Criminal Prosecution of the Christian Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses

in the Magistrates' Court of Victoria, Australia, over breaches of mandatory child protection laws as legislated in the Victorian Working with Children Act 2005 for "religious organisations" and "ministers of religion".

Case No. B12083108

Acting Prosecutor: Mr Steven Unthank

July 26, 2011 to February 21, 2012

Volume 3



"The Christian congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses is an international brotherhood."



Criminal Prosecution of the Christian Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses

Article by Steven Unthank

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Victoria, AUSTRALIA

The Christian congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses is legally recognized in Australia as forming part of the overall ecclesiastical and administrative authority for members and associates of the religion of Jehovah's Witnesses.

The Watchtower magazine, November 15, 1996, on page 27 states that

"The Christian congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses is an international brotherhood."

The Christian congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses operates in Australia as an unincorporated body unlike other countries where they have chosen to be formally incorporated or registered. For example, in the United States of America, the Christian congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses is incorporated in the State of New York under section 402 of the Not-for-Profit Corporation Law. Whereas, in Italy, they go by the formal name *Congregazione Cristiana dei Testimoni di Geova*, of which, according to *The Watchtower* magazine, translates as "Christian Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses". – see w02 1/15 p. 32

On July 26, 2011, a total of 7 criminal charges were officially filed in the Magistrates' Court of Victoria, Australia, against the CHRISTIAN CONGREGATION OF JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES in relation to ongoing breaches of the Victorian *Working with Children Act 2005* as it applies to "religious organisations".

Each of the 7 charges carried a fine of Au\$144,000 and up to 2 years imprisonment for each individual member of the committee of management for the Christian Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses "who knew of, or knowingly authorised or permitted, the commission of the offence" or offences.

All 7 charges were in relation to allegations of unlawful activities carried out against children within the Traralgon Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses by the entire Body of Elders within the Traralgon Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses.

A total of 5 separate legal entities were criminally charged over breaches of child protection laws as legislated in the Victorian *Working with Children Act 2005*. Those legal entities charged were

Governing Body of Jehovah's Witnesses (7 charges)

Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania (7 charges)

Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of Australia (7 charges)

Christian Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses (7 charges)

Faithful and Discreet Slave (7 charges)

See the article "Jehovah's Witnesses Hierarchy Charged" at www.jwnews.net

The Christian Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses were summoned to appear in Court on September 13, 2011, to face their criminal charges. They refused to appear when summoned and failed to be represented by legal counsel. In addition they also refused to appear in Court or to be represented by legal counsel on 4 subsequent court hearings conducted in their absence over the next 5 months. On February 21, 2012, the Director of Public Prosecutions, after formally taking over the case from the current Acting Prosecutor, Mr Steven Unthank, "discontinued" the criminal case after claiming that the ongoing criminal prosecution of the Christian Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses, over breaches of mandatory child protection laws, was not in the "public interest".

The "Charge-Sheet And Summons" for the Christian Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses was served on Vincent Joseph Toole, legal counsel and senior elder for the Christian Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses, and recognized officer "who is concerned or takes part in the management of" the Christian Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses in Australia.

Documents and evidence pertaining to the criminal prosecution of the Christian Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses also identified Vincent Joseph Toole as part of the committee of management and also as a "member of the committee of management of the body or association who knew of, or knowingly authorised or permitted, the commission of the offence" or offences against the *Working with Children Act 2005*.

During the Magistrates' Court hearing on October 11, 2011, the second round of hearings, a former member of the Christian Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses in Australia attended the hearing and later compiled a report on the hearing. JW News was recently granted copyright ownership of this report, which, apart from discussing courtroom arguments in relation to the "Faithful and Discreet Slave", the report also discussed brief arguments relating to the Christian Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses presented by legal counsel for the Watchtower Society and not by legal counsel for the Christian Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses as they failed to appear or be represented.

Note: the report on the following pages is published verbatim and contains only one comment by JW News in brackets [] in relation to court listing dates. Abbreviations have been spelled out according to the original report. Example "WTS" becomes Watchtower Society. The endnote summary has been added to clarify a statement made by the presiding Magistrate in relation to the criminal charging of each member of the Governing Body of Jehovah's Witnesses.

OCTOBER 11, 2011, COURT REPORT BY ANONYMOUS

Victoria, Australia: Report for October 11, 2011, Criminal Court Hearing Involving the Prosecution of the Committee of Management for the Religion of Jehovah's Witnesses

I had no plans to turn up to the court hearing as an observer, as in my experience, it can take several hearings and a number of months before any court case gets rolling. This usually involves a transfer to the County Court or the Supreme Court for a trial unless the defendant pleads "guilty."

Everything changed upon learning that the Watchtower Society (WTS) had instructed elders and others in the congregations to comply with the working with children laws and to actually obtain their working with children cards. Getting the Watchtower Society to comply with the laws after three years of refusing to comply was quite an achievement for Steven Unthank. With this development who would not want to sit in on the next court hearing and witness the defense tactics the Watchtower Society and their legal team launched to get themselves out of the potential crisis they got themselves into.

And launch they did. In a short space of 90 minutes, the Watchtower Society completely destroyed the entire fabric and structure of the faith of some 7 million Jehovah's Witnesses for nothing more than self-preservation. Fortunately or unfortunately, depending on your view, most Jehovah's Witnesses will never find out.

