁴ Both the majority and minority reports agreed with these conclusions.²⁵ However, the Synod of 1948 deferred action and appointed another committee, giving it a mandate that seems to demand a report that supported a Calvin-only position.²⁶ That subsequent study committee produced such a report.²⁷

In the end, it appears as if those who argued for multiple Christian Reformed colleges completely misunderstood the concern of their opponents, regardless of how ill-founded those fears were. In

fact, neither group appears to have been able to understand the other's concerns or frustrations. In the end they merely agreed to disagree, and their compromise, approved by the Synod of 1962, has remained until the present day.²⁸

Concern for Reformed Orthodoxy

Similarly, only an agreement to disagree could end the on-going discussion in regard to the Calvin-only group's concern for Reformed orthodoxy. Those who argued for Calvin as the only Christian Reformed college pointed to the CRC's difficulty with preserving orthodox teaching among its faculty and orthodox behavior within its student body. Accordingly, they questioned how well a society-controlled college could stay faithful to Reformed faith and doctrine. They argued that a society-controlled college lacked the close organizational control of Calvin; such a college would surely stray from its Reformed roots, giving way to open acceptance of the myriad heresies abounding in science, philosophy, etc.²⁹

In response, some of those who argued for multiple colleges bluntly proclaimed that "Christ did not build the security of His Church on the rock that might be provided by a liberal arts college."³⁰ On the other hand, the proponents of Dordt College in the early 1950s tried to alleviate these concerns by providing clear descriptions of how they would organize their board, namely by including classical advisors on their board, but to no avail.³¹ According to their accounts, they quickly discovered that their opponents could not conceive of a society-controlled college that would not stray from the faith.

Somewhat ironically, given this context, a number of the proponents of multiple Christian Reformed colleges also argued that a society-controlled college would be able to give professors and students a greater amount of academic freedom since it would not be tightly monitored by an entire denomination.³² At the same time, supporters of a Calvin-only position tried to argue the same advantage, namely that a church-controlled school could provide ample academic freedom.³³ This particular argument seems to reduce the entire debate over orthodoxy to a comic opera, with both sides trying to argue how they best ensure ortho-

doxy and also academic freedom at the same time.

In the end, this particular debate seems to have been useless, merely because neither side could argue for *both* orthodoxy *and* generous academic freedom at the same time with much success. Even more importantly, no one could predict the character of a college that did not yet exist, and all they had to work with were the relatively short history of Calvin College and the brief histories of Grundy College and Chicago Christian Junior College. Simply put, both sides were basing their arguments on fear and/or faith.

Financial Worries

As much as both sides might have claimed that they were arguing on the basis of principle, concern for Reformed orthodoxy, and other such noble points of debate, the entire argument centered around financial worry at its most basic level, second possibly only to concern for denominational unity. Both sides rightly knew that it takes a significant amount of money to run a school, not including the equally significant amount required to expand and update the campus and/or staff regularly. But, while one side believed that the denomination could support more than one school, the other doubted it.³⁴

Those who argued that Calvin College should be the only Christian Reformed college had the historical record on their side. Both Grundy College and Chicago Christian Junior College, the only two other colleges that had been established prior to 1955, had failed. For the Calvin-only group, these failures proved that the denomination could not support multiple colleges.³⁵

In regard to the junior-college movement in northwest Iowa, they pointed specifically to the financial failure of Western Academy. That failure in the 1920s proved that northwest Iowa could not support a Christian Reformed high school (as such schools are called today), much less a college. In fact, not only did Western Academy fail, but Calvin College graciously took possession of the building, assuming \$10,000 of debt.³⁶ Additionally, Calvin College paid \$8,677.79 over fifteen years for the back interest, foreclosure expenses, and insurance, even while letting a new Western Christian High School use that building at no cost for many of

those years.³⁷ In the end, Calvin sold the building to Western Christian High School in 1942 for only \$5,000.³⁸ In short, if even the large Christian Reformed constituency in northwest Iowa—foremost among the push for multiple Christian Reformed Colleges in the 1940s and 1950s—could not support a high school apart from relying on Calvin College to bail them out in times of trouble, it would be foolish for them or anyone else to try to start a college.³⁹

