

APOSTLES OF DENIAL

**An examination and exposé of the
history, doctrines and claims
of the JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES**

EDMOND CHARLES GRUSS

APPENDIX B

OLIN MOYLE'S ORIGINAL LETTERS

Olin Moyle had been in the Watchtower movement for more than twenty years when the first of the following letters was written. He had served as legal advisor to the organization, without pay, for four years. He was deposed from his position in 1939 and excommunicated from the Milwaukee Congregation of the Jehovah's Witnesses in March 1940. In August, 1941, a Resolution discrediting Moyle was read and unanimously adopted by an "Aye" vote of the crowd of 65,000 Witnesses assembled in convention in St. Louis, Missouri. Having been falsely attacked in *The Watchtower*, Moyle brought a libel suit against Rutherford and the Board of Directors of the Society which he won, receiving a settlement of \$15,000 in 1944.¹

The following letters, reproduced in full, present what Moyle saw from firsthand experience and they reveal what kind of a leader Judge Rutherford was.

As to the authenticity of these letters, Roy D. Goodrich stated: "Hundreds of these have been reproduced by me and sent out, and neither Brother Moyle or the Society has ever called in question their authenticity."²

¹ David Manwaring, *Render Unto Caesar* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1962), pp. 222, 306, note 71.

² BTTBW publication 141, p. 2. The letters are in mimeographed form and are BTTBW publication 79.

Sept. 25, 1940

To: Jehovah's Witnesses,
Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

Dear Brethren:

On March 21st of this year I was excommunicated from the Milwaukee Company of Jehovah's Witnesses under orders from the Society's president. Many of you brethren are still in ignorance of this fact, and some have inquired as to why Sister Moyle and I do not now attend meetings. Others have wondered about the controversy between Judge Rutherford and myself. During the year you have heard and read just one side of the controversy — the Society's side — and strenuous efforts have been made to keep you from knowing any facts I might present. Any consideration of my side of the case is branded by the Society as an act of treason against the "Theocracy" and a stirring up of dissension.

In order that you may know some of the FACTS, I am attaching to this letter copies of two letters to Judge Rutherford, to-wit: First: my letter of July 21, 1939, tendering my resignation as the Society's counselor. Second: Copy of letter of May 18, 1940, reviewing Judge Rutherford's subsequent actions in the matter. These letters contain FACTS of which the Society's president is desperately trying to keep you and all of Jehovah's witnesses in ignorance.

Many have wondered why the Judge has waged such a malicious and vindictive campaign against me. There is just one answer: FEAR. The whole story was not told in my letter of protest. There are many additional FACTS about this self-styled administrator of "The Theocracy," which if generally known would cause him to be looked upon with abhorrence and disgust. FEAR of exposure impelled him to embark on a smearing campaign against my good name and reputation with the purpose of thoroughly discrediting me in the eyes of his supporters. FEAR is the motive which causes him to blacken others rather than have his own misdeeds brought to light. FEAR of the truth has brought to birth many a religious inquisition and Judge Rutherford follows in that well-beaten path. Whether the whole story of his monumental deception of God's people shall be published is a matter of time and the Lord's leadings to determine.

For more than twenty years Sister Moyle and I gave our best efforts and service to the work directed by the Society. We did this as unto the Lord and it has been heart-rending for us to believe that the organization has departed from the faith. **BUT WE CANNOT DENY FACTS.** The Society's intolerant attitude and practices cannot be reconciled with Christianity. Real Bible study has been gagged and suppressed by the organization. The comforting doctrines of

Restitution, Resurrection and the Kingdom have been set aside and are replaced with the wondrous delusion that the Jonadab babies will fill the earth. God's people among Jehovah's witnesses are being ensnared into bondage to a Rutherford Hierarchy which is of the same order and just as intolerant as the Papal machine. Truly the message, "Come out of her my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins," applies as fully to the Watch Tower organization as to any other false religious organization.

