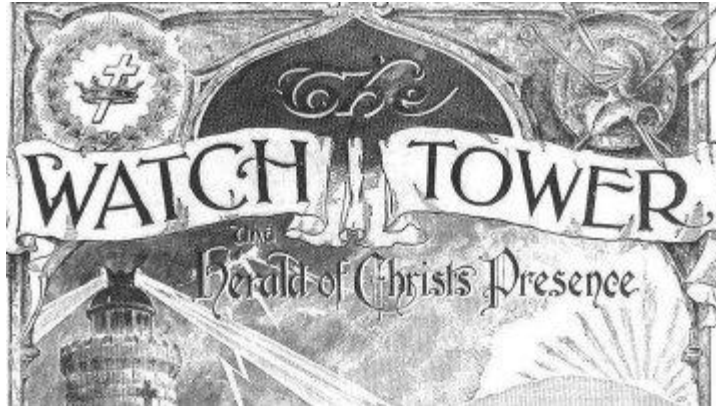


РАПСИ

РОССИЙСКОЕ АГЕНТСТВО
ПРАВОВОЙ И СУДЕБНОЙ
ИНФОРМАЦИИSection: **News**

Watchdog's ban on distributing Jehovah's Witnesses magazines affirmed



http://rapsinews.com/judicial_news/20120202/259911702.html

11:49 02/02/2012

MOSCOW, February 2 - RAPSИ. An appeals court has affirmed the mass media watchdog's ban on distributing in Russia the Awake! and Watchtower magazines published by Jehovah's Witnesses, the court told the Russian Legal Information Agency (RAPSИ/rapsinews.com).

[The Ninth Commercial Court of Appeals](#) dismissed the petition filed by Wachturm Bibel - und Traktat-Gesellschaft, Deutscher Zweig, e.V, the license holder and the Jehovah's Witnesses management center responsible for distributing magazines.

The Federal Service for Supervision of Communications, Information Technology and Mass Media (Roskomnadzor) canceled on April 6, 2010 the magazines distribution license issued by the State Committee for the Press in 1997. The reason was that Russian courts declared some of their stories extremist.

The claimants earlier denied the orders as being unlawful because press publication and distribution are its core economic activities and its rights have been violated by the disputable orders.

The claimants also noted that the ban should be considered a "sort of censorship" and may be only imposed by court.

Roskomnadzor argued that the organization conducts its activities beyond

Russia and they are not subject to Russian law.

Jehovah's Witnesses is an international religious organization. Many traditional religions consider it to be a pseudo-Christian sect. Its management center in Russia is in St. Petersburg. Its activities are forbidden in China, North Korea, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Iraq and a number of other countries. According to the organization, it comprised about 7 million people as of August 2009.

In June 2010, the European Court of Human Rights declared illegal the Russian court's decision to dissolve the religious community of Jehovah's Witnesses in Moscow and ordered Russia to pay 70,000 euros in compensation to the aggrieved party.

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