Before compiling this report I took the opportunity to read through Steven Unthank's web site <u>www.jwnews.net</u> for the purpose of clarifying a few case point overviews and I recommend this to others. For anyone interested in court numbers and proof of court hearings, the Daily Court Listings can be found on the Magistrates' Court of Victoria web site for November 8th.

[Note Magistrate Court listings are only published prior to the date of the hearings.]

My opinions and observations

The best way to comprehend what is going on, from a courtroom perspective, is that the court hearings at the moment are administrative, which in very simplistic terms means 'the shuffling of paperwork' and 'the jostling for position' along with some short case arguments or presentations to the magistrate.

During the court hearing on October 11th, the Director of Public Prosecutions and the Office of Public Prosecutions (referred to as the Crown) indicated to the court that they intend to take over all five cases. As to why they have not done so previously is anyone's guess. In my opinion I would not be surprised if all five cases have been sort of co-prosecuted and case managed by the Crown and by Steven Unthank working together in a de facto relationship, with Steven Unthank acting in the capacity as acting prosecutor and the Crown as legal adviser. Such an arrangement would be advantageous to the overall prosecution of the cases for two very specific reasons:-

- 1. Steven Unthank would not have a working knowledge of the criminal justice system; and
- 2. the Crown would not have a working knowledge of the Watchtower Society's corporate religious system and its relationship to Jehovah's Witnesses and each of the defendants.

Many of us, including myself, may have greatly underestimated Steven Unthank's ability or understanding of the court process, the structure of the Watch Tower Society, its relationship with the Jehovah's Witnesses, and what was needed to launch a criminal prosecution. It has been a long running joke about having the "faithful and discreet slave" charged. But consider this. Everything that happens within the Watchtower Society and within the Jehovah's Witnesses is attributed to the entity and class of individuals known within the religion of Jehovah's Witnesses as the "faithful and discreet slave."

According to the Watchtower teachings, the authority of the elder arrangement, their governing body,

the branch committees, and also the authority of the lawyers within the congregation and organization, comes from the "faithful and discreet slave." If these elders, governing body members, branch committee members, and lawyers made a mistake over the Working with Children laws then the fault may also lie with the person or legal entity that employs their services, be they corporate services, legal services or religious services. For a criminal trial this has to be explored by the prosecution.

The charging of the "faithful and discreet slave" as a religious body now has the ability to publicly expose the quasi-legal religious relationship they have with the Watch Tower Society and its legal department. The Watch Tower Society would no doubt never want this to be publicly exposed and therefore must take action to keep this hidden from scrutiny at all costs. It is irrelevant as to whether any observers believe in the "faithful and discreet slave" or not. It is real to Jehovah's Witnesses and is the entire religious heart of their belief structure.

To understand the court arguments we first need to establish whether the "faithful and discreet slave" exists under Victorian law.

"Who really is the faithful and discreet slave?"

What we do know is that the "faithful and discreet slave" (FDS) have been criminally charged and are being prosecuted as "corporate accused." We also know that there are seven charges on their "Charge-Sheet and Summons (Corporate Accused)" in relation to the *Working with Children Act 2005*. We do not know what the charges are as these have not yet been read out in court. This will happen in time, but until then it is anyone's guess. In all reality the charge wordings are irrelevant.

Under Victorian law a "corporate accused" can legally be an incorporated entity (a registered company), an association, or an unincorporated body. The "faithful and discreet slave" is not an incorporated entity (a registered company) and is not an association (no articles of association) so therefore the charge sheet or sheets must list it as an "unincorporated body."

According to the teachings of Jehovah's Witnesses, as written in the book "Organized To Do Jehovah's Will" on page 16, the "faithful and discreet slave" are a "body" which Christ uses "to publish information on the fulfillment of Bible prophecies and to give timely direction on the application of Bible principles in daily life." Therefore, the "faithful and discreet slave", by their own written admission, are a "body" of individual persons. As they are not incorporated this makes the "faithful and discreet slave" an unincorporated body similar to the Governing Body of Jehovah's Witnesses.

The *Working with Children Act 2005* says that a person includes "an unincorporated body or association and a partnership." Therefore, the phrase "person" can also legally be applied to an unincorporated body. This then makes the "faithful and discreet slave" a legal entity under Victorian law, a "person" who operates as an unincorporated body.

The Working with Children Act 2005 says that "If this Act provides that a person, being an unincorporated body or an association or a partnership, is guilty of an offence, that reference to the person must–(a) in the case of an unincorporated body or association–be read as a reference to each member of the committee of management of the body or association who knew of, or knowingly authorized or permitted, the commission of the offence."

To simplify, the Working with Children laws recognize unincorporated bodies as a legal entity by granting them legal status as a "person" under law. This was legislated so that there were no loopholes in the law that allowed or permitted anyone, or any group of people, religious or otherwise, from not complying with the Working with Children laws. In the event that a criminal offence is committed by the unincorporated body then the offence is deemed to have been committed by each member of the committee of management of the body.

This understanding is important in that it shows that the "faithful and discreet slave" have been granted legal recognition under Victorian law as a body that does indeed exist as a legal entity. Why is this important?