What is more, those who argued that Calvin College should be the sole Christian Reformed college had seen Calvin barely pass through the Depression. In order for the school to continue through many years when its income continued to decrease, Calvin College's faculty voluntarily and repeatedly took salary cuts.⁴⁰ Therefore, it is not surprising that, as John Timmerman remarked in regard to the morale at Calvin College during the years in and following the Depression, "talk about junior colleges in various parts of the country aroused anxiety."⁴¹ Those who argued for one Christian Reformed college were rightly afraid of Calvin coming so near to closing once again. Accordingly, they argued with passion and force because they believed that their school's existence depended on the outcome of the debate.⁴²

Of course, the Calvin-only group did have some seemingly ulterior motives, most of which are probably only coincidental. It just so happens that Grundy College, the college that initiated the debate, came into existence while Calvin College and Seminary were in the process of building the Franklin campus. The first building on that campus was completed in 1917, the year immediately following Grundy College's establishment.⁴³ Additionally, in 1947, as the movement for junior colleges was becoming stronger in the CRC, Calvin inaugurated a one million dollar fund drive for much-needed expansion.⁴⁴ Within the next fifteen years—the same time period Dordt College came into existence—Calvin required even more funds as it began the massive project of planning, purchasing, and building its current Knollcrest campus. And between 1917 and 1947, of course, lay the Great Depression. Accordingly, throughout the entire journey from one college in 1916 to multiple colleges in 1962, Calvin always needed more

money, sometimes to make ends meet, sometimes to expand. Those who argued for one Christian Reformed college naturally wanted Calvin to succeed and grow; they feared that any other colleges would affect Calvin's growing financial requests and needs by diminishing its broad, faithful, and *still-needed* base of supporters.⁴⁵

Now, those who argued for multiple colleges did not have much of a foundation on which to stand and from which to argue against the Calvin-only group in regard to financial matters. Their main argument consisted of a belief that more students would attend college if an area college were located closer to their homes, which would mean more tuition dollars and a larger, financially loyal base of support. However, their primary response to the reasonable concerns of their opponents seems to have been an unswerving faith that another college could and would survive and even thrive alongside Calvin.

Miscellany

To do justice to the people who debated on one side or the other during the CRC's journey from one college to multiple colleges, one must recognize that the issues already mentioned do not encompass the entire discussion; to support their positions, these Christian Reformed members considered a number of less significant or less common issues that should be recognized, albeit briefly.

First, some of the Calvin-only group argued in regard to the junior college movement—to which Chicago Christian Junior College and Dordt College (during the early years) belonged—that junior colleges might lack the educational quality of their four-year counterparts.⁴⁶ Therefore, some dismissed the movement altogether.⁴⁷ However, most did not dismiss the movement altogether but asked for time to see how junior colleges developed in the States and whether the CRC could expect junior colleges of their own to be quality institutions of higher learning.

Second, and slightly related, some of the group that argued for multiple Christian Reformed colleges accused their opponents of elitism. Most of their published articles do not contain any such sentiments, but it is not unlikely that the few appearances of this opinion may be indicative of a

more widely spread criticism of the Calvin-only group.⁴⁸

Third, some of the Calvin-only group cited tradition as an issue that the CRC should thoroughly take into account. Regardless of whether or not churches should own and operate colleges and regardless of whether or not there was a definite need for regional colleges, the fact remained that the CRC owned and operated Calvin College. Under other circumstances they would have agreed that it would be acceptable to establish multiple colleges; however, given CRC history up to that point, they felt that the entire CRC should live with the status quo and press on behind its school.⁴⁹ The CRC had established and supported Calvin College as the educational arm of the denomination,⁵⁰ and the need to change was not great enough to warrant changing that tradition.

Lastly, it must be mentioned that the groups behind Grundy College and Dordt College each had a unique motivation for arguing to establish additional Christian Reformed colleges. Specifically, Grundy College began as a college and a seminary, with the explicit purpose of training ministers for service in the German-speaking churches of the CRC.⁵¹ Dordt College arose out of a need to train more teachers for service in the Christian Reformed day schools of the midwest United States.⁵² Yet outside of the prominent role that these purposes played in the establishment of each respective school, these unique purposes did not play much of a role in the greater journey from one college to multiple colleges.