It is my hope and prayer that this letter and its accompanying enclosures will help some to break these chains of restraint and come forth into the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free.

Your brother in His service,
Olin R. Moyle

July 21, 1939

Judge J. F. Rutherford,
Brooklyn, N. Y.

Dear Brother Rutherford:

This letter is to give you notice of our intention to leave Bethel on September 1st next. The reasons for leaving are stated herein and we ask that you give them careful and thoughtful consideration.

Conditions at Bethel are a matter of concern to all of the Lord's people. Nowhere among imperfect men can there be perfect freedom from oppression, discrimination and unfair treatment, but at the Lord's headquarters on earth conditions should be such that injustice would be reduced to the minimum. That is not the case here at Bethel and a protest should be made against it. I am in a good position to make such a protest because your treatment of me has been generally kind, considerate and fair. I can make this protest in the interests of the Bethel family and of the Kingdom work without any personal interest entering into the matter.

ILL TREATMENT OF THE BETHEL FAMILY

Shortly after coming to Bethel we were shocked to witness the spectacle of our brethren receiving what is designated as a "trimming" from you. The first, if memory serves me correctly, was a tongue-lashing given to C. J. Woodworth. Woodworth, in a personal letter to you, stated something to the effect that it would be serving the devil to continue using our present day calendar. For that he was humiliated, called a jackass, and given a public lambasting. Others have been similarly treated. MacAulay, McCormick, Knorr, Prosser, Price, Van Sipma, Ness and others, have been similarly

scolded. They have been publicly called to account, condemned, and reprimanded without any previous notice.

This summer some of the most unfair public reproaches have been given. J. Y. MacAulay asked a question which carried with it a criticism of the present method of Watch Tower study. For that he was severely reprimanded. Your action constituted a violation of the principle for which we are fighting, to wit, freedom of speech. It was the action of a boss and not that of a fellow servant. Securing an efficient mode of study with imperfect study leaders is no easy task, and no method yet produced has proved to be one hundred percent perfect. You stated that no complaints had come to you concerning this method of study. If that be the case you have not had all the facts presented to you. There is complaint in various places that the Watch Tower studies have degenerated into mere reading lessons. It may be that the present method is the best that can be used, but in view of known limitations honest criticism should not be censored nor honest critics punished.

Brother Worsley received a public denunciation from you because he prepared and handed to the brethren a list of helpful Scripture citations on fundamental topics. How can we consistently condemn religionists for being intolerant when you exercise intolerance against those who work with you? Doesn't this prove that the only freedom permitted at Bethel is freedom to do and say that which you wish to be said and done? The Lord certainly never authorized you to exercise such high-handed authority over your fellow servants.

Since the Madison Square Garden meeting there has been a distressing condition of restraint and suspicion at Bethel. The ushers were placed in a tough spot, but did an excellent piece of work. They exercised care and diligence in watching arrivals at the Garden, and preventing a number of suspicious characters from entering. They were on the job immediately when the disturbance started and quelled a disturbance which would have otherwise reached serious proportions. But for two weeks following the convention, there has been constant criticism and condemnation from you. They have been charged with dereliction of duty and labeled as "sissies." To see some of these boys break down and cry because of your unkind remarks is, to say the least, saddening.

The brethren at Bethel have thoroughly demonstrated their loyalty and devotion to the Lord, and do not need to be berated for wrong doing. A suggestion or a kindly admonition from you would be more than sufficient and induce greater happiness and comfort for the whole family. You have stated many times that there are no bosses in the Lord's

organization, but the undeniable fact cannot be evaded that your actions in scolding and upbraiding these boys are the actions of a boss. It makes one sick at heart, and disgusted, to listen to them. If you will cease smiting your fellow servants Bethel will be a happier place and the Kingdom work will prosper accordingly.

