SHOPPING GUIDE TO SHERMAN OA

LAWEEK

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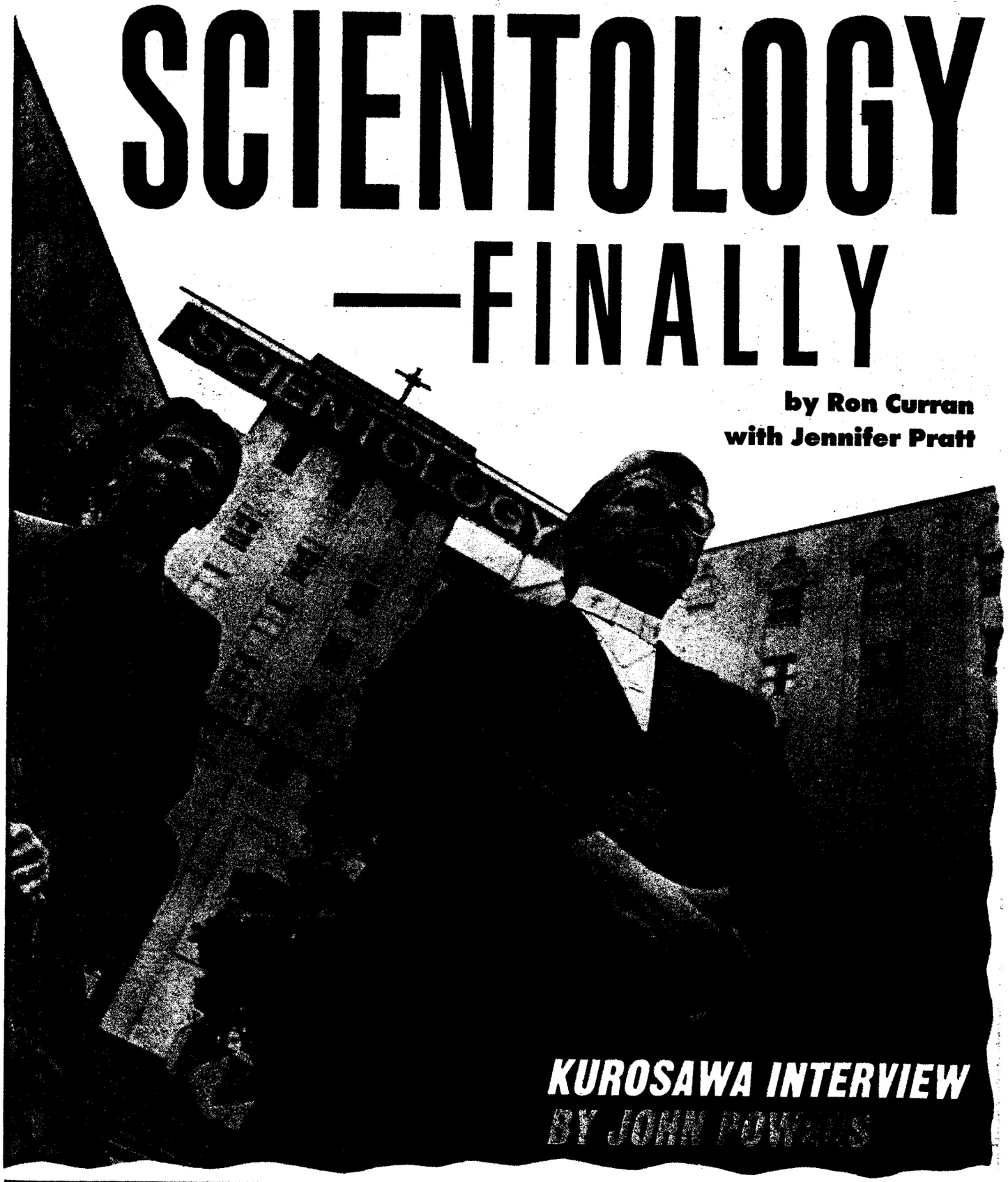
INSIDE SCIENTOLOGY —FINALLY

by Ron Curran
with Jennifer Pratt



KUROSAWA INTERVIEW

BY JOHN POWERS

L.A. WEEKLY

FEATURES

April 4-10, 1986 | Vol. 8, No. 19

ON THE COVER:
Rev. Ken Hoden and Rev. Heber Jentzsch photographed by David Jacobson.

THE OTHER SIDE OF THE LOOKING GLASS

by Ron Curran with Jennifer Pratt

[L. Ron Hubbard] has now moved on to his next level of . . . research. This level is beyond anything any of us has ever imagined. It is a level, in fact, done in an exterior state, completely exterior from the body. In this level . . . the body is nothing more than an impediment, an encumbrance to any further gain . . . Thus, at 2000 hours, Friday, the 24th of January, A.D. [1986], L. Ron Hubbard discarded the body he had used in this lifetime for 74 years, 10 months and 11 days . . .
—Hubbard protege "Captain" David Miscavige, to 1,800 Scientologists at the Hollywood Palladium, January 27, 1986

Commander Hubbard

Hubbard's "Freedom" Army

THE CHURCH OF SCIENTOLOGY's headquarters on Berendo Street off Sunset Boulevard is the busy mecca of L.A.'s substantial Scientology community. Approach the "blue building" and young children scurry up and offer to sell you copies of Scientology magazines. As you enter the lobby and near the reception desk (which bears a banner urging members to "Get Trained"), staffers wearing the naval-motif uniform of the church are quick to greet you, eager to help current members or recruit new members. A steady stream of non-staff Scientologists floods the lobby around you. Some are on their way to or from counseling sessions, others have just dropped by to peruse the latest Scientology "technology" for sale (such as a set of taped L. Ron Hubbard lectures, selling for $1,888). The Church of Scientology is indeed a world of bustling activity — and bristling anxiety.

