

## “CTS Move to Ft. Wayne”

### *Springfield Speaks*

J. Jackson, Dr. R. Preus, Prof. Wm. Houser, D. Mulder

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**Jack Jackson:** Good afternoon. This is Springfield Speaks coming to you from Concordia Theological Seminary in Springfield, Illinois. I'm Jack Jackson [Hobart, IN], a second year seminarian. The next time you hear from us, we will be the Fort Wayne theological seminary. And we will be at our new home in Fort Wayne, Indiana.

Today we will be discussing the mechanics of moving our campus with Dr. Robert Preus, president of the seminary; Prof. William Houser, administrative liason for the move; and also with us is Dave Mulder [Sandusky, MI], a fellow seminarian, who will talk about the problems and whatever it is that students are having with it.

**Jackson:** Dr. Preus, how is it that the move is being handled? What's the sort of the big picture of the move?

**Robert Preus:** Well, the move is being handled almost exclusively of the students or faculty or even board of control of the seminary. The synod decided to move our seminary immediately after they decided to phase out the present Senior College at Fort Wayne, and gave the entire responsibility for the move to the Board for Higher Education. So what we're trying to do is take orders and do everything as well for them as we possibly can.

**Jackson:** Okay, fine. Prof. Houser, what is your particular responsibility? What kind of duties do you have here for the move?

**William Houser:** Well, basically just one. I was asked to make certain there were sufficient number of students to help in the moving process. That's basically all I'm doing is just making sure that there will be enough Sem Is or IIs or IVs to help load and pack and whatever is necessary in moving the library or in moving of the professors or whoever is involved.

**Preus:** I might just add to this that probably the business manager here, Mr. [Walter] Campbell, is doing more than any other single person so far as the logistics of the move are concerned. He's constantly being called upon by the Board for Higher Education because he's here and they're other places. So what we're doing, particularly Mr. Campbell, is simply trying to carry out their instructions as they move it in the most feasible and economic way.

**Jackson:** Okay, very good. Dave, you're a married student with a family. What sort of helps have been provided to the students in terms of the move?

**Dave Mulder:** So far, I think we're in pretty good condition. Those of us who just finished our first year will move five times in four years with a combination of vicarage and moving to Fort Wayne. But I think this will be our best move because there is storage facilities available there for interim while we're looking for apartments. They're also providing 75% of the total moving cost. All we have to do is pack. And we're packing in boxes and cartons that have been provided. So I think we're in very good shape.

**Jackson:** How much do you expect it to cost you to make the move?

**Mulder:** Well, I have a medium sized apartment full of things and it'll cost between \$75 and \$100 for actual moving costs. There may be some other miscellaneous, but it should be under \$100 for total cost to move.

**Preus:** How many children do you have?

**Mulder:** I have two children. So I have about four thousand pounds of furniture. There will be other fellows that have more – runs a little bit more – but maybe up to between \$100 and \$200. And then, of course, we have gas for travel and that sort of thing. Like I say, of all the moves I think this will be the best because they are moving us, rather than we fellows having to order a U-Haul and drive it ourselves.

**Jackson:** Sounds like we are getting a real good deal. Dr. Preus, has a buyer been found for this campus yet?

**Preus:** Maybe. [chuckle] That's the best I can do. Mr. Campbell has been designated by the treasurer of the synod, Mr. Carpenter, who in turn has been designated by board of directors of the synod, to sell the campus. In other words, Mr. Carpenter is responsible for the sale of the campus for the synod itself. However, he can't be here and Mr. Campbell is here. Mr. Campbell has been showing the campus to a rather large number of possible buyers and there is one particular party where it looks like it's getting pretty close. I better not say who it is because I don't really want to steal anybody else's thunder.

**Jackson:** Well, that's fine. Just happy to know there is a potential. Prof. Houser, since the Fort Wayne campus is somewhat isolated from the community, is there a danger that this could lead to an ivory tower experience for the students, leading away from the more practical attitudes expressed here on this campus?

**Houser:** Well, I might answer in relationship to the professors. But perhaps you [Dave

Mulder] would want to answer in relationship to the students if you would care to answer first for the students.

**Mulder:** Yes. I've made two trips to Fort Wayne. And besides being impressed with the facilities and the potential of the facilities we have to use there as seminarians, most of us, I think – so far there are a few men who will buy homes and have already bought homes – there are four apartment houses within a two mile radius of the campus of itself. All are government subsidized and if you have low enough income – which most of us qualify very easily [chuckle] – we will be able to live there. And it's definitely a move up for us from here for most of us. We will live in relatively new apartment houses but with the combination of rent and utilities, we will live for about the same cost that we are here, maybe just a few dollars more. But we will be living out with the people. And I think it's a very good move up for us.

