

Lloyd Evans
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Charity Commission
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29th December 2015

Dear Sirs

Further to my previous correspondence (see Annex 2) I have had the pleasure of assisting your colleague, Jonathan Sanders, in the Commission's investigation of Jehovah's Witnesses – specifically the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Britain (charity no. 1077961, hereinafter referred to as "Watchtower") and its associated charities in England and Wales.

Since I am a former Jehovah's Witness elder and a graduate of the organization's "Ministerial Training School" in 2005 (now known as the "School for Kingdom Evangelizers"), I trust my experience and knowledge of the organization and its practices will be of some benefit to the Commission.

I understand the statutory inquiry now underway focuses primarily on child safeguarding, which I agree is deserving of considerable scrutiny – especially in light of recent disturbing evidence heard by the Australian Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, which I understand Jonathan is familiar with.

However, I would like to formally request on behalf of both myself and a number of former Jehovah's Witnesses (all of whom are UK citizens, and some of whom are listed under Annex 1 to this letter) that the Charity Commission broaden the scope of its statutory inquiry to encompass scrutiny of other destructive policies of Watchtower – most notably shunning – for reasons I will now elaborate.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Religiously-mandated shunning is a human rights issue. Article 18 of the Universal Declaration reads as follows (bold is mine):

*Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; **this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief**, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance.*

Since 1981, the hierarchy of Jehovah's Witnesses has made it impossible to leave the religion without the cruel punishment of family estrangement being imposed. In the September 15th, 1981 edition of the *Watchtower* magazine, the following rule was introduced (see page 23):

Persons who make themselves "not of our sort" by deliberately rejecting the faith and beliefs of Jehovah's Witnesses should appropriately be viewed and treated as are those who have been disfellowshipped for wrongdoing.

Hence, those who leave (or “disassociate”) from the Witnesses are to be treated in the same way as those who are disfellowshipped, or ejected due to perceived wrongdoing. And how are disfellowshipped ones to be treated by Jehovah’s Witnesses? A more recent *Watchtower* magazine article, dated January 15th 2013 (which, as with the previous quote, was printed and distributed by a UK ‘charity’) makes this clear on page 16:

Do not look for excuses to associate with a disfellowshipped family member, for example, through e-mail.

Hence, both disfellowshipped AND disassociated Jehovah’s Witnesses (i.e. not just Witnesses who transgress organizational rules but Witnesses who *change their religion*) are punished to the extent that believing family members are not even allowed to write to their loved ones by e-mail.

I can personally attest that this practice is strictly enforced and observed by Jehovah’s Witnesses in the UK.

In December 2013 I formally disassociated from Jehovah’s Witnesses via a “judicial committee” (or, as I call it, an apostasy trial) at my congregation in Sisak, Croatia, where I am currently living. My father, (*name redacted*), who is a trustee of the Wilmslow Congregation of Jehovah’s Witnesses (charity no. 1066121) emailed shortly before my judicial committee to remind me that he would be shunning me if I parted ways with the organization. Since then he has been true to his word, and has not even seen his granddaughter, our 19-month-old daughter Jessica, born in May 2014, because of the organization’s rules regarding those who leave.

More recently, in August 2015, I attempted to visit my father to give him an opportunity to see Jessica for the first time. I assured him we would not use the opportunity to speak negatively of his beliefs or discuss religion – it would purely be a chance for him to see his granddaughter for the first time. But such is dad’s indoctrination and loyalty to the organization that he declined this opportunity.

Despite his refusal, my wife and I called by his house, my old family home in Wilmslow, and posted a note to say we would be calling by the next day to cut his hedges for him, which were overgrown. When we returned the next day, we found the house had been vacated and dad was nowhere to be found. I then set about cutting dad’s hedges and experienced the bizarre phenomenon of seeing him circling the house in his car to see if we were still there. An awkward wave and smile was all he could muster for his son. The knowledge that his baby granddaughter (who has never done anything wrong, or had anything to do with the Witnesses) was with us was not enough to make him stop the car and speak to us.

Needless to say, my father’s treatment of me has caused my wife and I considerable distress, and it is entirely a product of the writings and teachings of Watchtower. The situation is exacerbated by the shunning we experience from other Witness relatives, including on my wife’s side of the family. I am fortunate to avail myself of the services of a trained counsellor with experience of cults to help me cope with the trauma, but I can well understand why family ostracism would drive some ex-Witnesses to suicide. And I can certainly appreciate why the threat of shunning prevents many Witnesses from leaving.