For when the staffers learn that you are a "wog" (Scientology-speak for non-Scientologist) or, worse yet, a wog *journalist*, their warm smiles change instantly to icy defensiveness. "What do you want?" snaps the receptionist, who only seconds earlier wanted to be your best friend. It doesn't take long to realize that although church literature stresses that " 'Love thy neighbor' is a basic tenet," unless a Scientologist's neighbor is a fellow member of the church, Scientologists can be zealously self-protective.

A closer look behind the facade of good will offers further evidence of this. Security guards are everywhere. Sophisticated locks (whose combinations are continually changed) seal off the building's catacomb of offices, files and counseling cubicles. A wanted poster offering a $500 reward for incriminating information on several church "enemies" hangs near one of the corridors. And though Scientology claims to be a "major religion" encouraging "all man's inalienable rights . . ." to think freely, to talk freely, to write freely their own opinions and to counter or utter or write upon the opinions of others," its "mother church" seems more like a fortress than a forum to an outsider, its atmosphere more like a city under siege than a citadel of learning.

But to Church of Scientology officials, this hyperprotectionism is a basic necessity if the mission that L. Ron Hubbard has bestowed upon his flock — nothing less than "building a new civilization" — is to be achieved. That the battle lines had been drawn was clear when three of the Scientology leaders most responsible for fulfilling Hubbard's vision gathered one recent Sunday morning in the office of Church of Scientology International's 51-year-old president, the Reverend Heber Jentzsch. Seated in front of a wall-size photo of the

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The most visible non-traditional "religion" in Los Angeles is Scientology. Everybody sees its buildings; few know what goes on inside them. Critics call it a "Moonie-like" cult; devotees such as John Travolta, Chick Corea, Al Jarreau and Karen Black swear it has changed their lives for the better. Opponents say it coerces, menaces and manipulates members and critical outsiders alike; supporters say it has merely defended itself against outside assaults. One thing is certain: Scientology is different.

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Andromeda galaxy were Jentzsch, with an ornate Scientology cross hanging from the cleric's collar of his powder-blue shirt; the Reverend Ken Hoden, the gaunt, intense president of L.A.'s Scientology flock; and Earle Cooley, a blustery man of considerable girth who serves as the church's primary attorney. Three well-groomed young aides sat at the ready should the leaders need documents to support their pending points. And above all (literally and figuratively) was L. Ron Hubbard, keeping a watchful eye from a portrait hanging high on the south wall. (Though Hubbard officially "retired" from church leadership in 1966, disappeared from the public eye altogether in 1981 and died last January, the spectre of "Ron" still hangs heavy over every nook and cranny of the Scientology scene.)

The Reverend Jentzsch offered to explain the reason for the Church of Scientology's history of controversy. "We are the victim of an international assault led by the psychiatric community, Cointelpro, the Rockefellers and governments throughout the world," said Jentzsch, a former journalist (*L.A. Free Press*) and actor (*Paint Your Wagon*) who joined the church in 1967 and became president of Church of Scientology International, its management arm, in 1981. "The Church of Scientology is determined to stand up against this attack on First Amendment rights." (See Sidebar: "The Government's War Against Scientology.")

"I think it goes much deeper," added Cooley, who has served as the church's attorney for 16 months, but who has been a church member for only six months. "What we're dealing with is really a deep underlying problem. Since the dawn of time, man has been interested in unlocking the secrets of the mind, of human nature. All religions are engaged in this pursuit, but Scientology focuses on it more intensely. This places Scientology on a collision course with psychiatry, psychology and the forces of government who are committed to behavior modification, thought control and the manipulation of mankind. We are engaged in a war for the human spirit."

"So we have to protect our church and our freedom to believe in the religion of our choice," interjected Hoden. "We have been singled out and been the center of so much attention because we have discovered a workable way for man to achieve total freedom. The freedom of mankind is our goal, and we will defend our right to strive for that freedom."

L. Ron Hubbard surveyed the scene from his portrait. He seemed pleased.

L.A.'s Most Conspicuous "Cult"?

Scientology is certainly no stranger to attention, and when the reclusive L. Ron Hubbard died of a stroke at his San Luis Obispo ranch, the bright light of public scrutiny was again cast upon his progeny. But despite the walls of defense evident at Scientology headquarters, the church has, ironically, done everything in its power to keep its product, if not its parishioners, in the public eye. For in the 35 years since Hubbard founded Scientology, basing it on principles propounded in his 1950 best-seller *Dianetics: The Modern Science of Mental Health*, it has consciously positioned itself as L.A.'s most conspicuous religion. (Some say "cult.")

Just look around. In a city of outlandish architecture, Scientology's bright blue Berendo Street headquarters (once Cedars of Lebanon hospital) certainly catches the eye, while its 70-foot-tall green neon "SCIENTOLOGY" marquee dominates the Hollywood strip. Celebrities such as John Travolta, Karen Black and Al Jarreau publicly praise Scientology's role in their success. Glossy newspaper supplements trumpet Scientology as a "major religion . . . [like] Protestantism, Buddhism, Judaism, Catholicism." TV commercials show attractive women scaling mighty cliffs thanks to Scientology principles. Circuslike court trials brought by and against Scientology continually grab prominent coverage in the local and national press. (A $100 million fraud suit against the church is currently being tried in federal court here.) Indeed, in Los Angeles, where a high profile is often more important than high standards, the Church of Scientology has made itself a star.

But despite its pervasive presence, Scientology remains an enigma to most people. The questions are many: What exactly is Scientology? Is it really a religion or is it a business disguised as a religion? How many members does it have? Who wields the power? Why does it generate so much controversy? Has it, as critics have charged, been taken over by a money-hungry, manipulative and exploitative coterie who deceive and use the members for their own ends, turning them into fanatics, or is it run by a truly conscientious group? Is Scientology "the only road to total freedom," as its many supporters insist, or a "greedy, brainwashing money machine and vicious cult engaging in sometimes despicable acts," as detractors claim? Or is it something in between?

