



Scientology Responds

The News-Herald is "attempting to capitalize on sensationalism," says Reverend August Murphy of the Church of Scientology. For his response to the News-Herald's stories on his church, see page five.

Public Forum

Scientology Responds to News-Herald Articles

by Rev. August Murphy
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of San Francisco

(Editor's note: In its investigation of the Church of Scientology, the News-Herald has repeatedly attempted to interview members of the Church in order to present a balanced picture of the subject. Scientology officials from San Francisco met with the News-Herald briefly and provided a great deal of written information about the Church, but have refused to be interviewed on the record. Officials from the Scientology mission in Santa Rosa also refused to be interviewed, despite continual requests. Finally, the News-Herald offered Rev. August Murphy the opportunity to write his own story on the subject, and he accepted. The story is printed here.)

For the past several weeks, readers have been exposed to an "inside" look at the Church of Scientology, courtesy of Dennis Wheeler at the *News-Herald*.

Having interviewed several former Scientologists including L. Ron Hubbard, Jr., several known "antagonists" to the church, and culled numerous details from various "exposes" on the Church, Mr. Wheeler has presented a pretty bizarre picture of Scientology.

Obviously, should one be writing an article about the Army, and only interview AWOL soldiers and members of an anti-draft organization, one could easily present a pretty tainted picture of the Army. From painting a picture of Manson being a member of the Church (Hogwash! There is no evidence to support such claim) to that of L. Ron Hubbard visiting heaven twice (a statement taken out of con-

text, and similar to the statement by Martin Luther King that "I have seen the Promised Land," i.e. allegorical), Mr. Wheeler is, of course, attempting to capitalize on sensationalism, in the style of the *National Enquirer*.

Sensational stories sell more newspapers, and one can make anything sound sensational. Take for example the following:

Associating with a whole army of cult followers, known to laugh hysterically and described as "a very unkempt individual who hasn't shaved in years, and obviously lacking in proper nutrition due to his obesity," he is claiming the ability to "fly through the air and visit every single house in one night," according to an un-named source.

Known to keep files with which he extorts little children by threatening them "to be good," the self described "saint" — not wishing to enter buildings through conventional doorways — rather has instead an overwhelming preoccupation with dirty chimneys. Many psychiatrists have labeled chimneys as a subliminal phallic symbol.

Claiming to live in the North Pole, producing "toys" with the assistance of an army of "elves," he is rarely seen, successfully living as a recluse. The few individuals that have reported to have seen him, mostly young children, rarely fail to mention the rather large red nose, a characteristic common to many alcoholics.

He frequently goes by the name "Santa Claus," but is also known as Kris Kringle and Saint Nicholas.

Obviously this is fantasy. But anything, no matter how good it is or how worthy the cause, can be presented in such a way to make it sound threatening.

In any case, there is a lot to be said about Scientology. Obviously, I don't have the space to respond to each falsi-

Continued on next page

Continued from last page

ty that Wheeler has mentioned.

Scientology is an applied religious philosophy predicated on the fundamental belief that Man is basically good and seeking to survive, but is encumbered by painful past experiences, and his harmful acts against others. Scientology was discovered, researched and organized by L. Ron Hubbard, not invented. As religious teaching, it is revelatory, yet grounded in experience in the tradition of Eastern religions. The Scientology codes of conduct and system of ethical behavior aspiring to right action and reverence for life, all find their roots in Buddhism.

The Hindu concept of the four parts of man (the body, the mind — consisting of two parts: one, the conscious experience of which one is aware; the other, the subconscious, consisting of his past experiences — and finally, that of the being himself, called in Scientology, the Thetan), is fully endorsed and explicated in Scientology.

Another basic concept Scientology shares with universal religious thought is reincarnation. Like Buddhism, Hinduism and early Christianity, Scientology believes that the individual as an immortal being has assumed many bodies in his evolution in the physical universe toward an ultimate realization and freedom from material bondage.

Scientology is non-denominational. As in Hinduism, Scientology values other religious thought, and does not seek to persuade a man of one religion to change to another, but rather to validate the way that God is already guiding an individual, whether it be by way of the simplicity of Quakerism, or the rich imagery of the ceremony and vestments of Roman Catholicism.

There is a lot more to be said about Scientology. It is difficult to take a subject of 25 million words and over 3,000 taped lectures and condense it into two paragraphs.

Scientology has been described as "a route to knowledge," or the study of "knowing how to know." It provides a way for anyone to gain better understanding of himself and his own life, and a greater understanding of others. With knowledge, comes ability. After you have studied how to repair an automobile, for instance, you become more able to repair automobiles. So it is with life. When you understand yourself and others, you are then more able to handle yourself and your life, and cope with situations in life which may have seemed bewildering, complex or difficult.

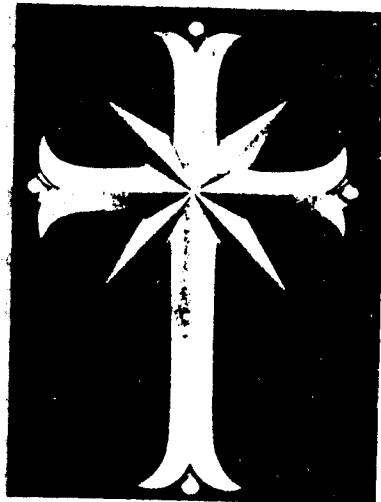
If one has difficulty in communication, for instance, one can study communication and discover the exact principles of communication — what makes communication effective and what can go wrong with communication. In this way, one's ability to communicate gets better.

Scientology's purpose is to make the able more able.

John Brodie, while a quarterback with the '49ers, was having difficulty with his greatest asset, his arm. While taking every medication known to man, he still couldn't throw. In just a few hours of Scientology counseling, as described in his book, *Open Field*, all the pain was gone from his arm. In that year, Brodie was selected as the National Football League's "player of the year."

"To know answers for once in my life is a very exciting thing," says John Travolta concerning Scientology. "Those little things that used to stop me before just don't stop me any more."

Chick Corea found an immediate change in his music life with Scientology. "I became extroverted from problems



The Scientology cross: despite its resemblance to the traditional symbol of Christianity, the two are unrelated. The horizontal bar represents Matter and the vertical bar Spirit, while the ends of the cross and the four points of the star represent the eight Dynamics of Scientology.

that I had been sitting in for a long, long time," he says.

"When you are trapped in the painful memories of the past, you aren't really free to experience life as it is," says Joan Prather of *Eight Is Enough*. "That is what is so wonderful about Scientology. It allows you to really be able to experience life for yourself."

There are millions of people around the world — actors, actresses, doctors, lawyers, musicians — people from all walks of life who have become more able through Scientology.

L. Ron Hubbard states: "What is true for you is what you have observed yourself." This is the way to approach Scientology. Take a look for yourself. Read a book on the subject. Visit the Mission of Scientology and receive a free lecture on Dianetics, or on the Purification Program, which is designed to free an individual from the unwanted effects of drugs and toxins by eliminating them from the body through a regimen of exercise, sauna, and nutrition. Or find out how the study technology of Scientology enables a person to better understand and apply what is being studied.

Scientology offers these and many other ways for the improvement of one's life. I invite you to see for yourself.