During the court hearing on October 11, legal counsel for the Watchtower Society, Rachel van Witsen, from Vincent Toole Solicitors (the Watchtower Society's in-house law firm located inside Bethel, Australia) made a statement on behalf of the Watchtower Society that:-

"The faithful and discreet slave is not a legal entity."

Vincent Toole Solicitors then went on to present arguments that the "faithful and discreet slave" do not exist as a "person" nor do they exist as an "unincorporated body" and nor do they exist as a "body" of Christians.

Literally Vincent Toole Solicitors were arguing that the "faithful and discreet slave" should be struck off the charge list because they simply do not exist. In one broad sweeping statement the Watchtower Society and their in-house legal team completely destroyed the entire fabric and structure of the faith of some 7 million Jehovah's Witnesses. What next happened goes beyond the wildest imaginings that any Jehovah's Witness could ever believe was possible.

Steven Unthank stood up, looked around the courtroom, and then actually defended the "faithful and discreet slave" and the beliefs and doctrinal teachings of Jehovah's Witnesses. No one else came to the defense of the "faithful and discreet slave". Steven Unthank, as the current acting prosecutor, was the only person who defended them. Unthank then presented argument that the "faithful and discreet slave" was real and was that body of Jehovah's Witness Christians that had religious responsibility over the entire Christian congregation.

The Watchtower Society and Vincent Toole Solicitors then presented rebuttal argument that the "faithful and discreet slave" did not exist but were nothing more than a:-

"theological arrangement"

A massive gasp could be heard emanating from the gallery from amongst a group of Jehovah's Witnesses who had attended to watch the hearing. It is worth noting that Jehovah's Witnesses are taught that to deny the "faithful and discreet slave" is to deny the Christ and that those who deny the Christ are the antichrist.

The Watchtower Society and Vincent Toole Solicitors then turned on the Christian Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses and denied that they existed or operated within Victoria and Australia. The magistrate did not accept this argument and, after seeking approval from Steven Unthank, adjourned all the court hearings for four weeks.

Simply put, the Watchtower Society and Vincent Toole Solicitors denied the existence of the "faithful and discreet slave" and denied the existence of the Christian congregation arrangement. What is also interesting in the entire court case to date is that it was the Watchtower Society and their in-house lawyers that brought theology and religion into the court room.

It is possible that sometime in the future there could be a very serious courtroom hearing in which the whole existence of the "faithful and discreet slave" is argued but not in the way any Jehovah's Witness could imagine. Unless the Watch Tower Society backs down, or the Governing Body of Jehovah's Witnesses step in and defend their faith, then we could see Steven Unthank actually defending the existence of the "faithful and discreet slave" and the beliefs of Jehovah's Witnesses in open public court while the Watch Tower Socity and their lawyers, with the backing of the Governing Body, deny the existence of the "faithful and discreet slave" and maybe even the Christian congregation. And if such a courtroom drama ever unfolds, then at any given time Steven Unthank could back down and the "faithful and discreet slave" become no more than a never existing group of imaginary Christians who are really nothing more than a convenient "theological arrangement" whom Jehovah's Witnesses mistakenly believe exist and are their spiritual leaders who care about them.

The only party not represented was the Governing Body of Jehovah's Witnesses. This is logical from a self-preserving religious point of view, as to defend the charges would be to acknowledge each single charge as being a "valid charge of improper conduct." This would then disqualify each member from being an elder until the case was sorted out.

This failure on the part of the Governing Body to appear or to be represented was noticed by the Magistrate who took the unusual step of suggesting and recommending to Steven Unthank that criminal charges be brought against every single member of the Governing Body of Jehovah's Witnesses as opposed to the unincorporated body known as the Governing Body of Jehovah's Witnesses. The only thing that may actually prevent this from really happening is that Steven Unthank lacks the financial resources. Good thing the Crown stated in court its intention to take over the prosecution.

END OF REPORT

Endnote by JW News

The suggestion of the presiding Magistrate, as described in the last paragraph of the above report, was in relation to the failure of the Christian Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses to answer the Court Ordered Summons to appear before the Court. The Magistrate was of the opinion that the Christian Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses could also be described as an "association" and therefore made the recommendation that the 7 criminal charges be placed in the names of each officer or "member of the committee of management of the body or association who knew of, or knowingly authorised or permitted, the commission of the offence" or offences. This provision is allowed under section 45(1) of the *Working with Children Act 2005.* The individual members comprising the Governing Body of Jehovah's Witnesses also comprise part of the committee of management for the Christian Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses. As none of the officers or members of the summons to appear in Court, and, as such, had thereby established a documented court record of failing to answer a Court Summons, a "Charge-Sheet And Warrant To Arrest" could be issued in relation to individual charging.

"Charge-Sheet And Warrant To Arrest" documents were prepared for the below listed individuals who were identified as being officers of "the committee of management of the body or association who knew of, or knowingly authorised or permitted, the commission of the offence" or offences:

Geoffrey Jackson - current member of the Governing Body of Jehovah's Witnesses.

Samuel Herd - current member of the Governing Body of Jehovah's Witnesses.

Gerrit Lösch - current member of the Governing Body of Jehovah's Witnesses.

M. Stephen Lett - current member of the Governing Body of Jehovah's Witnesses.

David H. Splane - current member of the Governing Body of Jehovah's Witnesses.

Anthony Morris - current member of the Governing Body of Jehovah's Witnesses.

