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Watchtower Bible and Tract Society
of New York, Inc.

Writing Dept., Desk GEA

117 Adams Street

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New York 11201

Åmål, February 22, 1978

Re. "The Gentile Times Reconsidered"

Dear Brothers,

I appreciated your letter of January 17 and your promise that my treatise will be examined by "responsible brothers". Surely we all realize the importance of this matter, as it does not concern some little detail only, but the "corner-stone" in our eschatological building. Therefore, as the search for and spreading of truth is the primary reason for our existence as a movement, this subject cannot be handled indifferently or postponed to some indeterminate future. A cook who was notified of the evidence indicating that some of the food he prepares seems to be poisoned would no doubt immediately begin to examine the matter and in the meantime he would be careful not to have the suspected food being brought in to the guests. Doesn't the same hold true of the spiritual food, too?

You evidently misunderstood the statement I made in my former letter that "several brothers have now examined the treatise". I am not talking about or trying to advance the evidence presented in the treatise among members in the congregation, as I am well aware of the disturbing effects this could have on the brothers in general. Love for truth and the brothers does not cause divisions and confusion, but as you know many brothers tend to regard the things written in the Watchtower publications as nearly inspired by God and therefore above critical examination in the light of the Scriptures. (Acts 17:11) I am sure you agree that such an attitude is very unfortunate and should be opposed. Because of this attitude open inquiry has to be avoided, as it time and again is met with irrational reactions. The treatise has been examined by six knowledgeable brothers in Sweden (none of whom belong to our congregation) and about eight brothers in USA and other countries. But as it is probably impossible for everyone involved to keep this delicate question secret, I think it will be spread around more and more as time goes by. There is some evidence of this already. This could in time cause a lot of trouble, but I am sure you will have cleared up the matter before that.

Another thing you comment upon is the statement on the front page that the treatise is "written by and for Jehovah's witnesses". As some brothers have been of great help in examining and correcting the treatise and have given several good suggestions and amendments, I felt it all right to state that the treatise was the result of the research of several witnesses, and also that it was intended for Jehovah's witnesses, not for our opponents who could use it as a forceful weapon against us. None of the brothers who have read the treatise has hitherto misunderstood this statement, concluding that the work "has the sanction of Jehovah's Witnesses as a body". But I understand your feelings about this detail and have changed the statement on the front page of my original. Enclosed is a copy of the new front page which you may exchange for the old one.

Some other minor details, too, have been changed in the treatise, especially some statements about Ptolemy which have been corrected in accordance with the evidence presented by R. R. Newton in his book The Crime of Claudius Ptolemy (see the PS in my former letter). These changes do not

change any of the lines of evidence presented against the 607 BCE date, but have been done for the sake of exactness. Another correction refers to footnote 21, page 63, where "8 months" should read "4 months" and "10 months" should read "2 months". The changed pages are enclosed so you may exchange them.

With warm Christian love.

Your brother in the service of Jehovah and his truth,

Carl Hoffmann —