



**Royal Commission**  
into Institutional Responses  
to Child Sexual Abuse

**Statement**

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**Name** Moshe David GUTNICK  
**Address** Known to the Royal Commission  
**Occupation** Rabbi  
**Date** 3 February 2015

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1. This statement made by me accurately sets out the evidence that I am prepared to give to the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. The statement is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.
2. The purpose of this statement is to supplement my previous statement to the Royal Commission dated 2 January 2015 (*my previous statement*). I make this supplementary statement having listened to and thought about the evidence that was led in the Royal Commission yesterday.
3. I am an emissary of Chabad and a proud member of the Chabad movement. I might not entirely like the terminology because of its medieval connotation, and the erroneous implication of lack of tolerance, but most people would call me 'ultra-orthodox', and with the above two provisos I accept that as an accurate description of my position.
4. I strongly believe that the wrongs that the Royal Commission is examining in this case study are not the outcome of, and have nothing to do with the teachings of Chabad or Judaism or Orthodoxy. I and many of my so-called ultra-orthodox friends and colleagues share the outrage at what has gone on here. I believe that the true tenets of Chabad, Judaism and Orthodoxy require that I and all Jews stand proudly shoulder to shoulder with and in full support of the victims who are here today and those who I know well and who are not here. That is my position. With the knowledge I now have I profoundly regret that I did not do more in response to the anonymous report that was made to me in 1987, which I have discussed in my previous statement. I believe that victims of child sexual abuse and their families are the bravest of the brave and I believe G-d is with them more than he may ever be with me: "I [G-d] dwell on the high and holy place, and with him who is broken and of humble spirit" - Isaiah 57:15. I believe the cover ups and bullying and intimidation that has gone on - and I accept that

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Signature: Moshe David Gutnick

Witness: [Signature]

it has gone on - represents the antithesis of the teachings of Chabad and Judaism and Orthodoxy.

5. So what has gone wrong? I believe the name of the inquiry says it all. Institutional Responses to child sexual abuse. When any religious institution forgets that its ultimate purpose must always be to serve the individual - and instead it is prepared to sacrifice the individual for the sake of the institution - that is when everything goes wrong. It doesn't matter which institution or religion it is. The terminology may be different. The doctrine and dogma may be different. But the disease is the same. When leaders forget that they are there to serve the people and instead when challenged they circle the wagons in order to protect the "institution" they have failed their G-d and abused their purpose.
6. Judaism teaches that Adam was created alone to teach us that each individual is an entire world and to save an individual is like saving the entire world. If each victim or potential victim would have been viewed as the entire world and the institution as what it really is - just a shell, we would not be where we are now.
7. In my previous statement I outlined the limitations of the concept of mesirah and, in particular, the proposition that the concept does not apply in the context of child sexual abuse. I wish to emphasise that message. I do not want the Royal Commission to have an erroneous understanding of the true principles of Chabad, Judaism and Orthodoxy.
8. There is no doubt at all: mesirah has no application whatsoever to instances of child sex abuse. It never has. In the early eighties when there was an instance of assault in the New York community, Rabbi Schneerson evoked a biblical obligation to those who witnessed the assault to report to the secular authorities and declared that whoever does not report a crime becomes partner to that crime. In my view as a rabbi, anyone in the leadership who seeks to cover up child sex abuse in any way cannot find comfort or justification in the doctrine of mesirah. To use mesirah in this way is an abomination that dishonours and impugns Rabbi Schneerson and the most fundamental and cherished principles of Chabad and Judaism and Orthodoxy. They cannot hide from the fact that the real reason for their deplorable actions lies elsewhere.

Signature: Moshe Gutnick

Witness: [Signature]

Signed:           Moshe Gutnick          

Date:           3/2/15          

Witness:           [Signature]          

Date:           D. CHIN          

Signature:           Moshe Gutnick          

Witness:           [Signature]