My experience is just one of numerous examples of the implosion of families of countless ex-Jehovah’s Witnesses from all over the world. For the benefit of the Commission, I have included a few more mostly shunning-related experiences from UK citizens as Annex 1 to this letter, with phone numbers for follow-up available where possible.

Taken as a whole, these testimonies clearly demonstrate that Watchtower routinely violates the human rights of individuals as regards freedom of thought, conscience and religion – which Britain as a UN member and signatory to the European Convention on Human Rights is sworn to uphold. The practice of shunning deprives people of their rights to leave their religion without repercussions, and directly results in the break-up of families.

In his recently-published summary findings to the aforementioned Australian Royal Commission, Senior Counsel Angus Stewart¹ drew the following conclusions regarding the practice of shunning:

The Jehovah's Witness organisation's policy of requiring its adherents to actively shun those who leave the organisation:

- a) makes it extremely difficult for someone to leave the organisation*
- b) is cruel on those who leave and on their friends and family who remain behind*
- c) is particularly cruel on those who have suffered child sexual abuse in the organisation and who wish to leave because they feel that their complaints about it have not been adequately dealt with*
- d) is not apparently justified by the Scriptures which are cited in support of it*
- e) is adopted and enforced in order to prevent people from leaving the organisation and thereby to maintain its membership, and*
- f) is in conflict with the organisation's professed support for freedom of religious choice and the belief that Jehovah God is a compassionate God who recognises the worth and dignity of all human beings.*

I wholeheartedly concur with Stewart's findings. And I would respectfully submit that by continuing to recognize, support and/or endorse the charitable status of Jehovah's Witnesses, an organization acknowledged by many experts to be a cult of similar notoriety to Scientology, the Charity Commission as a public body risks seriously undermining its own reputation with regard to respecting and upholding human rights.

Public Benefit Requirements

Not only does the shunning policy violate the freedom of thought, conscience and religion of those who are baptized as Jehovah's Witnesses – it also represents just one of a number of factors bringing Watchtower into a state of non-conformity with the public benefit requirements applicable to all charities.

As the Commission will be well aware, The Charities Act requires that the work of charities "must benefit the public in general, or a sufficient section of the public," and that it must "not give rise to more than incidental personal benefit."

When asked who benefits from its work, Watchtower answered the Charity Commission, on page 2 of its Summary Information Return 2013, as follows:

Persons residing in the United Kingdom and elsewhere, both Jehovah's Witnesses and the wider public.

Watchtower goes on to elaborate in response to the next question, which asks "How do you respond to their needs and how do they influence the charity's development?":

¹ Angus Stewart is contactable by the Commission on this email address: *address redacted*

By printing and distributing, without charge, Bibles and Bible study aids which offer practical advice on improving one's life spiritually, morally, and socially. By supporting congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses in Britain, and associations of Jehovah's Witnesses in developing countries, with their spiritual and material welfare.

All who care for the work of the charity are members of local congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses and so have direct knowledge of the needs of those in their local community. Input is also received from charitable associations of Jehovah's Witnesses in other lands. This knowledge and information is reflected in the nature and content of the Bible study aids and assistance that are made available.

From my perspective as a former Jehovah's Witness whose family life has been irreparably damaged by Watchtower, and who sees his human rights violated through shunning on a daily basis, based on the above statements it appears the Charity Commission has allowed Watchtower to *self-certify* itself as working in the public benefit without its claims being subjected to even the mildest scrutiny.

Regardless of Watchtower's claims that its work benefits the "wider public" simply by virtue of the fact that "Bibles and Bible study aids" are printed and distributed free of charge, the real motives behind Watchtower's work are *religious evangelism, recruitment and self-promotion*, as is clearly manifest through the most cursory reading of its own literature.

The following quote from the December 1997 *Our Kingdom Ministry* (a Watchtower newsletter) clearly outlines the true purpose of the work of Jehovah's Witnesses – to make more Jehovah's Witnesses (or "disciples"), and convince people that Watchtower's message is "the only hope for mankind" (bold is mine):

What Is Our Goal in Distributing Literature? Our goal is not just to place literature. The commission to make disciples involves two aspects—preaching and teaching. First, we have the privilege of preaching the good news of the Kingdom, making people aware that it is the only hope for mankind. (Matt. 10:7; 24:14) Our Bible-based literature is a time-tested and effective means of stimulating interest and imparting knowledge about the Kingdom to others.