**Houser:** If the professors want an ivory tower experience, they can have it. Certainly it is a temptation for this with the large campus and the trees and, in a way, you're cut out like walls, invisible walls of a monastery. But there's no reason for that. And I don't believe that the men in the faculty will. I don't think they will succumb to that temptation at all. Dr. Preus wants his professors to go out and preach. He wants them to join a church. He wants them to become a part of a voters meeting. I preach every Sunday as a professor. I made a sick call Sunday. I'm preaching a funeral sermon tomorrow. This is the type of community involvement with the community and with our people, with our Lutherans that we keep in touch with the parish. And so you drive out of your nice surroundings and you become with humanity again. And that way you're effective in teaching. So there's no danger of any ivory tower experience.

**Jackson:** Okay.

**Mulder:** I just might add, as you mentioned getting out into the parish, is the field education program there is going to be so ideal. Here men have to drive 50 to 75 miles at times to get to their field church which is not all that bad, but there we will have many churches to work with and we'll be very active, I think, in the churches. And, of course, field education learning and the practical aspects of being pastors is going to be very, very good for us.

**Jackson:** Okay, fine. Dr. Preus, a couple of questions about the move here. If the reason for the move is purely economic, why are we moving at all? [chuckle] It seems that if we were really interested in saving money, why didn't we just close the Fort Wayne campus and stay in Springfield? And also why was it moved so close and not possibly to the west coast?

**Preus:** Yeah. Well, you're asking a lot of questions of me that have been asked before and I can't answer them except by a certain amount of speculation. Because things that

are done by synods after the floor committees of these synod meetings have given reports, it's very difficult to know the reasons and motives for the actions that are taking place. Maybe I could take just a minute on this because I know that there are those in our church body who have said that politics dominates every single thing that is ever done at a synod meeting. I don't think that's quite true. What has happened in the last ten to twelve to fifteen years within our synod is that less and less people have come up through our entire system to the two seminaries. I think both of you fellows are examples of men who did not go through the system...

**Jackson:** Correct.

**Preus:** ...and over half of our men here at this seminary have not come through the system. And more and more at the other seminary. And it was simply costing the synod too much to keep so many schools going and they felt that they could have a first rate Senior College operation at an existing school, thus saving the cost of maintaining a campus.

So the first decision that the synod made was to phase out the Senior College at its present location, but to create the same program at a different location which was already working out very well up in Michigan, not too far from Fort Wayne actually. Then they looked at this campus which they had spent \$10 million or something to build not too long ago. And they, I guess, felt it would be crime to try to put this up for sale and take a terrific financial beating at it. But would take a school like ours, move us further away from St. Louis – where we would be less and less in competition with them – into a much more Lutheran area in terms of the immediate surroundings – up to maybe a 150 miles or 100 or even 50 miles – and simply save the synod the amount it would cost to operate one institution and at the same time sell another institution.

Now whether this is going to work out perfectly nobody quite knows. But if we get a good buyer for this institution – and that's a big if, of course – things will work out remarkably well in terms of the synod saving, I would say, at least \$700,000 a year in its overall budget for higher education. This is think was in the thinking of the people, and that's why I think it's primarily an economic factor.

**Jackson:** Okay, fine. Thank you very much.

**Preus:** The west coast you asked about.

**Jackson:** Oh, yeah.

**Preus:** I really think that anybody who would study seminary education would have to conclude that to begin a new seminary would cost so much that our synod couldn't possibly even begin to do it. To begin a first rate seminary on the west coast, I think,

would cost you up to \$10 million. You would have to build new buildings, not just inherit them or move into them, you see. And it would be a tremendous undertaking.

**Jackson:** Okay, fine. Prof. Houser, what effect, if any, will this move have on the power of this seminary in synod as opposed to the power of our sister seminary in St. Louis?

**Houser:** Well, I think we should drop that word power. Maybe we should say the effect of our moving. And, I suppose, number one is that we're going to start working more in the states that are closer. We're quite close now to St. Louis. But we'll be able to reach to Michigan, reach to Ohio. And then they can reach to Illinois and Missouri. I suppose that's the better word, the effect of our moving. But too, perhaps one was thinking of power, of competition. And, again, I don't think we should think of that. Maybe we should use this word, equality, maybe in this sense. When I came here in 1946 as student, I think I developed a little bit of an inferiority complex. This is practical and we really don't need you. We have St. Louis and they have a better staff and a better this and a better that. And this was a certain mindset, maybe by a few, that was wrong. Maybe we have to move a whole campus to show our synod that with our president and with our professors and with our academics and still being very strong and very practical because we are turning out practical pastors. Maybe this is all going to take away that mindset and we have what St. Louis wants us to have: an equality in buildings and see what we have for a president and pastors.