DISCRIMINATION

We publish to the world that all in the Lord's organization are treated alike and receive the same as far as this world's goods are concerned. You know that is not the case. The facts cannot be denied. Take for instance the difference between the accommodations furnished to you and your personal attendants, compared with those furnished to some of the brethren. You have many homes, to wit, Bethel, Staten Island, California, etc. I am informed that even at Kingdom Farm one house is kept for your sole use during the short periods you spend there. And what do the Brethren at the farm receive? Small rooms, unheated through the bitter cold winter weather. They live in their trunks like campers. That may be all right, IF NECESSARY, but there are many houses on the farm standing idle, or used for other purposes, which could be used to give some comfort to those who work so long and so hard.

You work in a nice air-conditioned room. You and your attendants spend a portion of each week in the quiet of country surroundings. The boys at the factory diligently work without such helps, or any effort made to give them. That is discrimination which should receive your thoughtful consideration.

MARRIAGE

Here again is shown unequal or discriminatory treatment. One brother left Bethel some time ago for the purpose of getting married and, so I am informed, was refused the privilege of pioneering in New York, apparently as an action of official disapproval of his leaving Bethel. On the other hand when Bonnie Boyd got married she didn't leave Bethel. She was permitted to bring her husband into Bethel in spite of the printed rule providing that both parties should have lived there five years. Harsh treatment of one and favored treatment of another is discrimination, and should not have a place in the Lord's organization.

FILTHY AND VULGAR LANGUAGE

The Biblical injunctions against unclean, filthy speaking and jesting have never been abrogated. It is shocking and nauseating to hear vulgar speaking and smut at Bethel. It

was stated by a sister that that was one of the things you had to get used to at Bethel. The loudest laughter at the table comes when a filthy or near filthy joke goes through, and your skirts are not clear.

LIQUOR

Under your tutelage there has grown up a glorification of alcohol and condemnation of total abstinence which is unseemly. Whether a servant of Jehovah drinks alcoholic liquor is none of my business, except in giving a helping hand to a brother who is stumbled thereby. Whether I am a total abstainer is nobody's business but my own. But not so at Bethel. There appears to be a definite policy of breaking in newcomers into the use of liquor and resentment is shown against those who do not join them. The claim is made, "One can't be a real Bethelite without drinking beer." Shortly after we arrived it was arrogantly stated, "We can't do much with Moyle, but we'll make a man out of Peter." A New York brother intimated that I was out of harmony with the truth and with the Society because I didn't drink liquor. A New York sister stated that she had never used liquor or served it until some of the Bethel boys insisted upon it. A brother who used to drink liquor to excess became a total abstainer after getting the truth. He knew that a single drink would start him off to his former drinking habits, but in spite of that, brethren from Bethel insisted upon his imbibing liquor and inferred that he was out of harmony with the organization through refusing. Total abstainers are looked upon with scorn as weaklings. You have publicly labeled total abstainers as prudes and therefore must assume your share of the responsibility for the Bacchus-like attitude exhibited by members of the family.

These are a few of the things which should have no place in the Lord's Organization. There are other more grievous injustices but I have had no personal contact with them and therefore do not discuss them.

It hasn't been an easy or pleasant task to write these things to you, and it is still harder to make this protest effective by leaving Bethel. We sold our home and business when we came to Bethel and fully intended to spend the rest of our lives at this place in the Lord's service. We leave in order to register most emphatically our disagreement with the unjust conditions related in this letter. We are not leaving the Lord's service but will continue to serve Him and His organization as fully as strength and means will allow.

Neither am I running away from battling the devil's crowd in the courts. I expect to return to the private prac-

tice of law, probably in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and hope to be in the fight in every way possible. With this letter I am enclosing a statement of the major cases now pending in which I am actively participating. It would be unreasonable and unfair to drop these matters into your lap without further assistance or consideration. I am ready and willing to press these issues in the courts just as vigorously and carefully as though I remained at Bethel, and will do so if that is your desire.