Second, if we are to make disciples, we must teach all the things Jesus commanded. (Matt. 11:1; 28:19, 20) Again, the literature plays an important role in our sounding the truth down into the hearts of students, helping them to become disciples.

Those who accept literature may be 'hearers of the word,' but it is unlikely that they will become doers of it if they are left on their own. (Jas. 1:22-25) Few will ever become disciples unless someone guides them. (Acts 8:30, 31) They need a teacher to help them prove to themselves the truth that is found in the Scriptures. (Acts 17:2, 3) Our goal is to help them progress to the point of dedication and baptism and to train them to become adequately qualified to teach others.—2 Tim. 2:2.

Hence, the entire purpose of the work of Jehovah's Witnesses is the recruitment of *more* Jehovah's Witnesses. Who benefits from this work? Certainly not the public. Here are just a few examples of how a member of the public would suffer serious detriment if they fell prey to the propaganda in Watchtower literature:

1. If he or she gets baptized as a Witness and later changes their minds, they risk being shunned by any family members who are also Witnesses. Shunning can often result in depression, emotional turmoil, and even suicide.

2. If he or she urgently requires an operation involving a blood transfusion, he or she risks death from refusing this procedure out of allegiance to Watchtower requirements. And if he or she has a child who urgently requires a blood transfusion, they will feel pressured to refuse this treatment on behalf of their child even though the child is not a baptized Witness.
3. If he or she seeks to improve their employment prospects by pursuing college or university education, they will be dissuaded from doing so. This policy seriously undermines the future prospects of countless young people who are raised as Witnesses.
4. If he or she finds themselves married to another Witness who is abusive, they will be told that they cannot remarry unless they or their spouse commits adultery. This policy results in many Witness men and women staying in abusive relationships.
5. If the congregation that he or she attends with their children includes a paedophile, they will not be notified of this unless the branch office decides they can be told. The paedophile could even spend time alone with a Witness child doing door-to-door work with the parents being unaware. And if the Witness child ends up being abused, if there is no second Witness the congregation elders are instructed to “leave matters in Jehovah’s hands.” This is to say nothing of the direct threat to the public of paedophile Witnesses, who are required to preach, calling at people’s homes.

All of the above scenarios are likely, as attested by both individual testimony and media reports – especially as regards child abuse and blood transfusions. Hence Watchtower’s principal aim of coercing people into becoming Witnesses cannot reasonably and objectively be considered as being in the public benefit.

Simply put, the public does not benefit from Watchtower’s work. The only ones who truly benefit from the work of Jehovah’s Witnesses are Jehovah’s Witnesses themselves – or, more specifically, the individuals who make up the Governing Body of Jehovah’s Witnesses in New York. These individuals are unelected and self-appointed, they answer to no one (certainly not the Commission), their power and influence is unquestioned, and they have a vested interest in seeing their power and influence expanded with each new member baptized.

The Governing Body of Jehovah’s Witnesses in the United States directs the work of Watchtower in the UK, deriving *incidental personal benefit* from its activities, and hence Watchtower’s work fails to meet the public benefit requirements. The trustees of Watchtower in the UK are trustees in name only, since they are powerless to enact any policies or reforms that contradict the will of their superiors across the Atlantic. Hence it is impossible for the Commission to regulate Watchtower’s work in any meaningful sense.

In summary

I am not naïve to the challenges faced by the Commission. I understand that revoking or even merely scrutinizing the charitable status of a religion as well-known as Jehovah’s Witnesses carries huge political connotations in a country like the UK where a significant percentage of the populace identify as believing Christians.

That said, the Commission has already demonstrated an impressive ability to fully utilize social media and other avenues to be transparent about its aims and processes. If the Commission is able to demonstrate, which it easily can, that the work of Jehovah’s Witnesses deviates considerably from that of other religious charities with regards to human rights and public benefit requirements, I believe most would respect that the rule of law must be upheld.

Britain is a charitable nation, and its kindness and generosity should not be exploited by overseas organizations who are solely interested in furthering their own aims and agendas at the expense of others.

