

Undated letter from Dooyeweerd to Hendrik Colijn (circa 1925, shortly before Dooyeweerd's appointment as Lecturer at the VU Amsterdam).

From :

G. Puchinger 1995. "Dooyeweerd: de figuur." In *Dooyeweerd Herdacht*

Referaten gehouden op het Dooyeweerd-symposium aan de Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam op vrijdag 18 november 1994 onder redactie van J. de Bruijn (Amsterdam: VU Uitgeverij, 1995), 17-18.

Your Excellency,

Since I learned that you will be leaving the country again tomorrow, I feel compelled to seek your advice on a few matters. I would not have dared to write what I am about to if I did not know that I was serving a cause to which I have devoted my life since my arrival at the Kuyper Foundation, and above all, if I were not deeply convinced that this is God's work, which must be carried out at the cost of all our personal considerations.

When you first spoke to me about a professorship at the V.U., I must admit, I was quite hesitant. I know that more is expected of me there than simply teaching, and indeed, that particular task attracts me greatly. (...) But there is something else that has given me no rest for weeks now. Despite all his special talents and devoted zeal for his students, Zevenbergen was unable to prevent the practical abandonment of his lectures in legal philosophy, as his students proved entirely lacking in general philosophical groundwork. How then am I to undertake this task?

It's not just a matter of lecturing; a cadre needs to be formed, or else, in a few decades, our entire Calvinist movement in Holland will sink back to the level at which Kuyper found it when he began his work.

Now there was a way out of this impasse, and when I last spoke with you, and learned confidentially that the directors indeed wanted to pursue this path, I silently thanked God for guiding everything in this direction. For me, the key issue was that the chair in philosophy should be filled by the only man who, at this moment, is capable of advancing Calvinist principles in this crucial field. That man is my brother-in-law, Dr. Vollenhoven. You may recall how he and I have worked together from the very beginning and are entirely of one spirit. The evenings and nights we spent talking and inspiring each other are unforgettable to me. (...) That's why I was so reassured when I heard from you that he was seriously being considered for a professorship as well. But since our last conversation, I've heard from a very well-informed source that, for the time being, this appointment will not happen. This statement was made with such certainty that it has completely thrown me off, and at the moment, I have lost all courage.

For if what I heard is true, then a path will be blocked, the only path where I saw a solution.

With the lectures in legal philosophy and encyclopedics, only a portion of the students are covered, and what could be more inspiring than the fact that two professors, working in heartfelt collaboration and with the same line of thought, are active at the same institution?

Your Excellency—forgive me for writing so boldly—it must go down this path, or half-measures will be taken!