To answer these questions, the *Weekly* spent the better part of a year tracing Scientology's history, studying its doctrines and interviewing former members and other critics of the church. Perhaps most important, the *Weekly*'s editors approached the press-paranoid leaders of Scientology with a deal: "Allow us to examine Scientology from the inside — to interview current church members, tour restricted church buildings and experiment with Scientology technology. In return, we promise to print a fair and accurate presentation of our findings."

Initially, the offer was met with resistance. During a meeting with these reporters early last year at a restaurant across from Scientology headquarters, Ken Hoden made it clear that, because of previous critical articles in the *Weekly*, "We don't want anything to do with your story." Days later, a prominent advertiser who is a Scientologist threatened to pull his ads if an article critical of the church appeared. But a meeting between senior officials of the church and a *Weekly* editor eventually took place, the deal was struck ("We've taken so many shots from the press, we have to be careful," apologized Hoden) and the *Weekly* was granted unprecedented access to the inner workings of the Church of Scientology. (Not without restrictions, however. Church finances were ruled a taboo subject. We were barred from random interviewing of church members and allowed to tour Scientology grounds only with Hoden as our guide. This defensiveness seems to stem from a combination of justified apprehension resulting from past press fixation on Scientology's controversial aspects and a paranoia inherited from L. Ron Hubbard, who considered reporters pawns in the global psychiatric conspiracy. Hoden confirmed that all Scientology officials receive instruction on how to deal with reporters.)

Still, Hoden was surprisingly cooperative, spending nearly 50 hours explaining the structure and philosophy of his church, arranging interviews with current Scientologists and rebutting the allegations of some 30 representative former Scientologists. (There is also an official opposition group called FAIR — Freedom for All in Religion — consisting of about 200 former church members, many of whom still practice "auditing" at independent centers but who oppose the current church hierarchy as "lying, fraudulent, money-motivated" and "Gestapo-like," to quote one FAIR member.)

Both sides had their axes to grind. Hoden and current church members feel Scientology is a ground-breaking religion unfairly persecuted because of its unique effectiveness. Former members (vastly outnumbered by current members) claim that abusive church policies have left them emotionally, spiritually and financially bankrupt and feel that attacks on the church are justified.

What did we conclude? That Scientology is neither patently good nor patently evil. Rather, there is a curious dichotomy. The majority of Scientologists attest to being perfectly happy with the church, while former members tend to carry with them intense bitterness and resentment. The church criticizes psychiatry while selling pseudo-Freudian counseling. Scientologists accuse its enemies of launching malicious attacks against the church, but the church itself has a history of harassment and of vengeful (and sometimes illegal) clandestine operations against enemies, real or imagined. But above all, Scientology promises total freedom while undermining that noble theory too often with disturbing practices.

Therapy as Religion

Though the Berendo Street headquarters is the hub of Scientology activity in Los Angeles, the church's showplace is its Celebrity Center at Franklin and Bronson. A grand gothic chateau built for William Randolph Hearst in the 1920s, this complex of Scientology offices and apartments has retained much of its charm, replete with garden grounds and flowing fountains. The idyllic setting is reinforced as you enter the mansion's foyer. The walls are lined with original art, and music from a grand piano wafts around you. Indeed, it is a serene setting.

That is, until one is confronted in the main lobby by a large advertising display selling a series of taped lectures by L. Ron Hubbard titled "Radiation and Your Survival." A brochure quotes Hubbard from a lecture: "There is actually such a point where a person's beingness can be sufficiently great that he becomes practically indestructable." The inference? With Scientology training, you will survive radiation poisoning. The cost of the lecture tape? Nearly $300. Welcome to the schizophrenic world that is the Church of Scientology: Enlightenment costs money.

It was at the Celebrity Center that we met 39-year-old Ken Hoden for the first of several formal interviews. A former electrical engineer who is the son of a Baptist minister, Hoden says he became attracted to Scientology after reading *Dianetics* in 1973 and realizing he "was not as effective as [he] wanted to be." He joined the staff the following year and was named titular head of Scientology's influential L.A. congregation in 1984.

Henceforth, Hoden would be our personal guide through the church's complex labyrinth of "freedom" and finance.

Wearing a traditional priest collar under a well-tailored gray suit, and sipping coffee from a sterling-silver service set in one of the Celebrity Center's conference rooms, Hoden articulated his confidence in the church. "Scientology is the best way I've found to help people improve their lives. If Dianetics and Scientology are applied standardly, it will work 100 percent of the time with every single person everywhere. Compared to anything else, it is the only road to total freedom."

According to Hoden, the Church of Scientology currently boasts more than 40,000 members in Los Angeles and 6 million throughout the world. (Church officials concede the world total includes *anyone* who has taken any Scientology course over the last five years, though of course many of these people now have no affiliation with the church.) Of the L.A. members, 1,500 are full-time staff, 760 of them living and working out of the Berendo complex, earning $24 per week plus minimal room, board and expenses as members of the "Sea Organization," an elite, almost monastic segment of the Scientology community.

The remainder of Scientology's L.A. members are those who take courses at any of the five area churches or numerous franchise missions in the L.A. area. (Scientology claims to operate 600 churches and missions worldwide.) L.A. also serves as home to Scientology's more upper-level Continental and American Saint Hill churches, as well as to "Advanced Org," at which progressively more sophisticated (and expensive) services are offered.

The day-to-day management of the church is carried out by Heber Jentzsch as president of the Church of Scientology International. Vicki Aznaran is head of one of the church's two major business subsidiaries, Religious Technology Center (RTC), which controls Hubbard's trademarks. David Miscavige runs the second subsidiary, the for-profit Author Services Inc. (ASI), which handles Hubbard's non-Scientology literary works (such as his best-selling sci-fi novel, *Battlefield Earth*). The "ecclesiastical top" of Scientology is its Flag Service Org in Clearwater, Florida. Mark Yeager is the church's highest ranking ecclesiastic official, assisted by Ray Midoff. Earle Cooley coordinates all legal affairs, while Lyman Spurlock is church accountant and Norman Starky serves as its marketing expert.