Charities are organizations that help the public. Watchtower is not interested in helping the public – only itself. Its leaders teach that Armageddon is imminent, that all human governments and organizations are doomed, and that any form of charitable work other than recruiting others into their cult is virtually pointless. Its publications contain carefully-worded articles designed to raise suspicion about charitable giving, including the following from the June 1st, 2003 Watchtower, page 7:

When it comes to organized charity, though, we need to be cautious as we evaluate the many appeals we receive. Some charities have high administrative or fund-raising costs, leaving only a small portion of the collected money for the intended purpose. Proverbs 14:15 says: "Anyone inexperienced puts faith in every word, but the shrewd one considers his steps." So it is the course of wisdom to examine the facts carefully.

It is difficult to imagine an organization that is more anti-charity while still being allowed to call itself a charity.

In view of the above, I implore the Commission to broaden the scope of its statutory inquiry to encompass other areas in which Watchtower is causing serious harm. Though any one of the issues raised in this letter, including the mishandling of child sex abuse, are of pressing concern by themselves, it is my personal belief that Watchtower's shunning policy is the most dangerous.

Watchtower's practice of denying people the right to leave the organization with dignity makes it a "captive organization" (to coin a phrase used by Angus Stewart). Because members are held captive, it is impossible for them to "vote with their feet" and positively affect change. This in turn allows other harmful practices, such as the mishandling of child sex abuse, to flourish – since the leadership snuffs out any potential avenue for protest by members.

Not only does shunning violate the human rights of the individual and contravene the public benefit requirements, it also acts as a bulwark against progress and reform. Individual trustees are powerless to enact changes recommended by the Commission if these contradict the will of the Governing Body, even if they wanted to.

I trust the above information will prove helpful to the Commission, and I appreciate and value the opportunity to be involved in your inquiries.

Yours sincerely,

Lloyd Evans

Enclosures

- Annex 1 – Testimonies of UK citizens who are negatively impacted by Watchtower policies (pages 7 to 15)
- Annex 2 – Schedule of Evidence, dated 2nd August 2014 (pages 16 to 22)

Annex 1

Testimonies of UK citizens who are negatively impacted by
Watchtower policies

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Annex 2

Schedule of Evidence Regarding Harmful Practices of Jehovah's Witnesses That Are Not In the Public Benefit

For the attention of the Charity Commission of England and Wales

2nd August 2014

By Lloyd Evans

1. Mishandling of child sex abuse

The Watchtower organization is receiving increasing media exposure, both in the UK and elsewhere, for its negligent policies in relation to child sexual molestation. The following evidence will demonstrate why this is.

- A. **The book *Shepherd the Flock of God* (published 2010)** – a textbook for use ONLY by Witness elders – gives the following guidance regarding elders adjudicating over accusations of child abuse:
 - i. If one who is accused of child abuse denies the accusation, and there are fewer than two witnesses, elders are to “leave matters in Jehovah’s hands.” (page 72) (This is referred to as the “two-witness rule.”)
 - ii. Elders are to “immediately call the branch office for direction” (rather than the police) if they “learn of an accusation of child abuse.” (page 131)
- B. A **letter dated October 1st 2012 to all bodies of elders** details the following policies as an update to the aforementioned “Shepherd” book:
 - i. It reaffirms the “two-witness rule” policy of only accepting the testimony of two or more witnesses as a basis for taking action (per item 11: “although they investigate every allegation, the elders are not authorized by the Scriptures to take congregational action unless there is a confession or there are two credible witnesses.”)
 - ii. It states that the only means of circumventing the two-witness rule is if there are, instead of two witnesses, two victims of the same perpetrator (the so-called “two-victim rule,” per item 11: “If two persons are witnesses to separate incidents of the same kind of wrongdoing, their testimony can be deemed sufficient to take judicial action.”)
 - iii. It insists that the branch office has the authority to determine whether a child molester should be considered a “predator” or not, with parents warned

accordingly (per item 13: "The branch office, not the local body of elders, determines whether an individual who has sexually abused children in the past will be considered a 'predator.'")

iv. It further insists that a known child molester may still be considered, under certain circumstances, for senior positions of trust in a congregation (per item 22: "It cannot be said in every case that one who has sexually abused a child could never qualify for privileges of service in the congregation.")

