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Advocates for Awareness of Watchtower Abuses

Press Release – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Jehovah’s Witnesses begin 2014 convention series, but beware of “the wolf in sheep’s clothing”

June 5, 2014

On June 6th Jehovah’s Witnesses will start their 2014 convention series in various cities within the USA and Canada. During the first week they will be arriving in such diverse places as Bakersfield, California and Penticton, British Columbia. Many local businesses look forward to a temporary cash injection because Jehovah’s Witnesses conventions typically attract a few thousand visitors.

Many local newspaper editors might be reluctant to upset businesses who advertise in their publications by writing about certain often unknown and unpleasant facts about an organization whose adherents will soon be flooding into their area.

Advocates for Awareness of Watchtower Abuses (AAWA) respects this economic reality, but also wants the public and civic leaders living in the convention cities to know that the Jehovah’s Witness leadership has never been totally truthful about what happens when a person becomes entangled with their group.

Global concerns about human rights violations imposed by the Watchtower organization’s rules on its members appear in the worldwide press nearly every day. Recent articles about the dangerous impact of the group’s independent and unique handling of criminal activity within their congregations (especially incidents involving child molestation) raise serious questions about the risks Jehovah’s Witnesses might represent to all communities. These concerns often focus on their public distribution of literature door-to-door as one of their methods to recruit new followers.

The Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society (of New York and Pennsylvania), legal entities used by Jehovah’s Witnesses, publish a magazine called “The Watchtower” that dictates how the organization’s followers should live their lives.

Families across the globe have been torn apart due to restrictions imposed by this magazine. One particularly

inhumane doctrine forbids Jehovah's Witnesses from communicating with former members, including their own children, parents and friends.

A recent edition of the magazine went to new lengths to deny family communication by forbidding even the use of email. It stated: "Do not look for excuses to associate with a disfellowshipped family member, for example, through e-mail." (Watchtower, January 15, 2013, p.16) Many social and legal experts agree that this kind of interference with private family relationships is a violation of basic human rights.

Child molestation and the protection of pedophiles are crimes that pose other critical concerns. Kathleen Conti is a former Jehovah's Witness whose daughter was molested by a ministerial servant in her own congregation. Now a leader of SNAP (Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests), Ms. Conti offers this warning:

"Child abuse victims within Jehovah's Witnesses have suffered because of an appalling lack of action to stop perpetrators of this criminal act. This is due to a rule which the organization uses to conduct its own independent judicial enquiries. They insist guilt can only be established when there are two witnesses, otherwise no action is taken.

"Tragically, that is almost never the case with child abuse. So molesters are often free to continue within the congregations. In many cases, this has resulted in scores of victims over decades of abuse. What really needs attention are the policies that the Jehovah's Witnesses Governing Body hand down which do nothing to protect children."

AAWA, an organization committed to raising awareness about these and other serious abuses by the Watchtower organization, has extended an open offer to the leaders of Jehovah's Witnesses – aimed directly at their governing body of 7 men located in New York – to meet and discuss ways in which they can take positive action to remedy these distressing issues. So far, AAWA's offer has gone unanswered.

AAWA encourages all local people to think about the implications of associating with this group and to consider twice before attending one of these conventions.

More Information Links:

- [Shunning Policy Explained](#)
- [Child Molestation Information](#)
- [Domestic Abuse](#)
- [Anti-education](#)
- [Refusal of Blood Transfusions](#)

Advocates for Awareness of Watchtower Abuses (AAWA)

Background: AAWA is a religiously neutral organization, a not-for-profit corporation with 260 volunteers from over twenty countries committed to objectively and respectfully raise awareness and to help victims of abusive Watchtower (Jehovah's Witness) policies. URL: <http://aawa.co>

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