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26 years of Scientology

"What is true for you is what you have observed yourself. And when you lose that you have lost everything. Nothing in Dianetics and Scientology is true for you unless you have observed it and it is true according to your observation. That is all. Our aims are a civilization without insanity, without criminals and without war, where the able can prosper and honest beings can have rights and where Man is free to rise to greater heights."

L. Ron Hubbard
Founder of Dianetics and Scientology

By Rev Michael Carlson

Many words have been written on the subjects of Dianetics and Scientology over the past 26 years since the religious movement first emerged. While it has had growing pains like other new established religions such as the Mormons and Christian Scientists, it has now outgrown its troubles and was recently reported to be the fastest growing new religion in the world. What is this modern religion all about?

If you asked 20 people, you might get 20 different answers. If you asked a Scientologist, he or she would probably say that Scientology is an all denominational religion which addresses man as a spiritual being, and that Dianetics, a substudy of Scientology, is a body of technology on the mind.

Omar V. Garrison, author of *Spy Government*, the book that revealed the use of intelligence tactics in Washington five years before Watergate, did a study of the church. After two and

a half years of investigation Garrison, who is not a Scientologist, wrote "The Hidden Story of Scientology." Garrison points out, "Early detractors had tried to counter the instant success of Dianetics by implying that the whole thing was a smoke ring fantasy tossed off in his spare time by a science fiction writer named L. Ron Hubbard."

Scientologists make no bones about Hubbard's early writings, which include articles in 90 national magazines, over 100 books and screen plays, fiction and nonfiction, as well as two texts on psychology.

They also point out that in addition to Hubbard being a skilled and talented writer and adventurer he also dedicated the majority of his 65 years as a humanitarian searching for the truth and honesty in life which would lead to real world peace and understanding among men.

The religious movement began in 1950 following the publication of "Dianetics the Modern Science of Mental Health" by Hubbard. The book rose to the top of the New York Times best seller list and stayed there for months. To date it has sold in excess of 1.5 million copies. The book is based on Hubbard's observations and research of the previous 25 years, dealing with the anatomy of the mind and its effect upon the spirit. (The literal meaning of "Dianetics" came from the Greek *dia* meaning through and *noos* meaning soul, thus "through soul".) The book offered a technology de-



L. RON HUBBARD
Founder of Scientology

signed to help people become more imaginative and responsible.

Scientology came into being shortly after Dianetics as Hubbard continued his research. He concluded, in the tradition of Buddhism, that the person himself was a spirit and that the spirit could itself obtain greater peace of mind and better judgment. He began to research methods addressed more to the person himself rather than just the mind, which would increase individual creativity and honesty by expanding one's knowledge and certainty of himself as a spiritual being. The application of these methods became known as auditing or pastoral counseling.

According to Rev. Richard Furbush, who heads the Boston Theological School of the Church, "Through Scientology counseling, the person confronts and be-

comes comfortable with spiritual barriers in his own life until he gains full control over those barriers for himself. With each step he becomes freer to be himself, express himself, appreciate others, and form lasting and happy relationships. As a person progresses he becomes more aware of his own personal worth and gains a clearer perception of his role and purpose in life."

On May 9, the 26th anniversary of Dianetics, the Church announced publication of a book entitled "Success With Scientology," containing affidavits from doctors, psychiatrists, educators, business executives, actors, artists and parents sharing their successes in Scientology ranging from increased family harmony to becoming more natural and imaginative.

The first Church of Scientology was founded in 1955 in Washington, D.C. The Mother Church is located in East Grinstead, Sussex, England. There are now over 200 missions and churches world wide on every continent except behind the Iron Curtain. Advanced theological training and counseling is completed at one of four advanced churches in the world including two in the US, one in Los Angeles and one in Clearwater, Fla.

In 1963 the Founding Church in Washington, D.C. had a run-in with the FDA which came into the Church unannounced and confiscated two tons of books claiming Scientology had been

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making physical medical claims.

Although church officials termed the charges preposterous, they promptly sued for the return of the materials, and a 10-year protracted legal battle ensued. The battle culminated in 1972 when the court decreed that all the material be returned. US District Judge Gerhard A. Gesell stated, "The Founding Church of Scientology, the principal claimant here, is a bona fide religion and that the auditing practice of Scientology and accounts of it are religious doctrine . . . The Church is a religious institution protected by the First Amendment."

Concomitant with the FDA difficulty, the religious status in Australia was under question. However, that, too, was resolved in favor of the Scientologists. Scientology's religious status has since been acknowledged by the Australian federal attorney general. Ministers of the Church are now authorized to perform marriages in Australia and in December of 1973 the Australian Taxation Office granted the Church tax exemption status enjoyed by other churches in Australia.

Meanwhile back in the United States, the IRS attempted to withdraw the tax exempt status of the Founding Church in Washington, D.C. The action was initiated in the late 1950's but the trial did not commence until the summer of 1967.

