

OCTOBER 8, 1968

# SKELETON IN THE HUBBARD

**S**CIENTOLOGY returned to Melbourne on Sunday — battered, on a small scale, but apparently unbowed.

A meeting of six people in a Noble Park house is hardly a dramatic resurgence. But the cult gained one objective — publicity.

The cult invited police and State Cabinet Ministers to the meeting. None attended.

Scientology is banned in Victoria, and the State Government has made it clear it will act to prevent any revival of the cult.

The practice of Scientology is banned under the Psychological Practices Act, and the Crown Law Department, following Sunday's meeting, is considering whether the so-called "Church of Scientology" can be prosecuted under the present Act.

## MINISTER GIVES PROMISE

Even if it cannot be prosecuted, the State Health Minister, Mr Dickie, has promised that the Government will amend the law if necessary to ensure that Scientologists cannot reappear in Victoria and "bring distress and unhappiness to people."

Whether members of the

## By TREVOR SYKES

Scientology cult are seeking publicity or martyrdom, they seem destined for a head-on clash with the law.

The cult was founded by Lafayette Ronald Hubbard, apparently in Phoenix, Arizona, in the early 1950s, although it is difficult to get exact information on this.

Hubbard calls himself a doctor on the grounds of a doctor of philosophy degree awarded to him by the University of Sequoia, Southern California, although this university is privately endowed and not registered with the American authorities.

Scientology spread to Australia in about 1958 and within a few years became a matter of grave concern to the Victorian Government.

In 1963, the State Government appointed an inquiry into it, which was conducted by Mr K. V. Anderson, QC, and resulted in a scathing condemnation of the cult.

It also produced some evidence that must have ranked amongst the weirdest ever heard by any legal inquiry.

Witnesses said...

- Scientologists believed earth was the penal colony of the universe and its inhabitants were insane.

- A former Scientologist had hallucinations in which he ran an atomic factory trapping souls in outer space.

- 43 trillion years ago certain malign people had made mental implants which caused aberrations in people living today.

- A 21-year-old man under the influence of Scientology had imagined he was an Indian prince.

## CHARGES TO STUDENTS

Witnesses also said students had been charged up to \$1200 for courses and that a Melbourne business man had been told he had to take at least 275 hours of "processing."

The Scientologists also had a considerable jargon of their own including the following terms...

- Dianetics — meaning the science of mental health.

- Clear — a person clear of aberrations.

- Preclear — a person who has not reached the state of "clear."

- E-meter — a small box containing two electrodes which are held by the student and which is supposed to measure his mental reactions.

Mr Anderson said in his report that Scientology was evil and should not be permitted in Victoria.

Scientology files contained intimate secrets and confessions with potential for blackmail, he said.

"It is the world's largest organisation of unqualified persons practising dangerous techniques which masquerade as mental therapy," he said.

"Its theories are fantastic and impossible, its principles perverted and ill-founded, its techniques debased and harmful.

"Its smattering, with the merest smattering of knowledge in various sciences, has built upon the scintilla of his learning a crazy and dangerous edifice.

"No acceptable or recognised standards are prescribed for its practitioners, whose ignorance of orthodox medicine and psychology make them each a menace to the health of the community."

## SCIENCE FICTION WRITER

Mr Anderson said that Hubbard was a former science-fiction writer who falsely claimed academic and other distinctions and whose sanity was gravely to be doubted.

The gross income of the Hubbard Association of Scientologists International over six years in Victoria had been \$546,746, of which 10 per cent had been remitted to Hubbard's headquarters in England.

The Government consequently banned Scientology in this State. Its files were seized and its Spring St. headquarters closed down. Scientology is still practised in other States.

Meanwhile, Mr Hubbard himself has been banded from South Africa, Rhodesia and Britain — probably the only thing that those three countries have agreed about for a long time.

He quit his headquarters — a manor in East Grinstead, Sussex — two years ago and left Britain after renouncing his directorships in Scientology.

He was last reported living, with his wife and 250 Scientology students, aboard a 3300-ton ship in the Mediterranean.

The ship, a rusted former Irish Sea ferry named the Royal Scotsman, is now docked at Corfu, Greece, for repairs which are estimated to cost \$52,000.