**Jackson:** Well, I think that when I looked at that I thought in terms of public relations. You know, we've always been the unheard of seminary in the past, too. When people thought of a seminary, they thought of St. Louis. Certainly everybody knows we are around now after this move. And having a nice, new facility and expanding our doctoral programs and things like that up there. I think that is one of the things we have not mentioned so far is that campus up there is going to provide us with a marvelous facility to expand these new programs that we have going here. Dave?

**Mulder:** I think for recruitment, too, as young men try to consider which seminary to go to, after you are here a year you find out that the real essential part of the seminary is the faculty. But a campus up there is what you see at first. And for recruiting and getting men which we surely need in our synod – more pastors – I think the recruitment potential is going to be much, much greater than here.

**Robert Preus:** I'd like to just add a word. I was asked a question by the task force, which was a group appointed by the synod to deal with the whole question of what to do with higher education – whether to close or move schools and so forth – and then they came with a report to the convention finally. The first question they asked me: How many seminaries do you think the Missouri Synod needs or ought to have? And without having a chance to think, I still believe I gave the right answer. I said two, not one. Not three or four or five, but two. We have almost three million people.

Recruitment is the important thing now. We have something like five hundred vacancies. There is no competition between St. Louis and us. What we should both be doing is tumbling over each other trying to get men into the ministry today. And if they want to recruit, we are going to recruit. And I am glad for every student they get, and they are glad for every student we get. And I just think being a little further away – in a sense it won't be good because I won't see a lot of my good friends anymore very often – but on the other hand I think it will enhance both programs quite a bit. And really our church is big enough. Our mission enterprise is going forward at such a rate that we need two schools.

**Jackson:** Very good. Okay. The only real negative I have heard in terms of facilities about going to Fort Wayne is “What are we going to do about the library?” Our library staff here is concerned that we have more books than will go into the present facility. How are we going to grow in that facility? Were there any plans for expanding the library?

**Preus:** Well, I think you are right. In terms of space utilization and utilities and buildings there, this is the only one problem. Now we would have run into this problem here in about ten years. Unfortunately, we built a library here that cannot be expanded very easily. I believe that if there is going to be any expansion there, it will not be given to us by the synod and probably ought not be. We will simply have to go out and raise the money from friends who believe that we ought to have more facilities there. And I believe we are going to find friends like this. In fact, I have a couple already in mind. I don't think it will happen in the next year or two, but I have already asked Prof. Barbara Steege to work out, at least, some tentative plans possibly for another building. Rather than enlarging a building and fooling around trying to enlarge every five years, we would have another building for graduate school books, for the more foreign books – the books that are not used so much – and in some way feasibly divide our library facilities into two relatively closely related buildings. So we are thinking about it definitely. It is not the first thing we are going to do when we arrive campus, though.

**Jackson:** Okay, fine. Well, that is the concern of a lot of people about that library. They feel that they have a beautiful set-up here and they like the way it runs...

**Preus:** Right.

**Jackson:** ...and they were very concerned about that. Prof. Houser, what kind of problems do you anticipate will result from the fact that the Senior College and not the seminary will be in charge of the campus for the next year?

**Houser:** I can't anticipate any problems or basically foresee any. Basically, you have two different units. You have students attending Senior College, you have students attending the seminary. You have professors teaching in one, professors on the other. You have a president for one, a president for the other. We just basically are not going

to, you know, have two professors teaching two different student groups in one room, you know, all kinds of problems then. [laughter] But goodness this is just the dress shop and a men's store next door. You know, two completely different staffs.

**Preus:** I would like to add to that. In a sense, they are doing us a favor because we are coming in there cold and new and not knowing the facilities, the city. And for a year we can observe the way they will be carrying out the whole matter. And so we can get into the change gradually. Now there may be a few cases where they won't let us use the gymnasium if we want to or something like that because they have it booked. But that is no big problem. We are just thankful that they are taking this responsibility for this last year there. They are doing us a favor.

**Jackson:** Dave, are there any – you said you made several trips up to Fort Wayne so far – what are the kinds of things you had to do to get settled in Fort Wayne besides finding housing?

**Mulder:** Well, that is basically it. Then, of course, my first concern was to find a Christian day-school for my oldest daughter. And many of us have done that. We have written ahead and checked and had very excellent response. We are going to be at a church out on the east side. That was the main thing. Once we go that established, then we looked for housing. And, of course, housing is the immediate thing. Just overall impression is very, very good.

Rev. [Daniel] Lochner [Admissions Counselor and Director of Financial Aid; CTS, Springfield, 1975] had, of course, preceded us and had everybody well prepared. When we walked in and said we were with Concordia Seminary, they were ready for us. So he had us well prepared.

**Jackson:** Very good.

Preus: What about jobs?

**Mulder:** Well, I am going to be working in the library so I didn't look that much. But I know a number of our men here work, for example, at JCPenny and the manager here called over there and lined up jobs ahead. With a town of 200,000 and a group of college graduates – if they're willing to work a bit – I don't think jobs would be any problem. I don't think we ever have a problem getting jobs.