Guy H. Pierce - current member of the Governing Body of Jehovah's Witnesses.

Donald H. MacLean - director of Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of Australia and elder.

Harold Vivian Mouritz - director of Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of Australia and elder.

Vincent Joseph Toole - legal officer for Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of Australia, legal counsel for the Christian Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses in Australia, and elder.

A number of other individuals were also identified as comprising part of the officers or members of the committee of management for the Christian Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses in Australia; however, a "Charge-Sheet And Warrant To Arrest" were not filled out or presented to the Magistrates' Court of Victoria, Australia, in relation to them.

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"The Christian congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses is an international brotherhood." - The Watchtower magazine, November 15, 1996, page 27.

The Responsibility To Bear Witness

Article by Steven Unthank

As first published by JW News on www.jwnews.net

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Victoria, AUSTRALIA

"Here is a sin men commit; a man hears the call that puts him under oath, and can bear witness of what he has seen or known, yet witness he bears none; he must pay the penalty."

- The Holy Bible, Leviticus 5:1, Knox Version.

This bearing witness can be a form of testifying under oath or in writing on behalf of someone who has, or may have been wronged, and therefore by necessity requires potential witnesses or representation to help the one wronged to get justice or to clear his or her name. Any witnesses of the wrong would know who has suffered an injustice and would have a responsibility to come forward to establish their innocence, and identify the guilty if known, otherwise they themself must pay the penalty.

In the volume set, *Commentary on the Old Testament* by Keil & Delitzsch, the authors point out that, from a Biblical point of view, an individual can become guilty of someone else's sin if they

"knew of another's crime, whether he had seen it, or had come to the certain knowledge of it in any other way, and was therefore qualified to appear in court as a witness for the conviction of the criminal, neglected to do so, and did not state what he had seen or learned, when he heard the solemn adjuration of the judge at the public investigation of the crime, by which all persons present, who knew anything of the matter, were urged to come forward as witnesses."

Is such a claim valid? Consider the Scriptural principle of Leviticus chapter 5 and verse 1 in the light of the following...

Not one single person in the religion of Jehovah's Witnesses voluntarily came forward to bear witness on behalf of the children and their families to get justice in the recent criminal court cases before the Magistrates' Court of Victoria, over criminal breaches of the Victorian *Working with Children Act 2005*. The religion of Jehovah's Witnesses remained silent.

Likewise, not one single person in the religion of Jehovah's Witnesses came forward to bear witness on

behalf of the Governing Body of Jehovah's Witnesses nor on behalf of the "faithful and discreet slave" for the purpose of clearing their name or establishing their innocence. The religion of Jehovah's Witnesses again remained silent.

Either way, the religion of Jehovah's Witnesses neither came forward to establish guilt nor to establish innocence. They simply remained silent.

Silence does not absolve an individual of liability nor of being a sharer in the sins, or crimes, of others. Non-compliance with the Working with Children laws is not only a crime, but also the sin of lawlessness.

Sharing in the Sins of Others

But suppose we realize that a suggested course of action is wrong? Does our rejecting it necessarily free us of further responsibility in the matter? If we know that those suggesting wrongdoing are engaging in it, what should we do?

Some who have knowledge of wrongdoing by others may be inclined to say nothing about it to those having the prime responsibility to keep the congregation clean. Why? Perhaps they do not want to be viewed as informers. Or, because of a false sense of loyalty, they may keep the matter quiet or may speak only to those who promise to keep it secret. This is very serious. Why? Because it can actually result in sharing in the sins of others.

... In today's world, covering over the wrongdoing of others is a general practice. Many are as mute as a stone wall when it comes to revealing the wrongdoing of others to those who should know about such actions. It requires strength of Christian personality to inform appointed elders of the serious sin of a fellow believer. But if we are to have Jehovah's favor, we must not let personal friendship blind us to the wrongdoing of another individual. Our relationship with God is of far greater importance than loyalty to a friend who is guilty of serious wrongdoing and refuses to reveal the matter.

- The Watchtower magazine, November 15, 1985, pages 19 and 21

The Watch Tower Society claims that the elders within the religion of Jehovah's Witnesses in Victoria, Australia, do not work with children and as such have no responsibility towards young ones by complying with child protection laws. All bodies of elders within the religion of Jehovah's Witnesses in the State of Victoria went on record late last year, and claimed – by publicly reading out a letter within their Kingdom Hall – that they, as elders, have no "direct contact" with children, even going so far as citing the *Working with Children Act 2005*.

The Working with Children Act 2005 defines "direct contact" for a "minister of religion" as:

any contact between a person and a child that involves-

- (a) physical contact; or
- (b) face to face oral communication; or
- (c) physically being within eyeshot."

It is irrelevant if a parent or guardian, or even another adult is present. The **Working with Children Check Application Guide and Form** [download sample form at <u>www.KidsVictoria.org</u>] on page 2, explains that "being within eyeshot" simply means that "you can see them" while carrying out your assigned duties (which includes any internal ministry or spiritual shepherding) within the "religious organisation" you volunteer or work in. That is why the *Working with Children Act 2005* stated that the assigned duties for "ministers of religion" include, by default, working with children. Simply put, the law states that if there is so much as one child within your "religious organisation" then any "minister of religion" works with children by default and must comply with child protection laws, which for "religious organisations" became compulsory on July 1, 2008.