C. A fax from Watchtower headquarters in New York to Betsan Powys of the BBC dated May 9, 2002 admits that the organization keeps "records" of those accused of child abuse. These records "include the names of many persons who have only been accused of child abuse whereas the charges have not been substantiated." (page 3)

D. The **Child Safeguarding Policy** for congregations in the UK dated January 2012 states that, in the event of an accusation of child abuse, elders will "arrange for contact to be made with a Safeguarding Elder at the branch office of Jehovah's Witnesses as soon as possible for guidance and direction." (item 11) It does not say anything about the Safeguarding Elder notifying the authorities of any such accusations in all instances.

2. Coercion of members to shun former members in breach of their human rights

Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (as upheld by Article 9 of the European Convention on Human Rights) recognizes a person's freedom to "change his religion or belief."

Since 1981, the Watchtower organization has made it impossible for Jehovah's Witnesses to leave their religion ("disassociate" themselves) without being punished. This punishment comes in the form of being shunned as though they are guilty of wrongdoing. (See item A below)

The practice of shunning is particularly applicable between family members, apart from in a very limited set of circumstances, such as between a husband and wife, or between parents and a child who is not yet old enough to leave home. Aside from these minor "loopholes," Jehovah's Witnesses are to avoid all contact with family members who are former members. Repeated coercion to this effect is to be found in Watchtower publications and lectures by senior officials in the organization.

Furthermore, those who conscientiously leave Jehovah's Witnesses, or who renounce their former beliefs, are classed as "apostates." The Watchtower organization urges that such ones be thought of as "mentally diseased."

A. **Watchtower magazine dated September 15, 1981:** "Persons who make themselves 'not of our sort' by deliberately rejecting the faith and beliefs of Jehovah's Witnesses should appropriately be viewed and treated as are those who have been disfellowshipped for wrongdoing."

B. **Watchtower magazine dated July 15, 2011** (italics mine): "Suppose that a doctor told you to avoid contact with someone who is infected with a contagious, deadly disease. You would know what the doctor means, and you would strictly heed his warning. Well, *apostates are 'mentally diseased,' and they seek to infect others with their disloyal*

teachings. (1 Tim. 6:3, 4) Jehovah, the Great Physician, tells us to *avoid contact with them.* We know what he means, but are we determined to heed his warning in all respects?"

- C. **Watchtower magazine dated January 15, 2013:** "Do not look for excuses to associate with a disfellowshipped family member, for example, through e-mail."
- D. **Watchtower magazine dated April 15, 2012** (*italics mine*): "Consider just one example of *the good that can come when a family loyally upholds Jehovah's decree not to associate with disfellowshipped relatives.* A young man had been disfellowshipped for over ten years, during which time his father, mother, and four brothers "quit mixing in company" with him. At times, he tried to involve himself in their activities, but to their credit, each member of the family was steadfast in not having any contact with him. After he was reinstated, *he said that he always missed the association with his family, especially at night when he was alone.* But, he admitted, had the family associated with him even a little, that small dose would have satisfied him. However, because he did not receive even the slightest communication from any of his family, the burning desire to be with them became one motivating factor in his restoring his relationship with Jehovah. *Think of that if you are ever tempted to violate God's command not to associate with your disfellowshipped relatives.*"
- E. A **recording of a talk given at a US convention**, using an outline that was also used at conventions in the UK, in which a senior Watchtower representative named Steven Bell says the following by way of coercion (*italics mine*): "What does Jehovah expect out of us even if the situation is so painful that we have a family member who is disfellowshipped? What does he want? Loyalty, that's what Jehovah wants. *Jehovah knows that this is a difficult time in our life, but he wants loyalty. We have to put him before a father, a mother and even our children if they're disfellowshipped.* And if the disfellowshipping of our family is not bad enough, loyalty to Jehovah may mean we even have to endure reproach. We may be hurting because, 'I can't, can't talk to my family member.' And then someone walks up to us that we work with and said, 'I thought you were a Christian. *Why won't you talk to your children?*' Or the disfellowshipped person may say, 'My family kicked me out of the family.' However, remember, the wrongdoer changed his relationship with Jehovah and his family. *It was their actions that affected the family, not ours. If they would have remained faithful, the family would still be intact.*"
- F. A **recording of a talk by Governing Body member Anthony Morris III in Rome**, January 2012, in which he said: "The Bible does not say 'don't keep company with anyone unless it's one of your close relatives'. It does not say, 'well this is my daughter, this is my son that was disfellowshipped.' It doesn't say, 'Well you don't understand, this was my mother that was disfellowshipped, my father was disfellowshipped.' The Bible says ANYONE... If you haven't been loyal to the disfellowshipping decree, let that disfellowshipped one know you're going to change from today on and be loyal to Jehovah God."

