

C0001 Johan Interview Part 3

J: um, ok, well I can say something. So, it's a small group of people who have been very close to the top management of Smiths Venner, who have seen the fraud and deception [0041] and have left and they wanted to reveal the facts and truths about what's going on. So they invested quite a large sum of money to have that documented and distributed. And so, um, an Israeli chap who had the contacts and resources, he set up an internet site. It was a lot of money invested into that [0137] but part of the investigation company that was behind it was also into the Trump investigation. So, for that reason the whole company went bankrupt. I think that's all I can say about it. I think that people within Smiths Venner, think that is God's penalty for criticizing or revealing Top secrets about Smiths Venner which they called lies[0232]. And it's quite interesting, because I see similarities between Donald Trump and Kare Smith so it's quite interesting that this investigation company has been involved in one way or another with those two odd characters.

[adjustment of camera] So I think that's about all I can say. I think that, as a comment to this documentary of yours, I think it's very important to have the story documented and distributed because it's a massive deception. [0335] I see it as spiritual fraud and financial fraud. So many people are exploited and deceived by ruthless leaders. I think it's a shame. The social pressure on members inside the church is massive if anyone who has left the church is criticizing them. So that makes it very [0423] difficult for people who have left the church to tell the truth about the whole thing. My whole family has left and there is no one with my parents DNA who is within the church. And I know the leaders in general only too well, not to mention Kare Smith, I know too well. I am out of reach for their anger and since I know it so well I feel committed to tell the truth [0512] and I will be a clear voice in general society. Because the critics within the church has been silenced. No one dare to have any critic comments to Kaare because then they are expelled so there is no internal critic at all. So for that reason I feel obliged to tell the critics in the open. I think that's important and it's healthy. And I think this abuse of power and this lack of criticism is what makes the church, this community, even more unhealthy over time

[0608] I think to develop a healthy community, it's important that the leader's behavior are subject to evaluation from time to time, on a regular basis, some kind of, just a tiny little piece of democracy, would have a very healthy effect on the church but there is no democracy at all. No evaluation of leaders. They use some terms that sound like a democracy. They have a council but the council [0702] they are representing the leaders, not the members. And they have all, they are all hand picked by Kaare. And this is what they call democracy. So they say, We have a council, there is some management here but in reality there is no audit at all. So that I think is what has made this unhealthy community even worse in the past few years. [0749] On the other hand, it seems to me that this community is more and more turning in the direction of a social club. so the membership is more like being a member of a country club or something and it is of course this is a country club of the extreme first division. Since this Brunstad is the best place in the world and that's the country club that belongs to God and you are stupid if you don't invest all your money and all your time in this country club. [0837] And in Spiritual terms, I've listened to some of the speeches that are on YouTube of Kaare Smith and it's just sadly. I get embarrassed when I am listening to this. I think, intelligent people are listening

to this and claim it's great. And I think it's just emptiness presented with the tears and screams and bad jokes. And when Kaare is telling a bad joke everyone is supposed to give him a big hand. And so they now realize that are some critics which are having contact with each other. [0944] And these critics obviously have inside information because they are quoting from the meetings like I have quoted from the meeting at the last New Year's stevne [conference] where kaare said he paid people to keep quiet. He said that from the pulpit, he paid people to be quiet. It cost some money but he thought it was worth it. I quoted that in the paper and, ya. So obviously there are some that are leaking from the meetings [1046] from this country club of god. So at that New year's eve meeting he said, here in this very congregation there are spies. Let us give them a hand! So people looked around very strange and so he repeated, give them a big hand and so they did. Everyone gave a big hand and so that's a quite good example of the social punishment. And that was an unelegant abuse of power. And so this is one of God's closest employees [1202] and it's quite something to have an employee of God running a country club at Brunstad and that is what, how to run a cult. This is my recipe for how to run a cult. Number 1 give them something to believe in [1228] Number 2 take their money. Number 3 seize all their time. And kaare is practicing this although I don't think he has taken my recipe. So he has his only knew that by heart and is doing that by an incredible degree.[1301] And people give he a hand and say "Hallelujah" [raises his hand], "Fantastisk", "Everything is Fantastisk", "everything is great in the church, kaare smith is great. There is nothing in this world that is similar to this. This is the best plae in the world. So they are running, they have built a lot of hotels and it's very expensive running this place at Brunstad so they need people to rent the place and they have problems. Because Christian people and many others don't like renting a place from a cult so Bernt Aksel Larsen has started a campaign[1402] to tell that smiths venner is just an ordinary Christian church! We are a Lutheran Christian church. So he is writing in this Christian Norwegian paper "Vårt land" once a month or something he is writing how ordinary a church this is, smiths venner is, so there is no obstacles for anyone to rent this place because this is not a cult, it is a regular Christian place and Martin Luther probably would be very happy with what we are preaching. So it is mostly misunderstanding. So this is what he is trying to put forward in the paper and of course since hee, they need more money, they need more business so they try to erase that picture of the big secret which the community is based on it. [1534] the big secret that It's the only Christian church in the world and all others are on the wrong track. They are trying to build down that picture. And that's going to be an identity problem, since the collective identity is that we are the only church in the world that has that understood the whole thing.