According to Hoden, these people assumed power "based on their record of production. If you make things go, you'll move up in the church. It's based on statistics . . . on graphs." (Quotas are imposed on Scientologists to encourage the maximum number of new recruits and the highest level of production. Critics claim these quotas often lead to overaggressive recruiting and fraudulent promises of results that warp the church's altruistic goals. The church's "Code of Ethics" lists "mistakes resulting in financial loss" as a "misdemeanor" offense.)

Ken Hoden also confirms that some of the church's most influential advisors came from an inner circle of aides who served Hubbard in his final years. People like Pat and Anne Broeker (who Hoden says serve as "consultants") are rumored to have gained substantial power in the church since Hubbard became an absolute recluse in 1981, while Hubbard's 24-year-old protege David Miscavige (whom Hoden describes as merely Hubbard's "literary agent at ASI and a close friend") seems to have been groomed for power in the church. Miscavige's role as announcer of Hubbard's death and host of his annual New Year's message seems to confirm this special influence.

Obviously, spiritual "enlightenment," or higher levels of getting "clear," is no requisite for advancement in the church.

Scientology is based on principles Hubbard first expressed in *Dianetics* — basically, that man can achieve "total freedom" by controlling his "reactive mind." Hubbard later expanded his theories into the more elaborate scenario of human existence and improvement known as Scien-

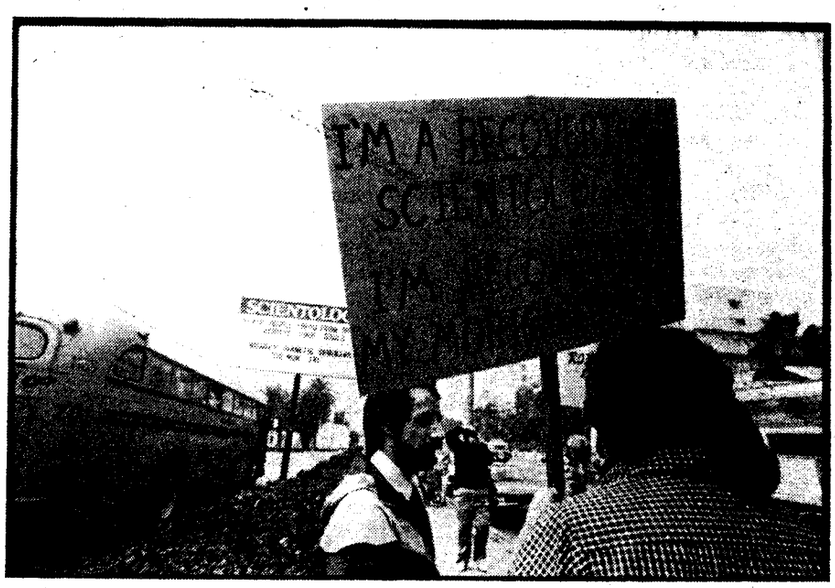
To eventually rid oneself of the "negative influence of the mind," a person must begin by "confronting" memory images of painful experiences accumulated in past and present lives.

Builders of "a new civilization."

Hubbard's "shrine."

E-meter auditing.

Conspiracy pawns, sincere critics, or just plain broke?



tology. Upper-level Scientologists are exposed to Hubbard's theories that aberrant behavior was "implanted" in humans 75 million years ago by an evil ruler named Xenu, who froze people and dropped them into 10 volcanoes. After killing the humans with hydrogen bombs to combat overpopulation, Xenu collected their spirits as they rose in clusters from the volcanoes and implanted the spirits with evil thoughts. Hubbard dubbed these clusters of brainwashed spirits "body thetans." These thetans, according to Hubbard, literally attach themselves to humans as we are reincarnated over the eons and are responsible for all aberrant behavior we commit. (Hubbard collected these and thousands of additional theories into a series of "red books" that serve as the bible of Scientology "technology." A series of "green books" detail his daily rules and policies for church management.)

It needs to be noted here that Scientologists are not exposed to the "Xenu" theories until they have moved well up through the Scientology courses. These courses deal with more mundane behavioral patterns and relationships, much as any therapy does, and Scientologists insist they are effective aids to human growth even without knowledge or acceptance of any of Hubbard's "higher" principles or theories.

Hoden and other Scientologists argue that most other churches, at their core, have creation myths that are as strange to outsiders as Scientology's — "'Do you know what Mormons really believe?" one Scientologist asked. (Hoden was so troubled by the impending discussion of the Xenu material that he asked the *Weekly* not to print it. The material originally appeared in the *L.A. Times*.) And at any rate, church supporters argue, getting "clear" of psychological trauma is paramount in church practices, not forcing members to accept unusual theories; and members may hold traditional religious beliefs as well.

To eventually rid oneself of the "negative influence of the mind," a person must begin by "confronting" memory images of painful experiences accumulated in past and present lives. These negative mental images are called "engrams" and carry with them a negative electric charge. (Scientologists don't consider the "mind" to be the brain, but rather a collection of pictures surrounding the person, accumulated throughout one's present and previous lives. Scientologists consider a person to be a spirit — called a "thetan" — that can be affected by these pictures.)

"Close your eyes and think of an apple," offers Hoden as proof that these mental pictures exist. "You can see an image of the apple, right? An engram is also a picture. They're actual images of negative experiences that exist in your mind, and when you address them in auditing you can eliminate their harmful influence." In an effort to "destimulate" the negative effect of an engram, Scientologists work their way up a "bridge" of increasingly expensive auditing courses until they eventually "clear" themselves of this "source of aberrant behavior and psychosomatic illness" and achieve "total freedom."

