

Washington Star-News

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William F. Willoughby

1975 Was All in How It Was Seen

IT'S THAT TIME OF YEAR when one looks back over the stories he's done over the year in covering the religion beat in an effort to evaluate their relative importance. That's not a real easy job, since to cover religion properly you've got to be subjective.

Besides, just about everything but the Second Coming took place.

I tell people quite frankly that I am not objective in covering religion, as all good newsmen are supposed to be on their beats. You can't be objective and still make the kinds of judgments that the job requires. Judgments are made on knowledge of the subject and this is one subject that if you are knowledgeable in it, you absolutely are not neutral.

I do try to be honest though, and I try to be fair. First one side of the story and then the other. Then the right side. Mine. That's the closest I can come to it.

I belong to an organization called Religion News-writers' Association and each year we vote individually to determine collectively which were the 10 most important stories. As usual, I find myself in disagreement with many of the choices that were made — at least in the way they were ranked.

For instance, the country's hundreds of religion news editors put the big squabble over women's ordination to the priesthood as the top religion story of the year. I wholeheartedly disagree, even though I wrote more words on that subject than almost all other religious subjects put together. I ranked it only the sixth most important story of the year even though the thick of it was right here in Washington.

Strange people have strange minds, though, so don't be shocked at my evaluation of things.

WHAT I CONSIDER THE MOST important religion story — deprogramming — is one that didn't even appear on the questionnaire list for religion newswriters. I wrote it in. Didn't get any extra points for spelling it by its right name, either. K-i-d-n-a-p-i-n-g.

I'm deeply concerned about the implications of the kidnaping-for-Jesus rings operating in the United States and Canada. While I don't personally sanction all the religions the victimized youths are kidnaped from, I do believe every youth has the right to choose his or her own religion and not even parents should be allowed to force a youth into it — or out of it.

These rings of kidnapers charge that the kids they rescue are kidnaped and brainwashed by the religious groups they enter. Of course, that gives the kidnapers the right to become a private Inquisition, the way they reason. It's not wrong if they do the same thing they accuse the strange religionists of doing. The kidnapers think they're doing Jesus a good turn.

And why not be zealous for Jesus in this high and holy calling? The fees they're charging run \$3,000 or more for the kidnapings and the brainwashing (pardon me — deprogramming), plus other heavy charges for "rehabilitation." The market is good, because several hundred kids (most of them 21 or over) are the victims of these rings each year and the activity is growing very, very fast.

I RANKED THE EXTENSIVE RESPONSE of the churches to world hunger as the second most impressive story, and believe me, what they did has to be commended. Couple with that what the American churches have done in resettling Vietnamese refugees and I think anyone who criticizes the churches for their lack of compassion ought to be deafened by the empty plaints of his own hypocrisy.

I ranked the stepped-up political and other activity not only by Catholics but many Protestants and Eastern Orthodox Christians against abortion and for a Right-to-Life Amendment to the Constitution as the third most significant story.

In reality, measured in the terms of 900,000 deaths by abortion in this country last year, it might actually be the most important story in the religious-ethical-moral realm, rating a category all its own. Or else list abortion where it belongs — with the crime news.

In a way, it is ironic that nearly everyone, religious or otherwise, was concerned that hundreds of thousands of individuals not starve to death, but that some of the same people don't bat an eyelid at the hundreds of thousands of deaths each year claimed through abortion.

Viability is the big catchword. Nonsense is the more appropriate one.

Somewhat related is the issue over euthanasia as represented in the Karen Quinlan case in New Jersey. I'd sneak it in as the fourth most significant religion story, although that's not the way I called the shot when the poll was taken.

FIFTH, AS I RATED THEM, was the Southern Baptist squabble over the tongues-speakers among them. I think we'll be hearing a lot more about that one and all of it won't be in an unknown tongue.

Sixth, as I indicated, was the Episcopal ordination question, important because either way the issue goes, it will result in schism in the Episcopal Church. Wait and see if I'm not right. And I think the tongues question will cause an eventual split in the Southern Baptist Convention.

Another pretty well developed split, the one in the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, I ranked as the seventh story.

I ranked as eighth the first big split in the 15-year-old neo-Pentecostal movement, over discipleship. One school of thought would have a sort of hierarchical setup, with a rigid discipline for members of the movement; the other wing would continue following a laissez-faire policy, with each believer essentially following only the leading of the Holy Spirit.

There are the makings of a fairly major denomination in the works from the hierarchy-discipline wing, so watch that one.

Even though I went to Rome and had a delightful time covering it, I ranked the canonization of Mother Elizabeth Ann Seton as the ninth story. It was a historic first for America, and most interesting, but I rate one-shot events much lower than ongoing trend-type stories. Catholic newspaper editors ranked it as the top story.

Closing out, I think the hell the Scientologists are raising with government agencies with their hundreds of millions of dollars' worth (literally) of suits because of the dirty tricks the agencies have played on that church is a much bigger story than a person can get space for.