Conclusion

In the end, both sides could only compromise. The group that wanted multiple Christian Reformed colleges gradually came to realize that they could not convince the Synod of the CRC to establish regional colleges. If some members of the CRC wanted another college, they would have to start one on their own. Similarly, the group that wanted to keep Calvin College as the sole Christian Reformed college could not convince their opponents to remain content for the time being with one college in Grand Rapids—they had no way of preventing the determined CRC members in central Iowa, Chicago, and northwest Iowa from go-

ing ahead and founding their own colleges.⁵³

Regardless of how stubborn these two sides might seem to modern readers, both groups had understandable positions. Both groups had genuine fears, big dreams, and particular hopes concerning the education of future generations of the Christian Reformed Church. Combined with historical events, these strong feelings and beliefs made for a long, frustrating, yet successful journey together.

Endnotes

1. Alan Waddilove, “Grundy College: Undying Legacy or Broken Promises?” *Origins* 19:1 (2001): 54-60.
2. B.K. Kuiper, qtd. in Mike Vanden Bosch, *The History of Dordt College: The B.J. Haan Years* (Sioux Center, Dordt College Press, 1990), 35. Cf. Bernard J. Haan, “Growing Interest!,” *Torch and Trumpet* 2 (December 1952/January 1953): 10, in which Haan made a similar observation: “[Grundy College’s] supposed failure still casts an ugly shadow upon all subsequent attempts to establish a school for higher education by Christian Reformed adherents outside of or in addition to Calvin College....”
3. For the purpose of this paper I make little distinction between colleges and junior colleges. Now, some might argue that I have improperly pressed multiple denominational issues—namely ecclesiastical ownership of Calvin, the question of junior colleges, and the use of denominational quotas—into one struggle: the journey from one to multiple Christian Reformed colleges. However, even though the Synod of the Christian Reformed Church did indeed deal with each of those denominational issues separately, I see them as part of that one, overarching struggle.
4. For a very brief summary, see *Acts of Synod 1950*, 311.
5. *Acts of Synod 1957*, 45-46.
6. *Acts of Synod 1934*, 45, 177. That year Synod agreed with the concluding advice of the study committee (majority report): “Our efforts should be in the direction of further centralization, i.e. of one strong, central, Reformed College, rather than in the direction of decentralization.”
7. Harry Boonstra, *Our School: Calvin College and the CRC* (Grand Rapids, MI, Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2001), 30-31.
8. *Acts of Synod 1934*, 175.
9. Henry R. Van Til, “Christian Reformed Synods on the Question of the Relation of Church and School,” *Torch*