"A Scientologist starts at the bottom of the bridge and works his way up to total freedom one course at a time," says Hoden. "He or she spends as much time as they need to achieve the results of each level. They decide when they're ready to move up."

The bridge is divided into two sections — "processing" and "training." The lower levels of the processing bridge, according to Hoden, "deal with the mind's effect on the body, which would include addressing the subject of drug dependencies and self-confidence and the psychosomatic source of illness." Four courses comprise this lower level: "Purification Rundown," which promises "freedom from restimulative effects of drug residuals and other toxins"; "Objectives," which puts the Scientologist "in present time and able to control and put order in the environment"; "Drug Rundown," which "releases the Scientologist from the harmful effects of drugs, medicine or alcohol"; and "ARC Straightwire," which assures that the Scientologist "knows he/she won't get any worse." (Sixty percent of the recruits, according to officials, have drug problems.)

The next level of processing includes seven auditing steps that lead up to the much sought after "clear" stage. Grade 0 provides the subject with "the ability to communicate freely with anyone on any subject"; Grade 1 provides the "ability to recognize the source of problems and make them vanish"; Grade 2 provides "relief from the hostilities and sufferings of life"; Grade 3 allows "freedom from the upsets of the past and ability to face the future"; Grade 4 assures that the Scientologist is "moving out of fixed conditions and gaining abilities to do new things"; "New Era Dianetics" proves that the subject is becoming a "clear or well and happy human being"; and "clear" is the stage where the Scientologist is "a being who no longer has his own reactive mind."

After the Scientologist has achieved the state of "clear," he enters the final stages of processing called the "Operating Thetan" ("OT") levels. The OTs "address the person as a spirit, improving the abilities of the spirit with the purpose of achieving total spiritual freedom," according to Hoden. The ability gained in OT courses 1 through 7 is listed as "confidential" in church literature, but includes such secret teachings of L. Ron Hubbard as his "Xenu" theory of man's beginnings. OT 8 is due out this year, while courses 9 through 15 are scheduled for release in coming years.

"Auditing is a very specific process," says Hoden, who himself has reached the level of OT 3, though, like many Scientologists encountered, he consumes vast amounts of coffee, adding to a general air of anxiety in the church (chain-smoking seems *de rigueur*). "It is a scientific, spiritual technology that must be practiced in a specific manner to be effective in helping people achieve spiritual freedom. If it is carried out uniformly, it will not fail."

The person responsible for conducting auditing sessions at these various levels is called an "auditor" (or "minister"). Auditors are trained on the "training" side of the bridge in a series of courses titled "Class 0 Auditor" through "Class 12 Auditor" (though an auditor cannot audit anyone in a processing course higher than he himself has achieved). When conducting an auditing session, the auditor attaches subjects to an instrument called an "electropsychometer" (or E-meter) that consists of two small metal cylinders connected by alligator clips to an elementary control board. As the Scientologist holds a cylinder in each hand, a harmless amount of electricity (about one-half volt) is pumped through his body. The auditor then asks questions regarding possible areas of emotional distress.

At the beginning of most auditing sessions (no matter what level the course), the auditor asks the same three questions of the subject Scientologist who is hooked up to the meter: "Do you have an 'ARC' break?" (Meaning, "Are you upset about

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anything?"); "Do you have any present-time problems?"; and "Has a withhold been missed?" (Meaning, "Is there any transgression you have withheld from someone?").

If there are no specific problems, the auditor asks a series of literally hundreds of predetermined questions specific to that auditing level. For instance, in the lower level of "ARC Straightwire," the auditor asks such questions as, "Can you remember a time when you were happy? Or when you had just finished constructing something? Life was cheerful? Somebody had given you something? You ate something good? You had a friend?" After the subject answers each question, the auditor probes him for "sense-memory" details (e.g., sight, smell, touch, color, emotion) that accompany the memory.

As questions are answered, the auditor monitors a needle gauge to see if it registers any changes in "mental" electrical charge. Experiences in the past that contain pain or emotional trauma are believed to cause a change in that person's electrical charge. The auditing minister then notes the E-meter response in the person's "PC [pre-clear] folder." Case supervisors later examine these notes to assure that the problems will be addressed at later sessions or in more advanced courses. For each type of problem, there is a series of questions intended to neutralize the charge. (The meter will also indicate when the "mental charge" is removed from the traumatic experience, meaning that the engram in question has been adequately dealt with. An engram that is extremely charged is referred to as a "rock slam.")

"The E-meter and auditing are really quite extraordinary," says Tony Hitchman, a former South African journalist who now conducts auditing sessions. "They serve as a wonderfully specific guide to what's troubling a person. Through auditing and the E-meter, we can help that person remove engrams and better his/her life."

Our brief experience on the E-meter proved inconclusive. Though the needle registered in varying degrees when we were questioned about general emotional topics such as our families and love lives, it seemed little more than an instrument reacting to physical responses (rather than "spiritual pictures"), much like a lie detector.

Regardless of whether E-meter auditing is a scientific probe or purely a placebo, it is certainly popular among Scientologists. While being shown through the blue building by Hoden, we witnessed literally hundreds of church members auditing and being audited in the deep recesses of the former hospital. Though we were not allowed to question Scientologists as they were auditing, many church members interviewed after the session expressed unqualified raves for the process that is the backbone of Scientology study.

"Scientology auditing has added a lot of meaning to my life," said Barbara Clarke, a 60-year-old former chemist and teacher who has studied Scientology for 18 years and served as a field auditor since 1975. "I got involved because I knew there had to be more to life than just getting up, working and going back to bed. From the very first lecture I attended, Scientology made so much sense. I know auditing works, and I've never felt any doubts."

Phil Gilbert, a 31-year-old plumbing company executive who began Scientology auditing after reading *Dianetics* in 1974,

typically shared Clarke's enthusiasm. "Scientology is the only logical explanation of how the mind works that I've come across," he says. "Auditing has been invaluable. I studied piano as a kid but had forgotten how to play. My mind had just blocked out that talent. But after just a few auditing sessions I suddenly remembered, and I've been playing and writing ever since. It's really something."

