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## You won't make it into the New Order – what Jehovah Witness told victim after he assaulted her, court hears

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By Gayle McDonald

A SENIOR Jehovah Witness told a 10-year-old girl she wouldn't make it into the New Order if she spoke out about his alleged sex crime, a court has heard.

Yesterday the trial of Barry Furlong, who is accused of sexually abusing four young girls over a 17-year period, continued at Bournemouth Crown Court.

The 69-year-old former fireman of Keeble Crescent, Kinson, denies all charges.

The jury watched a video statement given by the first of his alleged victims who claimed she was abused by Furlong when she was around nine or 10 years old.

She said he touched her inappropriately and made her kiss the crotch area of his trousers in the early 1980s.

She said: "After he said, 'you mustn't tell anyone that just happened because you won't get into the New Order', and that was it. He never ever mentioned it ever again. He never touched me again. It was just that one time."

The alleged victim told family members about the alleged sexual assault when she was a teenager and the matter was investigated by elders from the church, the court was told.

"I can remember having a meeting," she said. "I had to go to their house with the elders and say what happened. They didn't believe me either. I was just a naughty girl."

During cross examination, carried out via video link, James Newton-Price, defending, claimed the witness' version of events were untrue and the alleged offence did not happen.

"There was an occasion when something did happen but you would have been a little older - 12 or 13," he told the court.

He said in a "mischievous gesture", the alleged victim lunged towards Furlong and touched his crotch, which the witness denied.

Furlong denies four charges of rape, four of indecent assault and six of indecency with a child. The offences are alleged to have been committed between December 1979 and November 1996.

The trial continues.

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