"Although child training is primarily the duty of parents, elders also have a responsibility toward young ones in the congregation. In caring for God's flock, overseers also need to shepherd the lambs. (1 Peter 5:1-3) What a fine example Jehovah has set in tenderly caring for even the little ones! (Isaiah 40:11) Responding to his example, Christian undershepherds will also want to display warm, loving interest in young people and make them feel a part of the congregation."

- The Watchtower magazine, May 15, 1990, page 29.

Jesus is recorded in the Scriptures as saying

"Whoever receives one such young child on the basis of my name receives me also. But whoever stumbles one of these little ones who put faith in me, it is more beneficial for him to have hung around his neck a millstone such as is turned by an ass and to be sunk in the wide, open sea . . . See to it that you men do not despise one of these little ones; for I tell YOU that their angels in heaven always behold the face of my father who is in heaven."

- The Holy Bible, Gospel of Matthew, chapter 18 and verses 6 and 10, New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures.

This begs the question ... Would Jesus work with children or would he deny these little ones?

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Was the Christian Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses ever made aware of the need for compliance with the *Working with Children Act 2005*; and did any members or parents of the religion of Jehovah's Witnesses ever notify them?

Following this article is a 4 page facsimile copy of letter dated Sunday, August 3, 2008, which was sent to the Christian Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses by a family within the Traralgon Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses. The letter was sent following the passing of the July 1, 2008 deadline for compliance with mandatory child protection laws for "religious organisations" and "ministers of religion". This letter was sent to the Christian Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses following a year of effort by the family and others to have the religion comply with mandatory child protection laws prior to the deadline for compliance.

While the letter is heavily edited to protect the public identification of the family who sent the letter and their children, the letter does highlight the extent of action taken by members of the religion of Jehovah's Witnesses in seeking compliance with the *Working with Children Act 2005* and also in protecting the Governing Body of Jehovah's Witnesses and the congregation. In writing the letter, the family sought the assistance of Steven Unthank who, over the previous year, had also been trying to assist the religion of Jehovah's Witnesses to comply with the working with children laws.

The family that sent the following letter, and a number of other letters, were also a party to the issuing of the January 1, 2012, "Open Letter from the Children of Jehovah's Witnesses to the Governing Body of Jehovah's Witnesses" over the failure of the Governing Body and the religion to protect the children and comply with mandatory child protection laws as legislated in the State of Victoria, Australia.

On Friday August 29, 2008, during the District Convention of Jehovah's Witnesses held at Rod Laver Arena, Melbourne, Victoria, and at the request of the parents that issued the following 4 page letter, Steven Unthank personally met with Donald MacLean, director of the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of Australia and local Branch Committee member for the Christian Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses. This meeting was sought in line with the procedures for resolving "difficulties" as outlined in the Jehovah's Witness textbook *"Organized To Do Jehovah's Will*", chapter 14.

Acting under instructions from the family, Steven Unthank explained to Donald MacLean that

"If the Watch Tower Society and the Christian Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses do not comply with the Victorian *Working with Children Act 2005* then there would be no alternative but to formally request that criminal charges be laid."

In addition to this, the following was personally read out by Steven Unthank to Donald MacLean at the request of the father of the children that were named in the letter

"The Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of Australia and its representatives, including elders, who are not compliant with the Victorian *Working with Children Act 2005*, are hereby instructed to immediately cease and desist from direct contact; either physical contact, or face to face oral communication, or physically being within eyeshot of the following children of the [name of family and individual names of the children]

"As they engage in worship of Jehovah God as He personally invited them to do so."

NOTE: Two of the children as mentioned in the above letter and conversation later went on to be raped by a fellow member of the Christian congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses. Another child, as also named in the letter, was later indecently assaulted (of a sexual nature) by an elder within the Christian congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses when they were alone in a room together. This elder was not compliant with the *Working with Children Act 2005*, and as such, did not possess a Working with Children Card. The elder initiated the "direct contact" with the child after instructions were issued to stay away from the child. A complaint was recently lodged with Victoria Police in relation to this criminal assault. The Christian congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses refused to comfort the family and the children and turned their back on them.

See the JW News articles "Crisis of Conscience in the Traralgon Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses", parts 1 and 2, as published at <u>www.jwnews.net</u>

Steven Unthank then handed the 4 page letter to Donald MacLean along with a true copy of the *Working with Children Act 2005* and a "Working with Children Application Form".

The following day the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of Australia and the Jehovah's Witnesses Melbourne District Convention Committee falsely accused Steven Unthank of assaulting Donald MacLean; and falsely accused Steven Unthank of having carried out an act of terrorism in breach of Victoria's *Terrorism (Community Protection) Act 2003*, of plotting an act of terrorism against buildings owned by the State of Victoria, and of having carried out said acts of terrorism against buildings owned by the State of Victoria, namely being the Melbourne Olympic Park complex.

Steven Unthank was apprehended mid-morning of Saturday, August 30, 2008, by security staff employed by the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of Australia and the Jehovah's Witnesses Melbourne District Convention Committee.

The following week an order was issued by the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of Australia and by the Christian Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses banning Steven Unthank from any gatherings of Jehovah's Witnesses. In addition, members of the religion of Jehovah's Witnesses were informed that

"Steven Unthank is not welcome at any congregation meetings."