Preus: Banks and the hospitals have been very, very helpful, too. Just all kinds of jobs available.

**Jackson:** Well, seminarians out here have worked for how many years – eighteen years – out here running the Hertz Rent-A-Car on the weekends and shifts. And several

of our guys were up there talking to Hertz Rent-A-Car at the airport up there. And I think they are trying to open something like that.

**Preus:** Good.

**Mulder:** I just want to add one point. I think we will really appreciate Springfield after we are gone, because when we come in here we get discounts at many places. We get priority on jobs, priority on apartments. And, although, we are getting much the same treatment starting there now, this community has really treated us very well. It will take Fort Wayne a little time to get used to three or four hundred men coming in, you know, to the community.

**Houser:** There are so many more Lutherans up there and a Lutheran hospital and a Lutheran this and a Lutheran retirement home that all of these opportunities should just open up, blossom.

**Jackson:** Wasn't that the home base that we started?

**Preus:** Yeah. Concordia Theological Seminary had its beginning at Fort Wayne.

**Jackson:** It is trip home then.

**Preus:** After a long time.

**Jackson:** It certainly is. Okay. Here is an interesting question. There has been much printed in the various papers that exist in our synod about how much this move is going to cost. The question here says, "How much will the move really cost?" We have heard figures from \$200,000 to \$5 million.

**Preus:** Well, I suppose the president of the institution ought to know some about these things. It's a little difficult to say. Our mover, Mr. Pearson who was chosen by the Board for Higher Education and is really responsible for it, predicts something around \$150,000 as of right now. Now if you count the drapes that people are going to have to buy for a new house or something, who knows what it will be. But in terms of what it will cost the synod, it will be well below \$200,000 and I have never heard any responsible person in the Board of Directors or Board for Higher Education quote a figure very close even to \$200,000.

**Jackson:** Then we should come in under that...

**Preus:** I would like to know how anybody got that \$5 million figure.

**Jackson:** Well, there is one paper [chuckle] that came up with that. The last question



down here at the bottom of the page is one that every time I have talked to anybody who is not directly involved with the campus or something like that – but knows of the campus and is familiar with it – they want to know what is going to happen to Martin Luther. The first question: “Is he going to go?” And if you say “yes,” then they say, “How in the world are they going to do that?” And how much is that going to cost?

**Preus:** He is going to go, there is no doubt about that. [chuckle] That is the one thing we are going to bring with us. I don’t know how, but I really don’t think that that is really so terribly difficult. As I said before our meeting, if people can build the Brooklyn Bridge, I think they could move Martin Luther from one city to another.

**Jackson:** Have they picked a spot for it up there?

**Preus:** I think they have. I can’t tell you where it is. I haven’t been up there as much as some of the other men from our school here.

**Jackson:** Okay. Prof. Houser, possibly our listeners will be interested in – with especially this \$5 million figure – what is the enormity of the move. Do you have any statistics on the number of vans or anything like that?

**Houser:** No. I’m sorry. I just can’t tell you. But I do know that they have – in August – just all kinds of vans lined up and we are getting help. I just have no idea but it isn’t going to be as big as we think.

**Jackson:** Okay.

**Houser:** Routine.

**Jackson:** Well, we are coming up on the end of the show here. Dr. Preus, would you like to take a couple of minutes and wrap it up?

**Preus:** Well, I think – I don’t know exactly who this radio audience is – I know some of my good friends from St. Louis and some of my good friends here in Springfield. I’m just happy for the opportunity to say at this point thanks to everybody. The city of Springfield, I think, in a great many ways, particularly on individual basis, has been a wonderful host to this school for over a hundred years. At the same time, I think that our students have really won the hearts of many of the people in this town.

I’m very grateful to the tremendous welcome that the people in Fort Wayne are giving us; the chamber of commerce, the mayor, the Lutheran community, the hospitals, particularly President [Herbert] Bredemeier and Dr. [Edgar] Walz, the business manager. These men have really gone out of their way to help us. And it’s very hard on those people there, I know, particularly the faculty to be phased out. And I know that

some of the people feel rather strongly about it. We only hope that we can come in in a nice, quiet, unobtrusive but helpful manner and show that city – what I think what we have tried to show Springfield over the last hundred years – that our men can be not only good Christians and good servants of congregations but good citizens and good neighbors.

So I just would like to say thanks for everybody that has made the move a lot easier, so far, than I ever thought it would be.

**Jackson:** Thank you very much, Dr. Preus, Prof. Houser, Dave, ladies and gentlemen. This is last time we will be coming to you from Springfield, Illinois. The next time you hear us, we will be Fort Wayne Speaks from Fort Wayne, Indiana. Thank you very much.

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