

This trial was held in November of 1954. A Jehovah's Witness sued the ministry of Labour and National Service to keep from being drafted into the National Service. The Vice-President of the Watchtower Society, Hayden C. Covington was on the trial stand. He admitted under oath that the Watchtower Society was guilty of a false prophecy. For a complete copy of the trial write to: THE SCOTTISH RECORD OFFICE and ask for PUSUERS PROOF OF DOUGLAS WALSH VS. THE RIGHT HONOURABLE JAMES LATHAM CLYDE, M.P. Microfilm cost \$35.00.

Let us follow that up just a little. It was promulgated as a matter which must be believed by all members of Jehovah's Witnesses that the Lord's Second coming took place in 1874?

I am not familiar with that. You are speaking on a matter that I know nothing of.

You heard Mr. Franz's evidence?

I heard Mr. Franz testify, but I am not familiar with what he said on that, I mean the subject matter of what he was talking about, so I cannot answer any more than you can, having heard what he said.

Leave me out of it?

That is the source of my information, what I have heard in court.

You have studied the literature of your movement?

Yes, but not all of it. I have not studied the seven volumes of "Studies in the Scriptures," and I have not studied this matter that you are mentioning now of 1874. I am not at all familiar with that.

Assume from me that it was promulgated as authoritative by the Society that Christ's Second Coming was in 1874?

Taking that assumption as a fact, it is a hypothetical statement.

That was the publication of false prophecy?

That was the publication of a false prophecy, it was a false statement or an erroneous statement in fulfillment of a prophecy that was false or erroneous.

And that had to be believed by the whole of Jehovah's Witnesses?

Yes, because you must understand we must have unity, we cannot have disunity with a lot of people going every way, an army is supposed to march in step.

You do not believe in the worldly armies, do you?

We believe in the Christian Army of God.

Do you believe in the worldly armies?

We have nothing to say about that, we do not preach against them, we merely say that the worldly armies, like the nations of the world today, are a part of Satan's Organisation, and we do not take part in them, but we do not say the nations cannot have their armies, we do not

preach against warfare, we are merely claiming our exemption from it, that is all.

Back to the point now. A false prophecy was promulgated?

I agree to that.

It had to be accepted by Jehovah's Witnesses?

That is correct.

If a member of Jehovah's Witnesses took the view himself that that prophecy was wrong and said so he would be disfellowshipped?

Yes, if he said so and kept persisting in creating trouble, because if the whole organisation believes one thing, even though it be erroneous, and somebody else starts on his own trying to put his ideas across then there is disunity and trouble, there cannot be harmony, there cannot be marching together. When a change comes it should come from the proper source, the head of the organisation, the governing body, not from the bottom upwards, because everybody would have ideas, and the organisation would disintegrate and go in a thousand different directions. Our purpose is to have unity.

Unity at all costs?

Unity at all costs, because we believe and are sure that Jehovah God is using our organisation, the governing body of our organisation to direct it, even though mistakes are made from time to time.

A unity based upon an enforced acceptance of false prophecy?

That is conceded to be true.

And the person who expressed his view, as you say, that it was wrong, and was disfellowshipped, would be in breach of the Covenant, if he was baptized?

That is correct.

And as you said yesterday expressly, would be worthy of death?

I think — — —

Would you say yes or no?

I will answer yes, unhesitatingly.

Do you call that religion?

It certainly is.

Do you call it Christianity?

I certainly do.

H.C. Covington, op. cit., pp. 340-343