On January 29, 2009, Steven Unthank provided a signed statement to Victoria Police in defence of the false allegations of acts of terrorism alleged to have been committed by him in August 2008 at the Rod Laver Arena and Melbourne Olympic Park precinct. No charges were laid.

An initial investigation into the circumstances surrounding the events, conducted by Victoria Police, found that the security officers and crowd controllers engaged by the Jehovah's Witnesses Melbourne District Convention Committee were not licenced under the Victorian *Private Security Act 2004*. The matter was referred to the Licensing Services Division of Victoria Police and a formal police investigation commenced in February 2009 into breaches of the *Private Security Act 2004*.

By March 27, 2009, the matter in relation to breaches of the *Private Security Act 2004* by the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of Australia and the Jehovah's Witnesses Melbourne District Convention Committee, had made its way to Dannye Moloney APM, Assistant Commissioner Crime, Victoria Police, whereupon all investigations were shut down. The following week Steven Unthank was personally informed by a member of the crime investigating team, Acting Senior Sergeant W-, that Victoria Police have

"no intention of pursuing any matter against a religious organisation."

Acting Senior Sergeant W- also informed Steven Unthank that the above stand by Victoria Police also applies to pursuing any criminal breaches of the *Working with Children Act 2005* by the religion of Jehovah's Witnesses and by their "ministers of religion".

The attitude of Victoria Police towards not "pursuing any matter against a religious organisation" was confirmed a few months later during a private conversation Steven Unthank had with a State Member of Parliament who, in commenting on the situation said

"Victoria Police won't take any action against the Jehovah's Witnesses. The police are well known in government for backing off and letting organised religion get away with almost anything. If you want to protect the children and get the church to comply with the Working with Children laws then you'll probably have to do it yourself. I'll help as much as I can but you'll still find that you'll have a hard struggle and that the police won't help at all."

Information and statements relating to these events and conversations were later reviewed by the Chief Magistrate of Victoria and the Victorian Department of Justice prior to their giving formal approval for Steven Unthank to officially file 35 criminal charges against the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society and the Christian Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses, and others, in the Magistrates' Court of Victoria on July 26, 2011, over criminal breaches of the *Working with Children Act 2005* in relation to the Traralgon Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses and 7 "ministers of religion".

Sunday 3rd August 2008

Christian Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses

SUBJECT: ONGOING CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES OF THE FOLLOWING:

THE BRANCH COMMITTEE OF THE WATCHTOWER BIBLE & TRACT SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA

and

THE LEGAL DEPARTMENT OF THE WATCHTOWER BIBLE & TRACT SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA

Dear Brothers,

We,

, do formally request that the following charges:

- Charge 1. Child Abuse (multiple)
- Charge 2. Committing of Criminal Offences against Children (multiple)
- Charge 3. Loose Conduct involving Children (multiple)

be brought against <u>each person</u> of the "committee of management" of the Watchtower Bible & Tract Society of Australia as follows:

each person of the Branch Committee of the Watchtower Bible & Tract Society of Australia; and

each person (being an "officer" or like) of the Legal Department of the Watchtower Bible & Tract Society of Australia

The Watchtower Bible & Tract Society of Australia and its representatives, including elders, who are not compliant with the Victorian *Working With Children Act 2005*, are hereby instructed to <u>immediately</u> cease and desist from <u>direct contact</u>; either physical contact, or face to face oral communication, or physically being within eyeshot of the following children of Family:



as they engage in worship of Jehovah God as He personally invited them to do so.

In the event that this legal and scriptural instruction is not complied with prior to the commencement of the next public meeting of Jehovah's Witnesses in the Traralgon Kingdom Hall, Family, will commence action to have each and every officer of the "committee of management" of the Watchtower Bible & Tract Society of Australia charged by the Victorian Police (SOCA Unit) with criminal offences against our children. Each of the offences carries up to 2 years imprisonment. Up to and including today this amounts to over

years imprisonment for <u>each and every</u> member of the Branch Committee and Legal Department in relation to the Family children alone, with fines totaling in excess of \$500,000.00 – not to mention ALL the thousands of other child victims in the various congregations throughout in the State of Victoria.

In the event that the Watchtower Bible & Tract Society of Australia interferes with this instruction, Family, do hereby request that the Christian Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses in Australia take control under the guidance of the Governing Body of

Jehovah's Witnesses for the purpose of shutting down ALL Kingdom Halls of Jehovah's Witnesses in the State of Victoria and that they remain shut down until such a time that ALL elders, being "ministers of religion" comply with the Victorian *Working With Children Act 2005.*

FILE COPY

The Branch Committee were notified of this in writing. They were also informed of the following:

We now request that the Branch Committee of the Watchtower Bible & Tract Society of Australia be held personally accountable for the committing of criminal offences against the children of over the past month and that these men be immediately "removed as members of the Branch Committee . . . be removed as overseers of the Christian Congregation and

We also

request that those having oversight of the Legal Department receive the same judgment.

Following this we request the forming of a judicial committee with regards to the 3 charges as listed on page 1. that we have brought against the Branch Committee and the Legal Department. As evidence to their guilt we provide the following:

- The testimony of
- The testimony of the Traralgon Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses
- The testimony of the Body of Elders in the Traralgon Congregation
- A legal copy of the Victorian Working With Children Act 2005

Our request said:

Family received no reply the right to appeal to Jehovah God in prayer for

. Why?

