

# Christian Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses

The Ridgeway, London, NW7 1RN Telephone: [REDACTED]



LEM:LET February 4, 2020

Professor Alexis Jay  
Chair, Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse  
PO Box 72289  
London, SW1P 9LF

Re: Application to remove Lloyd Evans as core participant from “Protection in Religious Organisations and Settings” investigation

Dear Professor Jay:

We are writing to bring a serious matter to your attention which, in our view, should result in an order revoking the core participant status of Mr Lloyd Evans.

On July 5, 2019, you made a provisional ruling to refuse Mr Evans' core participant status. After receiving further submissions from his legal representative, Mr Richard Scorer, on August 7, 2019, you decided to grant Mr Evans core participant status based, *inter alia*, on the assertion by Mr Evans that “he is a former member and elder of the Jehovah's Witnesses, and is now a prominent campaigner, advocate, writer, documentary maker and activist who works with and supports former Jehovah's Witnesses, including those who have experienced child sexual abuse within the organisation”.

The CCJW has not been provided with a copy of Mr Evans' application for core participant status. It appears that Mr Evans did not disclose to the Inquiry that he was an elder for less than one year (in 2008) and, to our knowledge, did not deal with any matter that involved safeguarding issues. He apparently stopped attending the religious services of Jehovah's Witnesses shortly thereafter. As such, he does not have any personal knowledge of the current safeguarding practice and procedure of Jehovah's Witnesses. His only current experience with Jehovah's Witnesses is reading their religious publications and watching their religious videos, all of which are posted on the official website of Jehovah's Witnesses ([www.jw.org](http://www.jw.org)) in more than 1,000 languages and freely available for anyone to inspect.

Of more serious concern, it appears that Mr Evans did not disclose to the Inquiry the materials he has published about Jehovah's Witnesses. We have now reviewed Mr Evans' video statements on his YouTube channel and his public statements in his Twitter account, both of which he widely advertises. That material is grossly defamatory of the entire religious community of Jehovah's Witnesses and includes comments that constitute hate speech against Jehovah's Witnesses (see pages 1-8 of the attached). His speech is shocking and grossly offensive to all Christians, not only Jehovah's Witnesses (see page 9 of the attached).

The English courts and the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) have repeatedly denounced hate speech, which includes *inter alia*: (1) statements that trivialize or downplay the Holocaust;<sup>1</sup> (2) “vehement” and “sweeping statements attacking or casting in a

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<sup>1</sup> *R v. Bonehill-Paine (Joshua)* [2016] EWCA Crim 980 at [2], [24]; *R. v. Sheppard and another* [2010] EWCA Crim 65; see ECtHR judgments *Pastörs v. Germany*, no. 55225/14, §§ 36-37, 43 and 46, 3 October

negative light entire ethnic, religious or other groups” and statements which constitute a “general, vehement attack against a religious group, linking the group as a whole” with alleged criminal acts;<sup>2</sup> (3) profane and gratuitously offensive statements, including those in regards to “objects of veneration”;<sup>3</sup> and (4) statements accusing a religion as a whole of harbouring or welcoming child abusers or which accuse their religious leaders (without evidence) of “paedophilic tendencies”.<sup>4</sup>

The attached document provides specific examples of Mr Evans’ hate speech, which fall into each of the above categories. While these examples are by no means exhaustive, they illustrate and confirm that Mr Evans continues to broadcast his hate speech even after receiving core participant status from the Inquiry.

The Grand Chamber of the ECtHR warned in *Delfi AS v. Estonia* [GC]: “Defamatory and other types of clearly unlawful speech, including hate speech and speech inciting violence, can be disseminated like never before, worldwide, in a matter of seconds, and sometimes remain persistently available online.”<sup>5</sup> Public authorities and owners of Internet webpages thus have a positive duty to ensure they do not provide a platform for persons advocating hate speech.<sup>6</sup> Moreover, once hate speech is brought to the attention of State authorities, they have a “positive obligation” to take actions which respond appropriately to the hate speech and which constitute an “effective deterrence”, which may require that criminal proceedings be initiated.<sup>7</sup>

We invite the Inquiry to examine Mr Evans’ public statements as set out in the attached document and, in the light therefore, to re-examine whether he merits core participant status. Mr Evans’ participation in the Inquiry will inevitably give an air of credibility to his hate speech. Had Mr Evans and his legal representative disclosed that information to the Inquiry, we are confident it would have led to the rejection of his application. We submit that his participation in this Inquiry is highly inappropriate given his extreme views and hate speech towards Jehovah’s Witnesses, and Christianity as a whole.

For the above reasons, we respectfully submit that Mr Evans’ core participant status should be immediately revoked.

Sincerely,

*Christian Congregation  
of Jehovah’s Witnesses*

Legal Department

Attachment

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2019; *Williamson v. Germany* (dec.), no. 64496/17, §§ 20 and 26, 8 January 2019; and *Perinçek v. Switzerland* [GC], no. 27510/08, §§ 15, 209-210 and 212, 15 October 2015

<sup>2</sup> *R. v. David Bitton* [2019] EWCA Crim 1372, at [18] to [21]; *Perinçek v. Switzerland* [GC], cited above, § 206; *Delfi AS v. Estonia* [GC], no. 64569/09, § 136, 16 June 2015; *Ivanov v. Russia* (dec.), no. 35222/04, 20 February 2007; and *Norwood v. the United Kingdom*, no. 23131/03, 16 November 2004, p. 4

<sup>3</sup> *Klein v. Slovakia*, no. 72208/01, § 47, 31 October 2006; *Gough v. the United Kingdom*, no. 49327/11, § 167, 28 October 2014

<sup>4</sup> *E.S. v. Austria*, no. 38450/12, §§ 14, 43, 55 and 57, 25 October 2018; *İ.A. v. Turkey*, no. 42571/98, § 29, ECHR 2005-VIII

<sup>5</sup> *Delfi AS v. Estonia* [GC], cited above, § 110

<sup>6</sup> *Delfi AS v. Estonia* [GC], cited above, §§ 110 and 159; *Tagiyev and Huseynov v. Azerbaijan*, no. 13274/08, §§ 8, 37, 43 and 47, 5 December 2019

<sup>7</sup> *Beizaras and Levickas v. Lithuania*, no. 41288/15, §§ 110-111, 125 and 127, 14 January 2020