

LOS ANGELES

HERALD EXAMINER

YOUR TURN/ A Scientology defense

"Who would have dreamed that U.S. intelligence agencies would attempt to destroy a religious movement born in America?"

By Jeff Dubron

In 1950, the book "Dianetics: The Modern Science of Mental Health" by L. Ron Hubbard was first published. It was an immediate bestseller. It was also the target of an intelligence campaign covertly carried out by many federal agencies such as the State Department, FBI, CIA, Air Force Intelligence and others.

Perhaps we will never know the original reason for this attack on an American church. Perhaps it was because the earliest literature of the church called for social change and condemned the type of activity various intelligence agencies were carrying out as a part of their mind control experiments.

There is also the fact that the Church of Scientology was born during the McCarthy years and must have seemed to be as good a potential threat as any with its strong beliefs and rapidly expanding membership.

Then again, maybe it was just the same type of thinking that has allowed the persecution of many religions and minority groups throughout history.

Sun Tzu, an ancient Chinese philosopher who is considered the father of all dissertation on the subject of war, reportedly said "Look into the matter of his alliances and cause them to be severed and dissolved. If an enemy has alliances, the problem is grave and the enemy's position strong; if he has no alliances, the problem is minor and the enemy's position weak."

The church has in its possession, obtained through lawsuits against the government and through the use of the laws governing secret files, over 200,000 pages of files the United States government kept on the Church of Scientology and its members.

These files clearly show lies circulated throughout at least 14 countries by U.S. intelligence agents such as the late J. Edgar Hoover. Hoover, with reports from his office, saw to it that throughout the United States and the world, the Church of Scientology was the subject of prejudice and deceit.

Illustrative of this deceit is the "Foley Memorandum." Written by an employee of the Department of Labor named Shirley Foley, the memorandum was based on a phone conversation between Foley and two Internal Revenue Service employees. The original source appears to be Air Force Intelligence, who earlier circulated the same false reports. Foley's report portrayed Scientology "initiation ceremonies" as using drugs and electric shock and went on for three pages expounding on the horrors of Scientology. The memorandum was not discovered by the church until approximately eight years after its writing and dissemination. One of the places this document was aimed at was the Immigration and Naturalization Service, who had used it as their guide in dealing with the church (as the document itself recommended be done) and denied

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entry to foreign Scientology ministers seeking to work for the church in the United States. They have since retracted the document.

Although this began in the '50s, the church didn't have any real knowledge of it until the late '60s and early '70s. Whenever officers of the church tried to contact the FBI, CIA, NSA, etc. to ask about files on the church, they were told none existed. The church was thus forced into long and expensive legal action to get the files released. Still the government has persisted and continued to lie.

Who, in those days, would have thought that they were covertly being attacked and watched by their own government? Who would have dreamed that U.S. intelligence agencies would attempt to destroy a religious movement born in America that advocated only peaceful social change? Who knew of the attacks on Dr. Martin Luther King, the assassination plots, the mind controlling drugs?

Now, some Scientology church

members are accused of fighting back by photocopying some of these files that were kept on them. Church members also stand accused of trying to be in a position to predict the next step in the government's hysterical attack against their religion by seeking government jobs.

But what came before this alleged counterattack? On July 4, 1966, Congress passed what has become known as the Freedom of Information Act. This act essentially states that as the government was run for the people for national security, ongoing investigations, and personal privacy, the people were now guaranteed the right to know what the government was thinking or saying about them.

The church began to file numerous FOIA requests. As the request went out, a pattern of responses emerged. Files on Scientology either related to "national security" or they were "non-existent"; ongoing investigations were not considered a factor.

The invoking of the "national security" label was of interest to us. We had never been involved with intelligence agencies and had never been accused of any type of subversive activities. Were the intelligence agencies trying to hide something? The "non-existent" category was simply not believable. The church began a cross filing system; when an agency finally sent a file, it was copied and put into folders for the sending and receiving agencies. And guess what? It wasn't long before we had nice, fat little folders of "non-existent files from the NSA, FBI, CIA, etc., folders containing harmful, false reports, such as the "Foley Memorandum" and its predecessors, spread throughout the world by these agencies.

The church estimates it has spent or lost over \$50 million in ensuring its growth against the onslaught by U.S. intelligence agencies. It has filed numerous lawsuits and begun its own investigations into corruption within the Justice Department and other agencies. The Church of Scientology was faced with only two choices; fight back in a non-violent manner or lay down and die. It did not lay down and die. The struggle goes on.

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