[1604] H [talking while camera is adjusted]: The new secret will become, we have a secret and we don't tell anyone here because they are stupid and we can lie to them, you know? Because of course if Kaare, if Bernt Aksel publishes we're just a Lutheran church and the BCC main page has only youtube videos that show nothing of what it really means, the insiders already know. That they're presenting a false face to the world because God's chosen place. Because of course if you're God's chosen place everyone is jealous you will receive attacks. And if you don't receive attacks and persecution you're probably not even God's chosen people. They're like the Jews, always going to be receiving persecution because they are the chosen one. SO I think that it is a crisis of identity [1706] but they will be able to twist it into a manipulative move for survival justified because they're only doing it to the trashy outsiders who mean nothing.

[1720] J: Ya, I think it could be something like that. I agree. ON the other hand, I think that this question about the big secret is not that important to young people within the church. It's less important to them, they are more and more the social thing that matters to young people I think. So we have to speak in certain terms and things and songs that is part of being, which keeps us together but it seems to me that probably that in 10 to 20 years from now it has basically turned into a social club.

[1820] H: That's a very good point. I don't see a lot of philosophical concerns from the younger generation. All I here is "you don't know how good it is here right now, just come back" it all about the young people, it's a wonderful place to be, everyone has all the virtues. That's all I hear. So I don't hear anything about, they're probably not too concerned with it. SO your perspective is good, because that means this cult is becoming less dangerous rather than more. If it's becoming a social club then it's hundred years of abuses will be slowly fading into the erased history of those victims and it will become just another mega-church with a watered down philosophy that serves the leaders. [1924] For example Ellen Heijmerix, who wrote those books in the Netherlands, she's written 3 books, they've been quite well received, she was raised in smith's friends and wrote about them. And she [1942] was quite emphatic that she thinks it's getting more fanatic and more dangerous than ever. She felt that it couldn't be stopped and that, it was a very nihilist view of the world and it was very intelligent and she felt that they are just more of a cult and more brainwashed than ever.

[2013] J: I guess so.

H: In any case, what you said about how they manage the power and what these leaders do at the top, how do you they think they represent you? What has your experience been for how, Because we know they don't tolerate critique, so how has your representation by them gone about? Because I've encountered people who say "I don't know about Johan Velten" even people who have left, so it's almost as though they have managed to instill this subconscious idea of your devil horns, even people who have left. That might be hard to hear. I've heard similar things [2116] about myself. I've been talking to a young man from my home fellowship and he's out but he's still defensive because his parents are still in it and he's needs to have an attitude to find some good in it. And sometimes, he'll just throw information at me that's incredibly hurtful when I find out just what people feel about me. It's hard to hear but have you heard anything like that [2147] those things for yourself.

J: I've heard from people inside that they say I'm a dangerous man [2202] I've heard from people inside. But I don't think I've gotten critique from people who've left in fact. I haven't heard any. That doesn't mean that everyone fancies what I am saying but frequently I get feedback from people that find it very sensible and illuminating what I am saying and that they found it scary in the first place but have got to agree with after a time. And I have met some who are still in the church that [2302] one I met hes aid to me I didn't like your book when it was originally released in 2002 but time has proved that you were right so I'm sorry about that.

[2319] H: I'm sure that, I don't think there is any doubt that you've helped more, that you've received more gratitude and acknowledgement that you are helping people than the other way around. I'm just

wondering how they are presenting you. So that I can paint a picture, whose presence I'm sitting in if this is seen by an insider. They would probably never see it.

J: No, probably not.