We have considered this action for some time, but this letter is delivered to you, just as we are leaving on a vacation trip for very specific reasons. First: It is desirable that you take time for thought and consideration of the matters herein set forth before taking any action. Hasty and ill-considered action might be regrettable. Second: Frankly I have no desire for verbal argument with you over these matters. I have had plenty of occasion to observe that a controversial matter does not receive a calm and reasoned discussion of the facts. Too often it turns into a denunciation of some person by you. I am not interested in that kind of a wordy battle. These statements are the reasons presented by Sister Moyle and myself for leaving Bethel. If we speak erroneously or wrongfully we are responsible before the Lord for so speaking. If we speak truthfully and we stoutly contend that everything here related is the truth, then there is immediate responsibility on your part to remedy the conditions necessitating this protest. May the Lord direct and guide you into fair and kindly treatment of your fellow servants is my wish and prayer.

Your Brother in the King's service,
Olin R. Moyle.

May 18, 1940

Judge J. F. Rutherford,
124 Columbia Heights
Brooklyn, New York

Dear Brother Rutherford:

Recently the Milwaukee Company Servant, in accordance with your directions, handed me a letter excommunicating me from the Milwaukee Company, at the same time stating, "I am sorry to do this, Olin. I like you as a man, but you are in bad with the Society." He well knew that my course of action in Milwaukee had always been in harmony with the Truth, but nevertheless felt obligated to put on the ban of excommunication because you desired it. Some others of the Company took a similar stand. They realize that I am loyal to the Lord and to the Truth, but for fear of incurring your displeasure they comply with the interdict.

This raises an issue of great importance. Which is Supreme: An edict from you, or the principles of righteousness? Must Jehovah's witnesses condone and support that which is evil solely because you request it? Do your commands as president of the Society supersede and set aside the laws of Almighty God?

Abstractly stated, there is no doubt but what you will agree that the laws of God and the principles of truth and justice set forth in God's Word are superior to any demands, requests, or directions issued by you or the Society. But in the discord and division you are stirring up about me there has been a very definite disregard of this fundamental principle of Supremacy. This should cause you to seriously consider your course, and for your own welfare I am again reviewing the matter.

During the past few months you have used the Society's facilities to discredit and degrade my name and reputation regardless of facts, truth or justice. You have hurled forth false accusations and circulated lies promiscuously in manner similar to those who propagate false religion. I cite a few instances:

FIRST: The September 1st Watch Tower contained a notice that my services as Counselor were terminated because of "unfaithfulness to the Kingdom interests and the brethren." This was wholly untrue. The work I did speaks for itself. And up to within a short time of my leaving you often commended my zeal and earnestness in fighting our cases. The truth is that I resigned my position and gave you thirty days notice thereof. You speeded my exit because I told you the truth about your own wrongful acts.

SECOND: You caused to be published in the October 15th Tower a statement alleging that every paragraph, except the first of my letter of July 21st to you was false. This was a whopper. Your record of scoldings, petulant outbursts of temper, and discrimination against the Bethel brethren is too well known to be successfully denied. C. J. Woodworth admitted the truth in his letter to me on August 15th. Then under your direction he reversed himself and signed a letter or statement alleging my letter to be totally false. Thus under coercion from you the Lord's people are required to speak lies and bring false accusations. Others even among the Board of Directors have privately deplored your tirades against your brethren, but they still retain your favor by keeping quiet. Fear of you and the desire for your favor more than the favor of God could be the only motive for the Directors to sign such a slanderous statement.

THIRD: Early in September you sent M. A. Howlett to spread and enlarge your campaign of defamation. It is now clearly evident that his job was to spread the idea that

I am busy circulating falsehoods and stirring up strife and division in the Companies. He made no investigation to determine FACTS but did a very successful job of building up a case of opprobrium upon nothing.