Jonathan Hawks credited a chance Scientology encounter in 1968 with increasing his communicative abilities. "I was having a lot of problems stemming from my frustrated theater career," said 52-year-old Hawks, who now works as a computer operator. "One day while my analyst was hospitalized, I happened to see an advertisement for a Scientology lecture and I thought, 'Why not try it?' As soon as I started auditing, I turned my problems around. I could finally communicate with people."

Even many former members who claim to have been embittered by their experiences with the church say they believe that they benefited from Scientology auditing. "I achieved some benefits," remarked Jon Zegel, who spent 10 years with the church before leaving to help establish an independent auditing group. "I'm more emotionally stable, and there *were* improvements in my life."

Countering this are, of course, the inevitable failures. While no statistics exist about whether auditing has been perceived by a majority of the participants as beneficial — the church argues that there are more current members undergoing auditing than ex-members — certainly there is at least a vocal minority professing problems from the process.

More objective analysis of auditing is hard to come by (the Periodical Index lists no scientific studies in medical or psychological journals), and independent psychologists and psychiatric professionals are reluctant to be quoted by name, noting that one colleague who did criticize auditing is being sued by the church, which has built a reputation for litigiousness.

However, one L.A therapist who worked with a former Scientologist said: "A lot of the practices these guys use are very close to the truth, but I suspect it's very dangerous for the average person because there's a tendency toward coercive, rigid misuse of otherwise good material. In this patient's case, it was hard for him to have an individualistic view. He saw everything in terms of Scientology's world view and jargon. It's clearly not for everybody."

Still another L.A. therapist who worked with a former Scientologist noted: "The process of simply having these auditing questions put to him didn't help him. He had serious self-esteem problems and he needed aggressiveness training and emotional release so he could learn to express himself. The auditing was too passive for that. I suspect it doesn't work on many people for that reason, and also because it doesn't truly give them a basis to understand the underlying causes of their behavior."

"Nancy," 42, is one such example. She claims she left the church after eight years because "I wasn't getting out of it what I thought I would. I had a drinking problem, and my self-esteem was low because of it. I'd heard from a friend that auditing was supposed to cure people of alcoholism. But I took courses for seven years, spending $12,000, then left. I went back for another year a year later to give it a second chance and spent another $1,000, but I still wasn't making progress. I was still drinking. Then I enrolled in Alcoholics Anonymous and I haven't had a drink since September 1984. Auditing just didn't work for me."

Yet another former member, "Betty" (who also requested anonymity), says she spent more than $80,000 during her 14 years of auditing. "They kept telling me just a little more auditing would solve my problems," she says. "But all it did was make them $80,000 and make me feel worse about myself."

Knowledgeable observers told the *Weekly* that they believe Scientology does have some positive effect, much of it coming from three sources: a) that Scientology tends to attract many young drug-damaged, truly "lost" personalities who benefit from the structure, as they would from any rigid-rule behavior systems such as prevail in many drug treatment programs; b) that many of Scientology's subjects have so little intercourse with themselves, or self-reflection, that even what they can pick up from the auditing process is itself the beginnings of self-awareness and therefore changed behavior; and c) the "placebo" effect — the fact that Scientologists believe themselves to be part of a process that helps them, and so they move through life with more confidence and fewer anxieties, creating their own more positive realities.

So what's the problem? If even many church critics are satisfied that the auditing process has improved their lives, why has Scientology been the center of so much controversy?

Payment Before Enlightenment

"Total freedom" through Scientology does not come cheap. With registered trademarks affixed to every Scientology term and title, Hubbard's religion sometimes more closely resembles K-mart than, say, Catholicism. Scientology's policy of payment before enlightenment is perhaps the leading cause of questions concerning the church's credibility as an altruistic institution. Although Ken Hoden initially dragged his feet in supplying a promised list of auditing fees because, as he put it, "when you walk into a Baptist church or any other church, [finances are] just not something you commonly discuss," he eventually provided a breakdown of prices for Scientology courses and materials.

Scientology's "Donation Rate Card" shows that "public" Scientologists — who comprise the vast majority of church members — can spend more than $1,000 per hour of auditing (purchased in 12½-hour blocks called "intensives") and between $50,000 and $100,000 (and more) to complete the dozens of Scientology courses.

(According to Hoden, staff members of Scientology's Sea Org — the elite group whose members receive only $24 per week allowance plus expenses — receive auditing free of charge, and other staff members receive substantial discounts. Hoden also stressed that "people can get *Dianetics* from a bookstore or library and audit themselves at home for free [up to the "clear" level], or get their processing free as they study to be an auditing minister. However, the "Donation Rate Card" does not spell out this option, advising potential members to "contact the Registrar at your nearest Church of Scientology for individual consultation and estimate." It also mentions only "Scientology churches, missions and field auditors" as outlets for processing services.)

According to Hoden, more than 90 percent of Scientologists enter the bridge by reading *Dianetics* and taking any of several "mini-courses" (such as "Anatomy of the Human Mind") to see if they find Scientology helpful.

The Scientology rate card lists the cost of the lowest-level course on the actual bridge ("Purification Rundown") at $2,000 total, while intensives for the next nine courses up through "New Era Dianetics" cost $4,330. A "clear" level intensive goes for $1,690, while OT intensives range from $1,000 to $8,000. There are also literally hundreds of periphery Hubbard teachings that range in price from $5 to $16,500. "Recommended" E-meters are also for sale, ranging from $873 for the Mark V to $3,493 for the Black Mark VI.