[2357] H: Part of the loyalty will be to not see it. So if you were to describe, the perfect formula for seizing power using a revival, how would you describe those steps or processes and how might those apply to the actual direction timeline of kaare smith's rise to power. Maybe that's too big a question but maybe. .. You referred to the revival as not a spritiual awakening but as a calculated [2443] business coup.

J: [asking for English word for Norwegian]

H: Your cult formula that you gave was right on, I'm sitting here with my hair blowing back

J: [getting the English for the word]

O/H: A buffoon, someone who is very rude,

J: Or slightly like street wise,

H: you mean a gangster

H: like a godfather, a mafia, like the Sopranos. Because a narcissist or a sociopath doesn't care

[Johan takes out his phone to look up what he's trying to say]

[2607] J: Hang on a sec. I

H: Like the serious clown....like

Makt sikt.....

"Power hungry",

H: I know the word you're searching or but I don't know it in English. Like Trickster?

In Norwegian it's also a bully, I clown and trickster and a bully.

H: like a frat boy

[END C001]

[start c0002 Johan Interview Part 4]

H: where they just destroy everything but have smirks on their faces.

J: That is the term, that is the term I was looking for.

H:Frat Boy, you're in a fraternity, their young, rich have trust funds are reckless have all the power and are cruel and charismatic. And they run wall street. And they are secretly the guy in American Psycho. [0032]

H:[some other directorial thing] If you were to describe Kaare's rise to power and the coup, could you also tie into it any examples you have of fascist, Hilter thing that I personally experienced in a very weird way. You didn't see it, I was there.

J: I'm more on Machiavelli

H: Yeah. The quote you had in your book about it, I stole it, it's in my notes. It's extremely good. If you could make people follow you even if they don't believe anymore then you've got what you need. I don't know who was doing the Hilter thing, whether it was Sverre Ricksfjord if he was spending too much time in St. Petersburg but they had, that's communism, but the arm pumping and the ruthless destruction of anyone that goes against your chosen status, so the commuknist kind of spying. "Let's give a hand to sneaks among us". Maybe not like Hilter but a very fascist regime, just like Trump.

J: It's very similar

H: you know I wrote the HuffPO piece comparing Trump to him

J: I try. I didn't have any contact with smiths venner from 1975 until my brother's funeral in 1992 [0300] and then I heard about these problems within the church at this time. And shortly afterwards my 2 other brothers were expelled because they criticized kaare and part.,well it was strange that kaare was chosen to become a leader because for most people he was perceived as being a "bias". It's some kind of a clown, powerful clown, maybe something like you call "frat boy" in the US. SO most people didn't consider him as a candidate at all. But of course uncle Sigurd and uncle Aksel were very helpful and one quite good strike they had, Sigurd Bratlie asked people at the meeting, those who loved Kaare to come up on the scene and sing a song. And of course when you are on the scene, it was quite obvious who are not loving Kaare [0442] those who kept sitting in their chairs and that was quite similar to Mao Tse Tung's idea. Let the thousand flowers blossoms. Just tell what you mean and when you did you were removed quietly. So the recipe was quite known already and my brothers Steiner who was among those that were sitting in the rows[0528] and there was some – baktalelse, hva heter det? – ["slander" from background] – slander, ja, and those who were criticizing kaare they were accused for slander by Sigurd bratlie. In a meeting, in a brother's meeting, my brother Steiner said to Slgurd Bratlie, I've been your chauffeur quite often, haven't all the talk in the car been about slander for the people who aren't there. So that has been a practice. And that of course was his last meeting there, he was expelled with anger because he had dared to criticize even Sigurd Bratlie and accusing him for slander. And of course that was, he had got too big ideas about himself that he could criticize Sigurd Bratlie. And my other brother left [0656] I would say in some kind of sympathy with Steiner.

But Kaare expelled everyone who were not his supporters. And the ones who were expelled lost all their friends lost all their social network. It was so much pain and so I would say, so many were traumatized by this abuse of power so all internal criticism disappeared. No one dared to say anything.

So he was working quite on the recipe given in Machiavelli's book. "You should perform all the cruelty at once, expelling all enemies, so that you shortly afterwards can show them your grandness [0821] and friendliness and turn people to support you. But first make all the cruelty in one step" so it was something like that he did. Sigurd Bratlie and Aksel Smith were very old but still his supporters so they gave him shelter as long as he lived and when they passed away he had got the power completely.

