



FROM **WATERLOO LUTHERAN UNIVERSITY**

WATERLOO UNIVERSITY COLLEGE — WATERLOO LUTHERAN SEMINARY

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

First Steps Taken as Waterloo Lutheran
Seeks Provincially Related Status

The executive of the board of governors of Waterloo Lutheran University agreed last night to meet five stipulations laid down by the provincial government if the university hopes to receive full government financial support and status.

The criteria, received in a letter from the Hon. George Kerr, minister of Colleges and Universities, listed these five items:

1. There must be no religious tests for students, faculty or administrators.
2. Compulsory religious courses must not be required for students seeking a general degree.
3. There must be no denominational connotation in the name of the university.
4. There must be no affiliation with a religious denomination.
5. A new board of governors must be established to represent the community.

Dr. Peters said the first two conditions provide no difficulties since the last religious requirement for administrators was dropped in 1968 when Dr. Peters, a Mennonite, became the first non-Lutheran to head the university, now marking its 60th anniversary. Compulsory religious courses were dropped in 1969.

At last night's special meeting, the executive of the board agreed to comply with the remaining requirements--which will mean a change in name for the university, as well as a change in the board and the severing of connections with the sponsoring church body, the Eastern Canada Synod of the Lutheran Church in America.

Dr. Peters pointed out that the executive's agreement is only one step toward acceptance of the university as a full grant-receiving institution. There must be further negotiations with the government and the Eastern Canada Synod must approve the move.

"Since there is still so much to discuss, including what compensation the government will offer the Lutheran Church for its investment in WLU, I don't believe a final agreement can be reached in time for it to be presented to the Synod for approval at its meeting here in June."

He added, however, that it would still be possible to call a special session of Synod. Another alternative, if an agreement can be reached with the government, would be to wait a year until Synod meets in June of 1973.

Waterloo Lutheran University ordered the president to discuss with the government a possible change of status since it has become increasingly clear that rising costs of operating the institution cannot be met by the church.

At present, the university, as the province's sole-remaining independent church-related university, receives only half the grants for operating expenses that it would otherwise receive, and gets nothing for capital expenses.

"If more financial aid is not achieved, the only alternative would be a drastic cut-back in course offerings which might jeopardize the institution's status as a university," Dr. Peters said. "That is why it is a matter of vital importance to us to meet requirements of the government for inclusion among the ranks of the provincial institutions."

The present budget of the university is in excess of \$8 million. Of this amount, \$3.6 million comes from government grants, \$2.7 million is paid in fees by the 2,800 full-time and 7,000 part-time students, \$130,000 comes from the church, and the remainder comes from revenues from various campus facilities, endowments, and sundry income.

While "Lutheran" is now a prominent part of the name of the university, only 10 per cent of the student body is Lutheran. Twenty per cent list themselves as Roman Catholic, as do a similar number of United Church members. Most other denominations also are represented.