

# Clearwater Sun

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## Editorials of the Sun

### How much does it take to justify an inquiry?

How much evidence do area law enforcement agencies need before launching a full-scale investigation of the Church of Scientology?

Apparently the agencies hereabouts are a lot less responsive than they are in Ontario, Canada.

The same sworn statements alleging criminal activity on the part of the locally-headquartered sect given to authorities in the Tampa Bay area have prompted action by the Ontario Provincial Police and resulted in the dismissal in California of a civil suit against former Scientology archivist Gerald Armstrong.

In his Los Angeles Superior Court decision, Judge Paul G. Breckenridge denounced Scientology as "clearly schizophrenic and paranoid." He said the evidence portrayed L. Ron Hubbard, the sect's founder and seer, as "virtually a pathological liar."

And authorities in West Germany are investigating the sect's activities there.

The *New York Times* recently repeated reports published in the *Clearwater Sun* last month that former sect officers claim they helped to divert as much as \$100 million in Scientology funds to foreign accounts controlled by Hubbard.

With so much smoke, somebody

should be checking for a fire.

Yet local representatives of state and federal law enforcement agencies have shown little enthusiasm for prosecuting the Scientologists.

Armstrong speculates the sect may be using damaging information on law enforcement authorities to deter an investigation. He bases this theory on his intimate knowledge of the way in which the Scientologists operated during his 11 years with the organization.

We would be shocked if Armstrong's theory is right. We have too much respect for local lawmen to entertain such grave misgivings.

We prefer to think there is a more acceptable explanation for the apparent inactivity of the state attorney's office, the FBI, the Florida Department of Law Enforcement, the U.S. Justice Department and the Clearwater Police Department.

We have reliable information that voluminous testimony has been given to those agencies, including allegations of criminal behavior by Scientologists. Yet there is no sign of an investigation into the sect's activities in Clearwater to date.

If there is no investigation, the public deserves an explanation.

And we call on the appropriate spokesmen for the law enforcement agencies involved to clear the air.