3. Negligent policies regarding domestic abuse

According to Jehovah's Witness beliefs, a person cannot get a divorce unless his or her spouse is unfaithful. It is due to this teaching that spouses who suffer domestic violence are generally dissuaded from pursuing a divorce from their abusive partner. Indeed, they are urged to remain with him or her wherever possible, with separation (with no hope of remarriage) the only recourse available to a battered spouse.

Watchtower's approach of viewing the preservation of marital ties as being more important than the preservation of human life has resulted in material being published that encourages the blaming of the victim when it comes to physical violence, and promotes the idea of battered spouses persevering by being more 'Christian'.

- A. **The book *Shepherd the Flock of God* (published 2010), page 53:** "If the Christian is considering obtaining a divorce, the elders should explain that divorce does not free him to remarry unless adultery occurs. (Matt. 19:9) In addition, the extreme step of divorce may make it more difficult to reconcile."
- B. **Watchtower magazine dated May 1, 1975,** article entitled "My husband sometimes beats me. Should I get a legal separation or divorce because of it?": "The matter is a complex one, however, for both the husband and the wife could be in the wrong and contributing to the problem. Some times when a wife says that her husband abuses her, he claims that he is merely defending himself or trying to chastise her."
- C. **Watchtower magazine dated February 15, 2012** (italics mine): "Selma recalls a lesson she learned from the Witness who studied with her. 'On one particular day,' says Selma, 'I didn't want to have a Bible study. *The night before, Steve had hit me as I had tried to prove a point, and I was feeling sad and sorry for myself.* After I told the sister what had happened and how I felt, she asked me to read 1 Corinthians 13:4-7. As I did, I began to reason, 'Steve never does any of these loving things for me.' But the sister made me think differently by asking, 'How many of those acts of love do you show toward your husband?' My answer was, 'None, for he is so difficult to live with.' The sister softly said, '*Selma, who is trying to be a Christian here? You or Steve?*' Realizing that I needed to adjust my thinking, I prayed to Jehovah to help me be more loving toward Steve. Slowly, things started to change.' After 17 years, Steve accepted the truth."

4. Coercion of members to decline medical treatment, esp. blood transfusions

The stance of Jehovah's Witnesses regarding blood transfusions is well documented. Notwithstanding this, here follows a few examples of some of the material published by Watchtower with a view to coercing members to decline medical treatment.

Please note the direct counsel given to parents that they are to coerce their children to decline treatment with blood.

It should also be noted that, to heap further pressure on Witnesses, elders are instructed to arrange the disassociation of anyone who "unrepentantly" accepts a blood transfusion, thus invoking the shunning punishments referred to earlier.

- A. **The book *Shepherd the Flock of God* (published 2010), pages 111 and 112:** "Willingly and unrepentantly taking blood. If someone willingly takes blood, perhaps because of being under extreme pressure, the committee should obtain the facts and determine the individual's attitude. If he is repentant, the committee would provide spiritual assistance in the spirit of Galatians 6: 1 and Jude 22, 23. Since he is spiritually weak, he would not qualify for special privileges for a period of time, and it may be necessary to remove certain basic privileges. Depending on the circumstances, the committee may also need to arrange for an announcement to the congregation: 'The elders have handled a matter having to do with [name of person]. You will be glad to know that spiritual shepherds are endeavoring to render assistance.'" On the other hand, if the elders on the committee determine that he is unrepentant, they should announce his disassociation."
- B. **1975 Yearbook of Jehovah's Witnesses, page 224:** "As Christian witnesses of Jehovah, her parents, Darrell and Rhoda Labrenz, correctly viewed blood transfusion as a violation of God's law and thus opposed it. They were concerned about their baby's eternal welfare, for everlasting life is the prospect only of those adhering to God's laws."
- C. **Watchtower magazine dated April 15, 1970** (italics mine): "But suppose one's wife or child were near death. Giving blood, no matter who the loved one might be, would still constitute a violation of God's law. Just because one is near death, this does not give one liberty to break God's commands. When one is near death is no time to tamper with or violate the law of God, but a time to draw as near as possible to God by remaining faithful. Everlasting life is the reward for faithfulness. How foolish it would be to *gamble away the prospect of life eternal* for the very uncertain promise of a cure by blood transfusion!"
- D. **Internal newsletter *Our Kingdom Ministry*, dated December 2005:** "Are your children able to express themselves on this issue? Do they believe with all their heart that it is a divine command to 'abstain from blood'? (Acts 15:29; 21:25) Can they explain their belief from the Scriptures? Would they courageously defend their firm decision about blood if doctors believed that their life was in jeopardy, even if their parents were not present? Since 'time and unforeseen occurrence befall [us] all,' how can you prepare your children for any unexpected challenge to their integrity... You have the responsibility to teach your children God's view of blood."
- E. The book **What Does the Bible Really Teach** (2005), **pages 130-131** (italics mine): "What if a Christian is badly injured or is in need of major surgery? Suppose doctors say that he must have a blood transfusion or he will die. Or course, the Christian would not want to die... Would a Christian break God's law just to stay alive a little longer in this system of things? Jesus said: 'Whoever wants to save his soul [or, life] will lose it; but whoever loses his soul for my sake will find it.' (Matthew 16:25) *We do not want to die. But if we tried to save our present life by breaking God's law, we would be in danger of losing everlasting life.*" *What Does The Bible Really Teach* (2005) pp.130-131