Many Scientologists who work their way up to the top of the bridge eventually spend more because the church historically continues to add "revised" auditing levels, each requiring additional investment before "total freedom" can be achieved. The recent Scientology brochure announcing the addition of a revised OT 5 level provides a good example. The brochure announces a pending "miracle" auditing technology that promises to answer "beyond your wildest dreams" questions about "Ron's breakthrough into the SECOND WALL OF FIRE." The "donation" required is $7,600 per intensive. (Though upwards of five intensives may be needed.)

Ken Hoden is quick to justify Scientology's rates. "There isn't a legitimate religion in the world that doesn't put an emphasis on money," says Hoden. "People know how much our courses cost when they sign up. Besides, you can't put a price on total spiritual freedom." Hoden added that members who question the adding of new study levels "are people who have given up the quest for total freedom. If you talk to people in the church who are up to that point, they're waiting on pins and needles for the new levels to come out. People in the church have no complaints. Besides, without money the church could not expand and bring further hope to mankind."

Current church members also insist that Scientology is worth any price. "I've found it's a great bargain because I'm more in control and therefore able to fulfill my potential and make more money," volunteered Carol Worthey Corns, a 43-year-old professional composer who joined Scientology 15 years ago. "I'd undergone two years of psychotherapy after spending the '60s looking for life's answers in assorted philosophies and the drug culture. But in

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Critical former church members Hana and Jerry Whitfield.

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my first three auditing sessions, I handled a major problem that would have taken me many years and 20 times more money to solve through psychotherapy. Scientology has saved my life at least 10 times. How can you put a monetary value on that kind of help?"

But Scientology's high prices have caused many members to question the church's priorities. One such is "Steve" (who spoke on the condition that his real name not be used). Steve was introduced to Scientology 13 years ago while still in college. He served as a member of Hubbard's staff for eight years, bringing home the then-standard salary of $17 for each of what he describes as "our average six-day, 80-hour work week[s]." Steve claims he spent more than $30,000 on Scientology before joining the staff (borrowing money from his parents and working a door-to-door job on his one day off) before beginning to doubt Scientology's motives.

"When the prices went really high, I started to feel that if Hubbard really thought Scientology worked, he would make it easier, not harder, for people to experience it," says Steve. "Total freedom was available, yet we couldn't afford it."

Jerry Whitfield, who is on the steering committee of FAIR, is another former member who became disillusioned by the church's financial priorities. Whitfield spent eight years and $20,000 in the church before he realized that "though the technology was helpful, the organization was not set up to let people make full use of it. It was arranged to maximize its profit margin."

A History of Controversy

As anyone who follows the news knows, Scientology has been involved in a series of controversial cases, many of them involving vengeful church actions against its critics. (More on this below.) Although the church always paints itself as the victim, its critics suggest that Scientology hasn't been persecuted from the outside, but rather is the victim of warped and misplaced priorities inside the church. The critics — and there are more than the church is willing to admit — assert that the fundamental problems afflicting the church are a direct reflection of the complex personality of the man who sired it, and of the power structure and money-bent nature of the church itself, as divorced from Scientology practices.

Step inside the giant brass doors of Scientology headquarters' Fountain Avenue entrance and you enter a shrine to the legend of Hubbard. Hundreds of proclamations honoring Hubbard from such luminaries as former L.A. Councilwoman Peggy Stevenson, Massachusetts Governor Michael Dukakis and Colorado Senator Gary Hart line the walls. Several portraits and busts of Hubbard are prominently displayed. Collections of his detective, science fiction and Scientology writings are meticulously preserved. Unfortunately for Scientology, it has often proven difficult for church members to separate manufactured legend from reality in Hubbard's life. Official church biographies have at various times described Hubbard as a nuclear physicist, an earner of a Ph.D., and a Navy hero who was crippled, blinded and twice declared dead in battle (but who completely healed his wounds with Dianetics techniques.)"

In fact, Navy records show that Hubbard's war record may have been exaggerated and that he was hospitalized due to minor ulcers and a fall from a ladder. In addition, evidence suggests that Hubbard obtained his Ph.D. from a diploma mill known as Sequoia University after failing his only nuclear-physics class and dropping out of George Washington University. (Hoden claims Hubbard left school because "they couldn't teach him what the human spirit was, so he went elsewhere.)"

Hana Eltringham Whitfield has unique insight into the man who was Lafayette Ron Hubbard. Before leaving the church in 1983, Eltringham Whitfield served as a senior Scientology official for 18 years (after signing the requisite "billion-year contract" with the church), including a stint as a personal aide aboard Hubbard's 320-foot yacht, the Apollo. ("Commodore" Hubbard established a naval motif throughout his church, requiring staff members to wear sailorlike uniforms and giving them various "officer" titles.) Says Eltringham Whitfield of Hubbard: "He was a very shrewd man, but he always wanted to be something more than he really was. He wanted to be a nuclear physicist, a war hero. He was an insecure man in that respect, so he felt the need to romanticize his past."

Ken Hoden dismisses Hubbard's biographical inconsistencies as "errors by former public relations people who have since been removed." But whatever the cause of the confusion, there is no question that Hubbard was ambitious. After a prolific and successful career writing pulp science fiction and detective stories, Hubbard published a thin volume of his Dianetics theories in 1948. He expanded those rudimentary principles in 1949 and published his full Dianetics book in May 1950. The book was a runaway best seller and a favorite among artists, writers and other intelligentsia of the day. (*Dianetics* has sold more than 7 million copies. Scientology officials put total sales of Hubbard's 589 published fiction and non-fiction stories and books at more than 50 million.)

Hubbard took the profits from *Dianetics* and created the Hubbard Dianetic Research Foundation in Elizabeth, New Jersey. When this initial venture proved

unsuccessful, Hubbard moved his foundation first to Kansas, then to Phoenix, where he formed the Hubbard Academy of Scientology in 1954. Later that year, a small group of Hubbard's followers officially established the Founding Church of Scientology, with headquarters in Washington, D.C., and field offices in L.A. Hubbard was named church director and "founder of the Scientology religion." Less than five years after reportedly telling a 1949 convention of sci-fi writers that "if a man really wanted to make a million dollars, the best way would be to start his own religion," Hubbard had taken his own advice. (Although Scientology officials have in the past confirmed the quote but claimed Hubbard was only kidding, others dispute the quote entirely, attributing it instead to George Orwell.)