And the fact that Congress is probing the American role in Interpol, the international police agency, has to be credited in large part, to that feisty little band of hardworking people. Rank it tenth, but it really should be a lot higher up than that — maybe ahead of those church splits. After all, churches are always doing that.

THERE WERE DOZENS of other stories in the religion beat that were quite significant. In retrospect, it makes me tired to think of all the work that went into covering religion for the past year.

Already I'm tired thinking about all that lies ahead in 1976 in my beat. But one thing's sure. Religion's not a dull beat. I'm eager to see what's around the corner.

Who knows? Maybe the Lord really will come back this year. I'll bet no beat on the newspaper can top that story. Sort of the final word, I'd say.

Herald-Dispatch

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Thursday, January 8, 1976

Commission Decries Psychiatric Mayhem

SACRAMENTO — In a documented submission presented to Senator Joseph Montoya (D-N.M.) today, a national organization of psychiatrists, medical doctors, attorneys, and laymen condemned the use of psychiatric profiles by federal security agencies as a means of detecting potential assassins. Montoya, Chairman of the Senate Sub-Committee on Treasury and Appropriations, has announced plans to investigate Presidential protection procedures.

Calling the use of the profiles "a serious threat to the welfare of the President," Citizen's Commission on Human Rights President Kenneth J. Whitman presented the initial results of a six-month study conducted by the Commission of over 500 publicized crimes of violence committed in the United States during the last 5 years. Whitman stated that Commission research documents conclusively prove the "inability of

psychiatrists to predict 'dangerousness.'"

Commission officials charged that over 50% of the violent crimes had been committed by individuals previously released from psychiatric care or psychiatric institutions as certifiably sane. According to the Commission, these individuals committed over 250 murders, rapes and assaults upon release.

"The case of Sara Jane Moore is of particular relevance to the issues at hand," stated Whitman. "Sara Moore was in mental institutions seven times prior to her assassination attempt. Yet she was set free by the Secret Service one day before her attempt because she did not fit the 'psychiatric profile' of a killer. Lee Harvey Oswald was also released from psychiatric care as was Gary DeSure, recently arrested in Santa Barbara, California for conspiring to assassinate the President. Using psychiatric profiles is literally a fatal mistake."

The group further charged that a number of

violent crimes were committed by individuals who had no history of violence prior to institutionalization. They cited the cases of Juan Corona, convicted murderer of 25 farm workers in California and Herbert Mullins, murderer of 10 as two examples.

"We are amazed that security agencies are

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Psychiatric Mayhem

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continuing to use psychiatric profiles in matters of such vital national importance," stated Los Angeles Commission Director Heber Jentzsch. "Newspapers today abound with stories of violent crimes committed by individuals who had recently undergone psychiatric evaluation and been released as cured. In fact, according to Com-

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Psychiatric Mayhem Decried

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mission research, nearly every infamous modern criminal was a psychiatric failure."

Commission officials recommended that governmental security agencies discontinue their reliance upon psychiatric evaluations or psychiatric profiles as a means of detecting dangerous individuals. The group further recommended that "an immediate search be begun for any individual or group which can be demonstrated accurately predict human behavior," and "that all governmental security agencies be instructed to deal with individuals who have received psychiatric care in the most cautious and judicious manner possible."

The Citizen's Commission on Human Rights has been active in the field of patients in since its formation in 1969 by Washington D.C. attorney John Joseph Matonis, and Kenneth Whitman, with noted New York psychiatrist and author Thomas Szasz as its original psychiatric con-

sultant. Its Southern California Chapter has most recently come to public attention with its testimony before the California State legislature regarding the controversial Assembly Bill 1032, which will outlaw electric shock and psychosurgery on most minors. The group is sponsored by the Association of Scientists for Reform and maintains offices in 18 major cities throughout the United States.

Monday, February 23, 1976

THE DENVER POST

The Voice of the Rocky Mountain Empire •

Narconon Founder Calls Idea a 'Definite' Success

By JERRY V. WILLIAMS
Denver Post Staff Writer

The founder of Narconon came to Denver Sunday to reflect on his 10-year battle to help drug users escape their addictions.

Willie Benitez, a 42-year-old ex-convict, spoke at a celebration in the Albany Hotel of the 10th anniversary of Narconon, which he founded while serving his fourth term in the Arizona State Penitentiary.

Narconon is to drug addicts what Alcoholics Anonymous is to people who can't control their drinking. Benitez said the program "definitely" is the success he hoped for when he got the idea from reading a book by L. Ron Hubbard, an engineer, philosopher and writer.

The book, "Fundamentals of Thought," and Benitez was "quite intrigued," he explained. During 13 years of imprisonment for drug use, he had tried other avenues of escape from his habit without success.

"I gained a lot of knowledge but I never found anything I could apply," he said. The principles Hubbard advanced, while not directed at drug addiction, nevertheless promised to produce the results he wanted.

For Narconon, he evolved a series of courses and exercises which attempted to

show an addict the problems he was trying to escape by using drugs.

"A narcotics addiction," Benitez said, "is a disability stemming from an inability to do a lot of things. And an addict has used drugs as a solution to this disability. But then that solution becomes a problem itself."

