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Scientology group moves as controversy continues

Charges and counter-charges continued to fly as Calgary Scientologists moved out of their premises at 529 17th Ave. S.W. late Friday night.

Landlord Franz Dopf told The Herald the group had been served with a notice to leave because other tenants complained of excessive noise, but Rev. Harvey Schmiedeke, a Scientology spokesman, said the move was caused by a need for more space. "We simply agreed to move." He did not say where the group intends to relocate.

Mr. Schmiedeke charged The Herald with "underhanded tactics" for attempting to photograph the late night move.

Lorna Levett, who led about 30 Calgary Scientologists in one of the largest defections from the organization, renewed her charges that "unsuspecting innocent people are being used to perpetrate exploitation of the public."

In a letter to the minister of consumer affairs, the former head of Scientology in Calgary said: "I have been used as a front to persuade people of Calgary to spend well over \$200,000 in Scientology in the last few years, the bulk of this money being sent out of the country by them. The intangible offered is Total Freedom,

"Anyone departing from Scientology and publicly stating the fact, let alone the reasons why, is considered to be an 'attacker' and an 'enemy.' Some of the people living in Calgary have requested police protection," she said.

"Very detailed folders are kept of all confessions and most people fear that these will be used against them if

they seek to leave the organization."

A Scientology letter provided to The Herald and reportedly written by the organization's founder L. Ron Hubbard gives the following instructions for dealing with attacks on Scientology: "Spot who is attacking us. Start investigating them promptly for FELONIES or worse using our own professionals, not outside agencies. Double curve our reply by saying we welcome an investigation of them. Start feeding lurid actual evidence on the attackers to the press. Don't ever tamely submit to an investigation of us. Make it rough, rough on attackers all the way."

Mr. Schmiedeke said he is not aware of this church policy. "It is quite apparent that tactics of this nature are not being used in Calgary." He said information about scientologists while they are being processed is never used.

Mr. Schmiedeke said Rev. Levett's "confessions of exploitation" were "entirely in keeping with her unorthodox

religious practices.

"Her interests appear to lie more in sympathy with the social abuses, specifically with institutional psychology."

In a letter to The Herald Friday the Canadian Mental Health Association supported Mrs. Levett's charges of exploitation, intimidation and harassment.

Ron LaJeunesse, executive officer of the CMHA said these charges have been supported in documentation received from authorities in England, Australia and Ontario.

Mr. Schmiedeke said this statement "aside from being false is simply a justification for the CMHA's gross failure to make any real changes in the mental health situation in Canada."

He added that Scientology policy of providing the press with "lurid . . . actual evidence" about those who attack Scientology "seems quite orthodox. Anyone who would feel revulsion for something like this probably is afraid of something . . ." he said.