The matter did not begin to finally resolve until 1974 when the Church decided to test the IRS in Federal District Court in Hawaii. In the midst of the proceedings, IRS attorneys, in a complete turn of events, offered the Church a full settlement of the case in the Church's favor including court costs and refund of taxes paid. Shortly after the IRS made its offer, 99 names on the now famous IRS enemies list were published for the first time. On the list,

among 12 religious organizations including the National Council of Churches which represents another 40 religious, appeared the Church of Scientology

Since that time many Scientology churches all over the country, including the church in Boston, have been granted recognition of their tax exempt status by the IRS.

Long before the church had settled its own tax matters it had begun an investigation of IRS practices through its independent news journal Freedom.

The results of the investigation were turned over to Sen. Edward Kennedy for hearings on IRS violations of the Freedom of Information Act.

As mentioned earlier, the release of the Nixon/IRS enemies list in 1974 included not only the Church of Scientology but 11 other religious organizations including the Unitarian Society and the National Council of Churches. On behalf of all religions and the concept of religious freedom, officials from Scientology Churches began using state and federal Freedom of Information Acts to obtain government files on the church.

Thus far the church has gathered a great quantity of material to demonstrate the danger of allowing government agencies to maintain unverified data in its files.

Recently in California, a special task force on religious defense completed a 20-month study of government documents which resulted in a 380-page report. According to the task force, it has documented evidence that government agencies have created and distributed false reports on the Church of Scientology for more than two decades.

Government documents were also reviewed by Victor Marchetti, former top-ranking CIA official and co-author of "CIA and the Cult

of Intelligence." His comments are as follows:

"After reading the thousands of pages you have provided, I feel two emotions. One is of shame . . . that our government would so harass a religious movement and its members in this modern day and age — particularly in view of the guarantees established under the First Amendment, i.e. freedom of religion and speech. The second is of professional disgust . . . that the US intelligence community, including the CIA (my former agency), the FBI and other agencies ostensibly concerned with protecting us from foreign threats, would be parties to such harassment — and then do such a sloppy and inaccurate job of investigation and analysis with regard to your church .

Former NFL quarterback John Brodie, who has worked with Narconon since 1973, states that, "I investigated various programs dealing with the (drug) problem and in Narconon I found one that worked."

In the field of education Hubbard's study techniques, researched by Hubbard to facilitate the study of Scientology, have been put to use by Applied Scholastics, Inc., an independent organization working in schools around the country to improve the learning and study skills of children and educators alike.

Many Massachusetts Scientologists have become active in local issues and have formed groups made up of Scientologists as well as non Scientologists to deal with particular social ills. These groups include The Citizens Commission on Human Rights, the Task Force on Mental Retardation, the Committee to Reinforce Ex-Offenders, the New England Elderly Demands Society and others. These groups have bound together to form the New England Association of Scientologists for Reform.

The Church of Scientolo-

gy itself is also active in the community. Locally the church is sponsoring a campaign in Massachusetts to reduce crime. Members have visited over 50 communities to find out what citizens feel they can do within their own community to help reduce crime and terrorism. According to Rev. Gerard Velona, who heads the campaign, they are also speaking with police to get more ideas of ways in which they feel citizens can help. The group will be compiling the results into a free publication. Velona states the main problem is that many people are not even aware that they can help reduce the crime rate. Velona also stated they have been contacting clergy of all denominations across the state to ascertain their views as to the role religion can play as well.

"The Church," remarked Velona, "plays an important role in handling family problems and reducing drug and alcohol abuses all of which lead to crime. We feel the entire religious community should work together to reduce crime in Massachusetts."

In 1966 Hubbard retired as executive director of Scientology Churches and was replaced by over 100 staff at the Mother Church. His work in the area of spiritual discovery has continued, however.

Hubbard currently is seeking a home in Southern Ireland and will devote his retirement to personal interests including horticultural work. Hubbard is highly regarded for his work in horticultural research.

His most recently released book "Dianetics Today" is a 1000-plus page text containing the Dianetic technology which has evolved from 1950-1975.

Hubbard is perhaps the Church's largest donor, having forgiven the church a \$13 million dollar debt. Hubbard helped finance the ear-

ly churches in the 1950's.

Hubbard is also a member of the Explorers Club, has written for 90 national magazines and has authored over 100 books and screen plays. Though retired for nine years, his presence is very much felt in all Scientology Churches. Church Ministers continue to use his counseling techniques exactly as he laid them out because they have been found to be most beneficial when done that way. But the approach is not dogmatic.

Scientology's all denominational services, held Sunday evenings, stress what Hubbard terms, "honor and personal integrity." "Never regret yesterday," he writes, "Life is in you today, and you make your tomorrow."

For Scientologists, increased awareness and greater involvement toward creating a better more peaceful world and genuine trust of self and one's fellows are vital elements toward evolving a civilization of which all people can be proud. Above everything else they want people to observe, act and think for themselves so that each individual can have the fullest, most creative and honest life he can live.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Rev. Michael Carlson is Minister of Public Affairs for all Churches of Scientology in New England. This article stems from a story in the *Sunday Globe Magazine* (March, 1975) to which the Church objected. The *Globe* herewith gives Rev. Carlson the opportunity to present his views of Scientology.