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The Watchtower Bible & Tract Society of Australia personally and publicly threatened

and misused the provisions of the Christian Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses for this. We were then viciously attacked by representatives of the Watchtower Bible & Tract Society of Australia with the support and backing of their legal department. We lodged a complaint against this and

The Watchtower Bible & Tract Society of Australia publicly threatened

The Watchtower Bible & Tract Society of Australia have also <u>publicly</u> refused to correct their errors in these and other matters and have instead <u>publicly</u> challenged Jesus Christ to personally do this. Jehovah God and Jesus Christ can not allow that public challenge to go unanswered.

Jehovah God's principles and laws of justice demand that the Watchtower Bible & Tract Society of Australia

be found guilty of committing criminal offences against children and that they be imprisoned for these crimes.

family have requested from Jehovah God that the Christian Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses in Australia be given one last chance to redeem the Watchtower Bible & Tract Society of Australia. How? By the way they respond or fail to respond to the following.

The Christian Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses in Australia is invited to:

- Immediately throw out onto the street the Branch Committee and the Legal 1. Department. They are to be given no warning because they are of no help and bring no benefit, but are a reason for shame and also a cause for reproach; and
- 2. Shut down immediately all Kingdom Halls and public meetings in the State of Victoria until compliance with the Victorian Working With Children Act 2005 is met; and
- 3. ALL elders and ministerial servants in the State of Victoria are to be removed (temporarily) as elders and ministerial servants until such a time that compliance with the Victorian Working With Children Act 2005 is met. Then have ALL these brothers apply for a Working With Children license. Once these brothers receive an 'assessment notice' reappoint them and reopen their local Kingdom Hall for their congregational use only; and
- 4. ALL Jehovah's Witnesses in the State of Victoria are to be encouraged to meet in small family-based home groups for personal prayer, bible discussion and worship until further notice. All should be encouraged to invite close family friends along so that no one feels left out; and FILE COPY
- 5. Reschedule the Melbourne 2008 District Convention for later in the year; and
- 6. Formally notify the Secretary to the Victorian Department of Justice and inform the Secretary of Steps 2, 3 and 5 and that those responsible for this legal oversight have been formally removed; and
- 7. Appoint a new Zone Overseer for Australia and assign him the task of developing a 'Legal Compliance System' over the next 12 months. We recommend Brother

an elder appointed by a representative of the Governing Body of Jehovah's Witnesses. In addition Brother is guilt-free in relation to the Victorian Working With Children Act 2005.

WARNING: once the Governing Body of Jehovah's Witnesses is formally made aware of ongoing breaches of the Victorian Working With Children Act 2005 and they do not take decisive and immediate action then they very well may find themselves in breach of S.35(1)a,b,c on page 47 of the Act. This may make them guilty of committing criminal offences against children the next time an elder "works with a child".

May Jehovah's spirit be with you.

Brother





Case Number:	B12083108
Case Date:	13 Sep 2011. 09:30 AM
Prosecuting Agency:	Unknown
Informant:	Unthank, S
Accused:	Christian Congregation Of Jehovah's
Accused Representative firm name:	Not Represented
Hearing Type:	Filing Hearing
Prosecutor Representative Name:	Not Represented
Plea:	
Location:	Latrobe Valley Magistrates'
Court Room:	0

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Magistrates' Court Criminal Procedure Rules 2009 S.R. No. 181/2009

Form 4

FORM 4

Rule 11

CHARGE-SHEET AND SUMMONS (CORPORATE ACCUSED)

To the Corporate Accused: CHRISTIAN CONGREGATION OF JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES Court of an unincorporated body Jictor 22 of: 12-14 Zouch Road COURT FEE PAID Denham Court New South Wales 2565 AUSTRALIA 2 6 JUL 2011 Email: legaldept@jw.org RECEIPT NO.066484 Registration No. State AMOUNT \$.69 .70 Licence No. State REGIST

You have been charged with an offence.

Read these pages to see what you must do.

Details of the charge against you

What is the charge?

Charge 1 Engaging, on every Tuesday and every Sunday between 30 June 2008 and 22 July 2011, RUDY VAN DER SLUIS in child-related work at the Traralgon Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses, knowing that it is child-related work, and knowing that he does not have a current "Assessment Notice" as required under the Working with Children Act 2005.

If you do not appear in answer to a summons and the charge is an indictable offence that may be determined summarily the Magistrates' Court may hear and determine the charge in your absence.

If you do not appear in answer to a summons for an indictable offence the Magistrates' Court may conduct a committal proceeding in your absence.