- and *Trumpet* 6 (December 1956): 9.
10. Samuel Brondsema paints an excellent picture of the geographical growth of the CRC. See Samuel G. Brondsema, "For Junior Colleges," *The Banner* 88 (February 20, 1953): 236.
 11. Abraham C. Boerkoel, "The Junior College Problem," *Torch and Trumpet* 3 (June/July 1953): 28-29. Cf. *Acts of Synod 1932*, 38-39, wherein Fourth CRC of Chicago presented an overture to Synod that claimed that Calvin College was most advantageous for people in West Michigan, primarily Grand Rapids and its immediate vicinity; *Acts of Synod 1947*, p. 22, wherein Classis California presented an overture to Synod to establish a junior college on the West Coast because of the growth of the classis and its distance to Calvin.
 12. Bernard J. Haan, "Growing Need!" *Torch and Trumpet* 2 (February/March 1953): 11-12; John A. Vander Ark, "Observations on the Junior College Question," *The Banner* 88 (January 23, 1953): 103.
 13. Henry J. Kuiper, "Impressions of Our Ostfriesland Group. I.," *The Banner* 78 (February 5, 1943): 124. Kuiper wrote, "As to the dissolution of the Grundy Center School, whatever may have been the cause, the very fact that it was disbanded would seem to point to the fact that it was not needed or at least no longer needed."
 14. Harry Boonstra, *Our School: Calvin College and the CRC* (Grand Rapids, MI, Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2001), 42-43.
 15. *Acts of Synod 1948*, 280. The study committee noted that there were already enough students to call for establishment of junior colleges in at least two classes, a good number of which went to colleges other than Calvin or not at all. Synod effectively rejected this report. See *Acts of Synod 1948*, 47.
 16. A similar trend might possibly be noted for Canada as well, but the drive for and debate concerning multiple Christian Reformed colleges seems to have been strongest in the United States during the given time period. Accordingly, this paper will concentrate on the United States.
 17. *Acts of Synod 1948*, 278-279. The study committee (majority report) concluded that the question now was not if, but how to establish regional junior colleges. As noted earlier, Synod effectively rejected this report (footnote 15).
 18. The Synod of 1955 did precisely that in regard to Dordt College (as it is called today). See B.J. Haan, *A Zeal for Christian Education: the Memoirs of B.J. Haan* (Sioux Center, IA, Dordt College Press, 1992), 85.
 19. B.J. Haan, *A Zeal for Christian Education: the Memoirs of B.J. Haan* (Sioux Center, IA, Dordt College Press, 1992), 65-66.
 20. This will be discussed more thoroughly in the section on financial worries.
 21. C. Oliver Buus, "Junior College Possibilities," *The Banner* 92 (March 22, 1957): 6-7. Buus not only emphasized denominational unity but also tried to argue for a way to integrate regional junior colleges into Calvin College. This begins to make sense when readers note that he is writing after the establishment of Dordt College.
 22. John Harold Bratt, "Church Control of Calvin College," *The Reformed Journal* 7 (February 1957): 17.
 23. George Stob, "The Church and Calvin College," *The Reformed Journal* 7 (May 1957): 9. Note that Stob was not arguing for multiple colleges as much as he was for an independent/society-controlled Calvin college.
 24. *Acts of Synod 1948*, 281-282.
 25. *Acts of Synod 1948*, 279.
 26. *Acts of Synod 1948*, 47-48.
 27. *Acts of Synod 1950*, 301-315. Synod discussed this report, but postponed action until the following year because it was not yet ready to act, presumably because Synod was divided on the issue. See *Acts of Synod 1950*, 81. In 1951 Synod discussed the issue, with the result that it appointed a committee "to keep Synod informed with respect to the feasibility and need of Junior Colleges among our people." See *Acts of Synod 1951*, 89-90.
 28. The compromise took the shape of a synodical decision concerning the denominational quotas that went to Calvin College. Synod approved a plan to reduce the quotas that had previously gone to Calvin, with the difference going to area Christian Reformed colleges. This might not look like much of a compromise at first glance, but it involved an acknowledgement of regional colleges on the part of the Calvin-only group and a willingness to retain Calvin College as the denominational college on the part of those who argued for multiple colleges.
 29. Henry R. Van Til, "Christian Reformed Synods on the Question of the Relation of Church and School," *Torch and Trumpet* 6 (December 1956): 11.
 30. George Stob, "The Church and Calvin College," *The Reformed Journal* 7 (May 1957): 10.
 31. Bernard J. Haan, "Organization and Administration," *Torch and Trumpet* 3 (April/May 1953): 11.
 32. George Stob, "The Church and Calvin College," *The Reformed Journal* 7 (May 1957): 8. Again, Stob was not arguing for multiple colleges, but his arguments served well to advance multiple-college cause.
 33. John Harold Bratt, "Church Control of Calvin College," *The Reformed Journal* 7 (February 1957): 17.