May I remind you that the circulation of TRUTH does not constitute the stirring up of strife and division. If I had circulated the letter of July 21st among the brethren I would be doing no more than giving them information to which they are entitled. I have actually shown it to about a dozen of my friends, but no more. The brethren of Milwaukee who ex-communicated me under orders from you, are still ignorant of the contents of that letter. But Howlett had to "make a case" and thereupon arranged for a bunch of letters and declarations referring to "malicious letters of Moyle" and Moyle's "attempts to cause division among the brethren." Chicago, Rockford, Aurora, Kankakee, Waukegan, and other places arose to the occasion and turned in such declarations. The striking fact is THAT I HAVEN'T BEEN NEAR ANY OF THOSE TOWNS OR CIRCULATED ANYTHING IN THEM. Nevertheless, you continue publishing the statements in order to cause brethren throughout the country to believe a lie.

We are told that a "false witness that speaketh lies" is an abomination unto the Lord. How can you reconcile your tactics with this plain declaration from Jehovah?

FOURTH: By the use of falsehood and compulsion you secured my excommunication from the Milwaukee Company of Jehovah's witnesses. The brethren here know that I am loyal to the Lord. But you wrote that I had "committed an assault upon the Society" (which is another lie out of whole cloth) and that I should be gagged and not tolerated. The brethren through fear then complied with your autocratic demand.

NOW MARK THIS: There wasn't the slightest sign of division or strife in the Milwaukee Company until you and Howlett sowed the seeds of discord. Now there is dissatisfaction and unrest. Why? Because you stirred up a false issue and caused confusion among the brethren. On account of the falsehoods of a henpecked sycophant of Racine you kicked Harry Fink, Zone Servant, out of office. And because he would not join in your interdict against me he has been treated like a leprous person by the brethren of the Company. The fact that Harvey Fink is thoroughly loyal to the Lord and active in Kingdom work has been disregarded by you. Obedience to your demands thus comes ahead of loyalty to Almighty God. Many are sick at heart over such unrighteous acts, and others follow your example of spreading false accusations and poison. That is the kind of discord you have brought to birth in the Milwaukee Company.

This isn't the whole story. One evil begets another and the perverse course you started on August 8th, has spread until it has reached voluminous proportions. No individual has heretofore received the extensive calumnies accorded to me in the Watch Tower. The conclusion is inescapable that while pouring out much condemnation on religion, you are guilty of indulging in the worst kind of religious practice, to wit, that of persecuting a brother who had the temerity to tell you the truth. And it is FEAR that has led you into this trap. You were afraid that I would broadcast to all brethren the facts concerning your unbridled use of the tongue, and you thereby determined to smear me so badly that no one would believe me. You have had some measure of success. BUT AT WHAT COST. "Wherefore hast thou despised the commandment of the Lord, to do evil in His sight?" Truly you have placed yourself and your reputation ahead of the laws of God. That is of much greater consequence to you than the degradation of reputation is to me.

You claim that I had no right to send you that letter even though its statements be true. In other words, your position is so lofty as to give you immunity from criticism or protest even though you commit the most wrongful of acts. This is further evidence that in your unrighteous course you have exalted and placed yourself and your commands above the laws of God. You have through coercion required Jehovah's witnesses to condone and support your wrongful course. You have punished those who would not, and have thereby engendered a woeful spirit of fear and restraint among the brethren. That is a vicious use of God-given facilities and a trampling upon the rights of your brethren.

My standing with Jehovah God has not suffered in the slightest by reason of your onslaught. I still love the Lord and still engage regularly in the witness work. I shall continue to do so regardless of your embargo. But through malice and fear you have been ensnared into Satan's trap, and you have violated so many of the plain decrees of Almighty God that a continuance therein must surely merit His stern disapproval. For your own welfare then may I urge you to carefully, honestly and prayerfully review this whole matter, and do that which is right before God and man.

Yours in Kingdom service,

Olin R. Moyle
(Johnson Creek, Wis.)