[0900] and so, Bernt Stadven who was married to Kaare's cousin, was also a very strong supporter and the madness of this whole thing was really shown when Kaare's mother died. I read the ad in the paper about Esther Smith had died and with the lines there, I said to my wife, "Oh, the mother of God has passed away" I hear afterward that they had this gathering at Brunstad, she was buried from Brunstad, and when the car should leave with her coffin [1015] Stadven gave a small speech at the side of the car: Maria gave birth to Jesus, Esther gave birth to Kaare Smith. And there were something like 3000 listening to this stupidity. And what amazes me is that most people are intelligent and they listen to this madness and no one is saying anything. They swallow it. Maria gave birth to Jesus, Esther gave birth to Kaare.

[1111] When I read the ad in the paper, I told it to my wife as a joke, but it wasn't a joke. That was Bernt Stadven's statement. How mad can it be!! And also Kaare, he is not brilliant in any manner. The people are supposed to give applause and laugh and say Hallelujah and this is fantastic. It's not. It's mean, that's what it is. And I think it's – guds bespottene, jeg vet ikke – blasphemy, I think it's blasphemy and the comparison? I don't have words to describe it [1239] and Bernt Stadven he was the one who introduced this [raises arm in salute] in the revival very close to Hitler Jugend. But it was a fist, Hitler Jugend was like this

H: no it was open like this. And if you were really serious it was both arms. And spontaneous. In the middle of whatever

J; Ya, it's really incredible that sensible people are buying into this madness, incredible. I've not explained myself where I am in relation to Christianity. I describe myself as Christian by culture [1404] but I'm not a believer. That's who I am in these terms. That means I read the bible and find it very interesting and it has, it's a reference for the western community of the whole civilization. It stems to a great deal from the bible. I consider Paul as the first modern man, and while he is criticized about his views on woman, the criticism is based on fake letters [1450] so Timothy 1&2 are written 60-70 years after Paul died so they were written by someone else.

H: Ya, I read that in your book and I'm glad I read that because I'm mad at Paul to this day. Could you describe for me a little on your spirituality. I know you've written a little about empathy for Christian principles, Buddhist principles, ethics, that you sort of felt there is something good to be gained from mindfulness, awareness. I'm not sure how I read it. It seems like you were a spiritual man, not necessarily ascribing to one system, that was my impression.

[1551] J: I would also like to say, how can the researchers tell that Timothy's letters were written 60 to 70 years after Paul died. Of course, it's simple. The wording

H: of the popular culture

J: If you read the 1992 bible and compare it to the 1930 bible the words used are different so the words from the 1992 bible could not possibly be from the 1930 bible. [1645] So that's why they're so certain about when this letter has been written, because of the wording.

H: That's really nice to know

J: So they can be positive

H: That's really cool. Can you tell me a little bit about, you wrote really well about women in the church, what's expected of them and how many of them perform [1716] and how many of them reflect the spirituality that is present in the leaders and how they are ignored, or at least they were. And it was really nice to read that description and can you give an explanation about the role of women in the church and what it looks like or what it looked like. And even what their role in meetings are and how that might sound.

J: Women are supposed to listen and to serve and [1816] and I think, this is an ancient way of thinking. I think it comes from Aristotle: he said there are different levels of development. On the top are men, on level 2 are boys they can develop into becoming men and on level 3 are women and they can't develop further. They have a natural talent for caring, giving birth and caring. And around the home but if they start thinking it gets mixed up, they haven't got a natural talent for thinking. They have a natural talent for caring. Showing, giving love. I think that the ideas of Aristotle almost 2 and a half thousand years has been following a lot of Christian or religious thinking. We have tried to get away from that in the last 250 years but it's really in the last 50 years [2011] that it has changed the mind of thinking. This idea has been the role of women in Smith's Venner and they are supposed to, like Aristotle said, giving love and taking care and keeping family together and so forth. When they should say something in the meeting, they should be thankful for the brothers and for the bright light which shines in the church. And they should cry and tell a bit about their own shortcomings and sinfulness and hopefully [gestures with hand]. Ya, a little cry and praise for the leaders that's what they are supposed to do. But this is about to change in a certain manner. But it seems they are picking up a little on that. But they had a so called sisters meeting, so special meeting designed for women only but the whole first row was men and they were speaking. It's they are slow learners I would say.

H: [take a break because sun is intense]

[end c002]