



WATCHTOWER

BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY OF NEW YORK, INC.

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TO ALL HOSPITAL LIAISON COMMITTEES

Dear Brothers:

An article has been published in the June 14, 2000, issue of the *Times of London* that states Jehovah's Witnesses have changed their position on blood transfusions. This article is incorrect.

We are providing the statement set out below that clearly states our position on the matter. There is no need to distribute this information to doctors, hospitals, or others. It is being provided for your information and use only in the event you receive inquiries.

The Bible commands Christians to "abstain . . . from blood." (Acts 15:20) Jehovah's Witnesses believe that it is not possible to abstain from blood and accept blood transfusions. They have consistently refused donor blood ever since transfusions began to be widely used in civilian medical practice in the 1940s, and this scriptural position has not changed.

If one of Jehovah's Witnesses accepts a blood transfusion and then later regrets the action, this would be considered a serious matter. Spiritual assistance would be offered to help the person regain spiritual strength. This position has not changed.

If a baptized member of the faith willfully and without regret accepts a blood transfusion, he indicates by his own actions that he no longer wishes to be one of Jehovah's Witnesses. The individual is no longer viewed as a member of the Christian congregation because he no longer accepts and follows the Biblical prohibition to abstain from blood. However, if such an individual later changes his mind, he may be accepted back as one of Jehovah's Witnesses. This position has not changed.

Jehovah's Witnesses seek quality medical care and accept medical alternatives to blood transfusions. Support is given to members to help them obtain medical treatment that respects their religious convictions.

The chairman should make sure that all members receive this information. Please be assured of our warm Christian love and greetings.

Your brothers in Jehovah's service,

Watchtower B. & T. Society
OF NEW YORK, INC.