



# WESLEYAN THEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

A FELLOWSHIP OF WESLEYAN ARMINIAN SCHOLARS

ESTABLISHED IN 1965

Annual Meeting, Anderson, 11/83

To the members of the WTS:

This constitutes my report covering my service as promotional secretary for the year 1982/83. By the constitution the work of the promotional secretary has two major foci: service on the program/executive committee of the society and the ongoing promotional work as deemed appropriate and necessary.

The first of these assignments was filled in numerous ways but primarily by attendance at all the executive committee meetings and in the program planning. With regard to the former I prepared a special study for the additional executive meeting held in June to consider, as directed in last fall's annual meeting, the question of "networking" or the relationship of the WTS to other currents. With regard to the latter in addition to the normal committee work in program planning I co-ordinated the Friday morning double-session in this year's meeting, developing the theme and organizing the session.

Other promotional work has proceeded on several fronts:

(1) For the last couple of years I managed to get a report of last year's meeting in the TSF BULLETIN. This seems to be the major source that I have located that is willing to consider reporting on meetings like ours--especially since CHRISTIANITY TODAY no longer seems interested in reporting on such intellectual events. I have a commitment from the TSF BULLETIN to carry a report of this meeting. Depending on several factors other options may be possible. If so, I shall pursue them immediately after the meeting.

(2) I have carried WTS materials to and made presentations at other meetings where such seemed relevant. I did this, for example, at the annual meeting of the John Wesley Theological Institute near Chicago. There a great deal of interest was generated in the society and I expect that our journal will in the future carry ads for the JWTI. I made a similar presentation at the Bicentennial Theological Consultation at Emory University in

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4410 Renn Street  
Rockville, MD 20853

### PRESIDENT-ELECT

David L. Cubie, Ph.D.  
Mount Vernon Nazarene College  
Mount Vernon, OH 43050

### SECRETARY-TREASURER

Wayne E. Caldwell, Th.D.  
215 E. 43rd Street  
Marion, IN 46952

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Donald W. Dayton, B.D., M.S.  
Northern Baptist Theological Seminary  
660 East Butterfield Road  
Lombard, IL 60148

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Nazarene Bible College  
P.O. Box 15749  
Colorado Springs, CO 80935

August were I made available some issues of the journal and our president beat me to the punch by distributing this year's annual meeting program. I was particularly gratified by the strong participation in this meeting of members of the WTS. This was especially significant in view of our decision to go next year to Emory University as a part of the celebration of the bicentennial of American Methodism.

(3) In the last few years I have been drawn into certain "ecumenical" discussions where I have been able to represent the WTS and the CHA constituency to some extent. In this process I have discovered the alarming extent to which we are not even on the intellectual map of many church leaders. We tend to be lost amongst the Evangelicals or confused with the Pentecostals. We have only recently, for example, begun to be counted among the "world confessional bodies." At any rate, in part because of these contacts and in part because of new initiatives from new staff involved in some ecumenical circles, we will at this meeting be considering an invitation to establish a liaison with the Commission of Faith and Order of the National Council of Churches. This is perhaps a surprising question to have before us, but I think it is a sign of some change in the church world, and an opportunity for us to exert some leadership in crossing some barriers. The Theological Students Fellowship of Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship has already decided to send a liaison with the blessing of the president of IVCF. The Society for Pentecostal Studies will be considering a similar invitation, and I am assured by the officers that they will likely accept. The Church of God (Anderson, Indiana) has had such a relationship for perhaps a couple of decades. I hope that we will approve such a step--if only to insure that we are understood more broadly as a full member of the Christian community with a significant contribution to make to the rest of the church world.

I could continue this report by describing other efforts to put the holiness traditions more fully on the "map" of both the church world and the intellectual community, but much of this activity moves very quickly into my own scholarly work. I would mention only that I am preparing a 40-volume reprint series that will make available to the general scholarly world many of the classics of the holiness tradition in America. I hope that this and other similar work contributes to our common work. I remain convinced that we are living through very significant times and that we have a major contribution to make if we can find the appropriate channels through which to express it. This conviction lies behind our discussions of networking and the relationship of the WTS to other theological and ecclesiastical currents.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve the society in this my ninth year in office. I am willing to continue to serve or to have the duties pass to another whose concerns and style would complement my own work--according to the wisdom of the society.

Respectfully submitted,