Narconon started with 20 of Benitez' fellow prisoners at the Arizona penitentiary and now has grown to 32 similar programs throughout the country (including Denver) and in a number of foreign countries.

Benitez provided the impetus for the founding of these programs and traveled extensively to help establish them.

In recent years, however, Benitez has reduced his lecture trips to concentrate on his carpet-laying firm in Phoenix, Ariz., where he lives with his wife and children. He has written a book, "The Narconon Story," due out later this year.

More than half the book, he conceded, is autobiographical and could be the addict's bible or reference book. Besides serving to tell the story of Narconon, Benitez hopes it will draw more addicts into the program.

All addicts, he said, have dreams of getting off the habit "because they know they'll never accomplish anything while they're on it."

The Cork Examiner

MONDAY MORNING, MARCH 22, 1976

OFFBEAT

By Larry Lyons

Man of many parts to reside here

THAT man of many parts, L. Ron Hubbard, who over the passing years had engendered and endured many controversies, is to retire to a quiet mansion in north Cork.

Hubbard (65), born in Tildren, Nebraska, who enjoys an international reputation as an horticultural expert, particularly for his important research and theories on plant life, will have an opportunity to pursue his work as a hobby in his quiet retirement, away from the din of controversy that surrounded his religious philosophies.

He is an author of popular fiction, contrasting scientific research and controversial philosophy, and has played a role in the film world, but he is best-known publicly as the founder of the Church of Scientology.

The religious philosophy of Scientology evoked considerable criticism and was attacked by sections of the press in both Britain and South Africa. This resulted in public misgivings.

Now all the controversies which not so long ago launched a thousand headlines are but ashes of the past.

For Mr. Hubbard resigned his directorships eight years ago and will devote his retirement in Co. Cork to his horticultural work and his personal interests.

In the field of horticultural research he is highly regarded and even those who found justification for criticising Scientology and Dianetics (a science of mental health) would agree that his work on plant life has been significant. His discovery of a cure for mildew using infra-red light in a greenhouse environment was

an important step forward on the subject.

Two of Hubbard's representatives, Mr. Robert Warner and Mrs. Hilarie Rock, were in Cork last week to pursue the negotiations for the purchase of the estate. They looked at many properties, including John Houston's house in County Galway, but the deal is

now almost finalised for the purchase of a property at Castletownroche, offered by Osborne, King and Megran.

Mr. Hubbard is expected to visit Cork this week and will view the prospective property where he hopes to live with his wife and family. He is staying in the Dublin area with some friends at the moment.

Of course the million dollar question is: "Does he intend to set up a Norconon drug rehabilitation centre of a Dianetic or Scientology in Ireland?"

The answer in writing which was supplied to me says:

"Most definitely no. Mr. Hubbard will be devoting his retirement to horticultural work and his personal interests."

Indeed in this very professional public relations exercise I had not even to ask a question of local interest. It was also supplied:

Q. How many staff will Mr. Hubbard require on the estate?

A. A number sufficient to run the property and the grounds. He will be bringing a small personal staff with him, but will probably require assistance from local labour in his horticultural work."

There is no doubt that Ron Hubbard has lived a full and varied life: he led the Caribbean motion picture expedition in 1933. A West Indies Minerals survey expedition a year later, led the Alaskan Radio Experimental expedition in 1935, worked as a director in Hollywood and was a prolific author including adventure, detective, western and general fiction under his own name and the non de plumes of Kurt Voan Rachea and Rene Lafayette.

It was in the works of non-fiction that he became involved in controversy from the publication of the first "Dianetics" in 1950, which incidentally was on the New York Times best seller list.

Now, like many other international authors, he is seeking a gentle rural retirement in southern Ireland.



Mr. L. Ron Hubbard

Monday, April 5, 1976

LETTERS

Scientology offers answers

Get to know yourself

To the Editor:

Scientology is coming to this campus on April 14, 1976. Scientology is an applied religious philosophy that answers such questions as, can one find PEACE OF MIND? What is the mind? How can I become more myself? How can I be

happier in the dealings of everyday life?

Scientology was discovered, developed, and organized by L. Ron Hubbard, an engineer, writer, and philosopher who spent most of his early years studying human behavior and researching ways in which man could realize more of

his potential abilities.

After 40 years of research by L. Ron Hubbard, Scientology explains how men tick, why they tick, and how they can tick better.

Scientology is the study of "knowing how to know." The subject you study is you and the betterment of your natural abilities. What you can gain from all of this research is

- *Increased abilities to study and comprehend

- *Higher level of communication

- *Increased awareness and creativity

- *Bettering your personal relationships

Hubbard's interest in eastern religions, his observations on man and societies, combined with his scientific training, led him to a very practical viewpoint on philosophy. Man knew of higher states of existence but never developed a sure scientific route to reach them which could assure a permanent state of well-being.

A special filmed interview with L. Ron Hubbard will be shown in Module 4 in room 179 at 12:30, 1:30 and 2:30 p.m. on the 14th of April

ALEX SOROKA
GARY WAGNER