5. Coercion of young people to avoid higher education

Watchtower literature, which is both read and distributed by Jehovah's Witnesses, is strewn with coercive propaganda aimed at dissuading young people from pursuing higher education. Rather than bettering themselves by acquiring skills and knowledge through college or university, young people are encouraged to pursue a career as "pioneers" – unpaid literature distributors for Watchtower.

- A. **Watchtower magazine dated March 15, 1969:** "Many schools now have student counselors who encourage one to pursue higher education after high school, to pursue a career with a future in this system of things. Do not be influenced by them. Do not let them 'brainwash' you with the Devil's propaganda to get ahead, to make something of yourself in this world. This world has very little time left! Any 'future' this world offers is no future! Wisely, then, let God's Word influence you in selecting a course that will result in your protection and blessing. Make pioneer service, the full-time ministry, with the possibility of Bethel or missionary service your goal."
- B. **Awake! magazine dated May 8, 1989:** "A university degree may or may not improve your employment prospects. But one fact is indisputable: 'The time left is reduced'! (1 Corinthians 7:29) For all its presumed benefits, would four years or more in a university be the best use of that remaining time?" *Awake!* 1989 May 8 p.13
- C. **Watchtower magazine dated April 15, 2008:** "What, though, of higher education, received in a college or a university? This is widely viewed as vital to success. Yet, many who pursue such education end up with their minds filled with harmful propaganda. Such education wastes valuable youthful years that could best be used in Jehovah's service. (Eccl. 12:1) Perhaps it is not surprising that in lands where many have received such an education, belief in God is at an all-time low."
- D. **Internal newsletter *Our Kingdom Ministry*, dated July 2011:** "Your children will no doubt experience new challenges and pressures. ... Are they prepared for the pressure they will receive to pursue higher education, date, and use alcohol or drugs?"
- E. **Watchtower magazine dated June 15, 2014:** "When a young Witness does well in school, a guidance counselor, a teacher, or a fellow student may pressure the Witness to pursue higher education as a step toward success in this system of things. Or a young brother or sister who has athletic ability may find that recruiters try to entice him or her into a sports career... What about you? Rather than pursue worldly goals, why not firmly establish "your ways" before Jehovah by sharing in the pioneer ministry?"

6. Other material worthy of consideration by the Charity Commission

In carrying out their investigations of Jehovah's Witnesses and their legal entities in the UK, the Commission should note that there is a doctrinal rule among Witnesses, sometimes referred to as "theocratic warfare," whereby it is deemed acceptable to tell lies if doing so is advantageous to the religion.

The book *Insight on the Scriptures*, Volume II, says (italics mine) "Lying generally involves saying something false to a person who is entitled to know the truth and doing

so with the intent to deceive or to injure him or another person.” It later adds, “While malicious lying is definitely condemned in the Bible, this does not mean that a person is under obligation to divulge truthful information *to people who are not entitled to it.*”

This is why there is doctrinally no problem for Jehovah’s Witnesses to mislead those outside their faith when under investigation or when applying for certain benefits, such as charitable status.

I have done my best to provide information that is most pertinent to your statutory inquiry and the issues raised in my complaint. If you require any further information, including PDFs or scans of the documents referred to above (or the recordings mentioned) please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Lloyd Evans