Under what law?	State Act Commonweal			
Act or Regulation No.	Working with Children Act 2005			
Section or Clause	Section 35 (1) (a)(b)(c)			
Are there more charges?	□No	Yes - see "Continuation of Charges" attached		

Type of offence	Summary offence	X Indictable offence
Request for committal hearing	□No	Yes
Who filed the charge-she	eet(s)?	
(Informant)	STEVEN JOHN UNTHAN	ĸ
Agency and Address:	50 Victoria Street Toongabbie Victoria 3856 AUSTRALIA	
Phone:	(03) 5192 4251	
Email:		
Fax No.:		an a
Agency Ref.:	a 19 - 19 - 19 - 19 - 19 - 19 - 19 - 19	e en la compañía de la c
Signature of Informant:	Steve Ut	ls
Date:	22 July 2011	
Filed at:	MORWELL	
Date:		
Where will the case be h	eard?	
	The Magistrates' Court	t at Latrobe Valley
Address	134 Commercial Road Morwell Victoria 3840 AUSTRALIA	
Phone:	(03) 5116 5220 03	5116 5222
When Time 9.30A	11 Day 13th Mont	hSEATEMBER 2011.
Details about this summ	ons	
Issued at: MORN	NELL	
Date:		
Registrar: 20	IUL 2011)
Magistrate:	Darren	Stebbings
Member of the police force:	Regist	rar of the
Pres oribed perso n:	Magistratos' (134 Commerci	Court of Victoria cial Rd, Morwell

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	of:	12-14 Zouch Roa Denham Court New South Wale AUSTRALIA					
	Email:	legaldept@jw.org	9				
		Registration No. Licence No.		State State			
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Charge 2	Engagin TONY N knowing	g, on every Tuesday IEEHAN in child-rela that it is child-relate as required under the	ted work at f d work, and	the Traralgon K knowing that he	(ingdom e does n	Hall of Jehovah's	s Witnesses,
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Section or Clause		Section 3	5 (1) (a)(b)(c)				
Type of	offence		Summ	nary offence	ffence X Indictable offence		ice
Request	l for comn	nittal hearing	□No		×	Yes	
Are then	e more cł	narges?	□No	1	×	Yes - see page	No. 2

Signature of Informant	Steve UHD	Date: 22 July 2011
Agency and Address:		1
	50 Victoria Street	
	Toongabbie Victoria 3856	
	AUSTRALIA	
	A CONTREA	
Phone:	(03) 5192 4251	
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Section	or Clause		Section	35 (1) (a)(b)(c)				
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Signature of Informant	Stere Ull L Steven JOHN UNTHANK	Date: 22 July 2011
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Phone:	(03) 5192 4251	
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Fax No.:		
Agency Ref.:	\frown	
Signature of Registrar:	L S	
Date:	2 5 JUL 2011	
Filed at:	MORWELL	
Date:	2 6 JUL 2011	

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Charge 4	Engagin ALBERT knowing	HELBLING in child-	-related work, and	rk at the Traralgon I knowing that he do	0 June 2008 and 22 J Kingdom Hall of Jeho ses not have a curren 05.	vah's Witnesses,	
Under wi	hat law?		X State		Act	Commonwealth	
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Are there	e more ch	arges?	□No		Yes - see page	No. 4	

Steve (III) STEVEN JOHN UNTHANK	Date: 22 July 2011
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Are there	more ch	arges?	□No		XYes - se	e page No	. 5

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Signature of Informant	Steven (III)	Date: 22 July 2011
Agency and Address:	50 Victoria Street Toongabbie Victoria 3856 AUSTRALIA	u.
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Are ther	e more ch	arges?	□No			XYes - see pa	ge No. 6	
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Page No 5 continued		
Signature of Informant	Steven () LL Date: 22 July 2011 STEVEN JOHN UNTHANK	
Agency and Address:	50 Victoria Street Toongabbie Victoria 3856 AUSTRALIA	
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	of:	12-14 Zouch Ro Denham Court New South Wal AUSTRALIA			
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Signature of Informant	Sterrer (UII)	Date: 22 July 2011
Agency and Address:	50 Victoria Street Toongabbie Victoria 3856 AUSTRALIA	E.
Phone:	(03) 5192 4251	
Email:		
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Date:	2 6 JUL 2011	

AFFIDAVIT / DECLARATION OF SERVICE

IN THE MAGIS	TRATES' COURT OF VICTORIA VALLEY Court Number: B12083108	
BETWEEN	STEVEN JOHN UNTHANK Plaintiff / Informant	
And	CHRISTIAN CONGREGATION OF JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES Defendant / Accused	
OF	12-14 Zouch Road Denham Court, New South Wales, 2565 AUSTRALIA	
Date of Docum	ent: 26 July 2011	
Filed on behalf Address: Telephone:	of: STEVEN JOHN UNTHANK 50 Victoria Street, Toongabbie, Victoria, 3856, AUSTRALIA (03) 5192 4251	

I, Steven John Unthank, a carpenter,

50 Victoria Street, Toongabbie, Victoria, 3856, AUSTRALIA of:

make oath and say/declare that I served a true copy of "Charge-Sheet And Summons (Corporate Accused)", on

CHRISTIAN CONGREGATION OF JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES

by

Sending a copy of the document by prepaid express post with Reference No. 026656902093, to Vincent Joseph Toole, the legal practitioner of the "Corporate Accused", at the ordinary business address of the legal practitioner,

2-4 Zouch Road, Denham Court, New South Wales, 2565, AUSTRALIA at:

Friday the 12th day of August, 2011. on

I acknowledge that this declaration is true and correct and I make it in the belief that a person making a false declaration is liable to the penalties of perjury.

MORNELI

SWORN / DECLARED AT

in the State of Victoria on (date)

671) Ste

Signature of person making affidavit:

SEPTEMBER

2011

Before me:

Michael Wintertor, Registrer of the Magistrates' Court of Victoria 134 Commercial Rd. Monwell