34. Henry Schultze, "What Must Be Taught in a Junior College?" *The Banner* 82 (May 9, 1947): 607. Most notably, Schultze observed that Calvin could barely provide the equipment necessary for some of its own courses! See also his article, "Counting the Cost," *The Banner* 82 (May 2, 1947): 576.
35. Henry Schultze, "Let Us Plan Wisely," *The Banner* 82 (April 18, 1947): 512. Schultze cited the past not to discourage other colleges from beginning but to warn the denomination not to rush to form junior colleges in light of the past, even though he predicted that the CRC would have junior colleges throughout the land in due time.
36. John J. Timmerman, *Promises to Keep: A Centennial History of Calvin College* (Grand Rapids, MI, Calvin College and Seminary, 1975), 122.
37. *Acts of Synod 1941*, 151-152.
38. *Acts of Synod 1942*, 26, 167.
39. By no means is this intended to suggest that northwest Iowa was the only area in which CRC members were interested in starting Christian Reformed colleges. Not only does the historical record include the attempts of Grundy College and Chicago Christian Junior College, but additionally in 1946 Classis California overtured the CRC Synod "to establish junior colleges in areas of the denomination needing such institutions." See B.J. Haan, *A Zeal for Christian Education: the Memoirs of B.J. Haan* (Sioux Center, IA, Dordt College Press, 1992), 67.
40. Henry J. Ryskamp, *Offering Hearts, Shaping Lives: A History of Calvin College 1876-1966*, ed. Harry Boonstra (Grand Rapids, MI, Calvin Alumni Association, 2000), 88.
41. John J. Timmerman, *Promises to Keep: A Centennial History of Calvin College* (Grand Rapids, MI, Calvin College and Seminary, 1975), 74.
42. One could rightly add that this group was being painfully realistic. Grundy College faced the very same financial difficulties during the Great Depression and ended up closing in 1934. The Calvin-only group was arguing from experience that the denomination could truly support only one school. For a picture of Grundy's similar financial situation, see Henry Zwaanstra, "Grundy College: 1916-1934," in *Perspectives on the Christian Reformed Church*, ed. Peter De Klerk and Richard R. De Ridder (Grand Rapids, MI, Baker Book House, 1983), 139-140.
43. Harry Boonstra, *Our School: Calvin College and the CRC* (Grand Rapids, MI, Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2001), 32.
44. John J. Timmerman, *Promises to Keep: A Centennial History of Calvin College* (Grand Rapids, MI, Calvin College and Seminary, 1975), 92.
45. Sydney T. Youngsma, "No Money Problems," *The Banner* 94 (May 29, 1959): 14.
46. Such a sentiment is clearly evident from Calvin College's treatment of Dordt College when the latter was seeking accreditation. Dordt thought it only natural to ask Calvin to be one of the three sister institutions to recommend it for accreditation. Calvin refused, so Dordt turned to other area institutions, who gladly recommended the school. See B.J. Haan, *A Zeal for Christian Education: the Memoirs of B.J. Haan* (Sioux Center, IA, Dordt College Press, 1992), 102. Not unexpectedly, John Timmerman paints a different picture of Calvin's relationship to Dordt and Trinity Colleges in their early years. See John J. Timmerman, *Promises to Keep: A Centennial History of Calvin College* (Grand Rapids, MI, Calvin College and Seminary, 1975), 124.
47. Henry Zylstra, "Are Junior Colleges the Solution?" *The Reformed Journal* 2 (November 1952): 5-7.
48. Peter P. De Boer, "Letter to the Journal," *The Reformed Journal* 3 (January 1953): 15-16, cited in Mike Vanden Bosch, *The History of Dordt College: The B.J. Haan Years* (Sioux Center, Dordt College Press, 1990), 34. This criticism makes sense in light of certain articles, such as those by Henry Zylstra in *The Reformed Journal* (May 1951, November 1952, and February 1953), to which Peter De Boer was responding. Zylstra's articles do indeed exhibit a certain degree of elitism.
49. John Harold Bratt, "Church Control of Calvin College," *The Reformed Journal* 7 (February 1957): 17-20. The last of Bratt's four points is that church-control of Calvin College "has proven to be eminently satisfactory."
50. Harry Boonstra, *Our School: Calvin College and the CRC* (Grand Rapids, MI, Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2001), 10.
51. Henry Zwaanstra, "Grundy College: 1916-1934," in *Perspectives on the Christian Reformed Church*, ed. Peter De Klerk and Richard R. De Ridder (Grand Rapids, MI, Baker Book House, 1983), 109-110, 120.
52. B.J. Haan, *A Zeal for Christian Education: the Memoirs of B.J. Haan* (Sioux Center, IA, Dordt College Press, 1992), 72.
53. Cf. B.J. Haan, *A Zeal for Christian Education: the Memoirs of B.J. Haan* (Sioux Center, IA, Dordt College Press, 1992), 83. Haan recounted using the illustration of a train to encourage people in the years prior to the establishment of Dordt College; he proudly likened the effort to establish a regional college to a steam engine: it is difficult to get going, but nothing can stop it once it has built up steam and momentum.

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