By then, Hubbard's philosophy had already come under serious attack. His claims that with Dianetics auditing IQs could be greatly increased, that "arthritis vanishes, myopia gets better, heart illness decreases, asthma disappears, stomachs function properly and the whole catalogue of ills goes away and stays away," had led to a 1951 New Jersey investigation for fraudulent medical practices. Similar claims attracted the attention of federal officials shortly after Scientology was founded, and ensuing years would see Hubbard's religion investigated by the governments of Australia, Canada, England, France, New Zealand and South Africa (as well as the U.S.).

Scientology was banned outright in much of Australia from 1965 through 1973. From 1968 through 1980, England barred foreign nationals, including Hubbard, from entering the country to practice Scientology. (Hoden claims that the church received apologies from government officials when the bans were lifted.) French officials in 1978 convicted Hubbard and two Scientology associates (in absentia) of fraudulent medical practices and fined them $7,000, before higher courts overturned these decisions. Such claims have also been the basis of several lawsuits, including one last year in which a Portland woman was awarded $39 million in damages before the judge, perhaps influenced by pressure from thousands of Scientologists protesting the decision, overturned his ruling on the grounds that it violated Scientology's right to freedom of religion.

Ken Hoden confirms that Hubbard's early claims are still taken as gospel by Scientologists. "We're not saying that if you lose a leg we can grow another for you," says Hoden (who stresses that the church "encourages members to see a doctor if they are ill"). "Through auditing, the psychosomatic causes of illness can be addressed. Once these are handled, the body is capable of healing itself." Hoden did, however, reassert that church members — including himself — regularly increase their IQs while studying Scientology.

Another major assertion among Scientologists is that the continual investigations are not only unwarranted but are part of a global conspiracy to destroy the church, orchestrated in part by the psychiatric establishment. (Hubbard often compared psychiatrists to Hitler and Genghis Khan.) "Psychiatry is a self-perpetuating fraud that realizes we can do a better job of helping people without shock treatment and pills," says Hoden, who added that Scientology is now practiced without restriction throughout the world. "The governments who have harassed us are threatened by our investigations into their excesses."

Scientology's claims of government harassment may, in fact, have some validity. The church is a leading expert in the intricacies of the Freedom of Information Act and publishes *Freedom*, a magazine of tough investigative reporting that has broken several stories embarrassing to its primary government targets: the FBI, CIA and IRS. (For full conspiracy details, see sidebar.)

Scientology and the IRS have long been particularly bitter opponents. Despite the controversy surrounding Hubbard, the popularity of his philosophy — and Scientology's bank accounts — grew quickly throughout the '50s. Money came so fast to Scientology that Hubbard, the pulp author who reportedly said he was tired of writing for a penny a word in 1949 — though Scientology officials deny this attribution — was able just 10 years later to buy a 30-room mansion and 57-acre estate in England, originally built for the Maharajah of Jaipur.

Soon after, the IRS began examining the relationship between Hubbard and his church. The years of investigations led to a 1984 U.S. Tax Court ruling that the Church of Scientology of California (CSC) had "made a business of selling religion" and had blocked the IRS from collecting taxes by storing large amounts of cash in a trust fund controlled by high-ranking church leaders. "Money that was supposed to be used strictly for church activities was going to individuals," says IRS spokesman Rob Giannangeli. "That misuse, combined with other violations of public policies on the part of Scientology officials, led us to determine that the Church of Scientology was not acting as a responsible exempt organization."

The 1984 denial of tax exempt status led the IRS to bill Scientology for $1.4 million in back taxes for the target period of 1970-72, with bills for other years to be forthcoming upon investigation. Scientology has appealed the decision to the U.S. Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals and continues doing business as usual. Ken Hoden insists this policy is fair because "we are confident [the court] will overrule the IRS," though he added that a negative court ruling will "affect the church

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throughout the country." But Giannangeli, while confirming that Scientology is technically within the law in still encouraging such donations, questions the practice's propriety.

"If the courts ultimately uphold the IRS decision, Scientologists will have to pay back taxes on any contributions totaling more than $1,000," says Giannangeli. "So if a Scientologist wrote off contributions of $50,000 a year, he's going to have a pretty hefty tax bill."

Allegations that Hubbard's immense wealth (estimated at up to $600 million, though Hoden would only put the figure "in the millions, and we're getting all of it") was due in large part to funds being illegally transferred from his church's accounts have dogged Scientology since its inception. Cash flow, certainly, has rarely been a problem for the church. Scientology bought its Berendo headquarters for $5.5 million in cash in 1976 and continues to make major real estate purchases. Former Scientology employees who once held sensitive financial positions within the church have testified that various subsidiaries were used to transfer church funds illegally to Hubbard's European bank accounts.

But to many Scientology critics, the controversy over financial misappropriation is a secondary concern. To these critics, the true danger of Scientology is the system of "control" used by church officials to keep disgruntled members from reclaiming their money and departing if they feel their funds are being mishandled. Ken Hoden claims that members have that freedom: "If someone says they don't like the way we do things, we say, 'Fine. Leave if you want.' "

But critics assert that Scientology policy and practices are designed to manipulate members to stay (and keep their money) in the church, or, if members do leave, to intimidate the "squirrels" (Scientology-speak for former members) into not criticizing Scientology.

Ideological Totalism?

Juliann Savage is a clinical social worker in the Cult Clinic, six years a non-sectarian affiliate of Jewish Family Services operating out of the United Way building in Van Nuys. Savage has treated more than 70 victims of mind control, from Hare Krishnas to Moonies, in her two and a half years on staff. She insists the 10 former Scientologists with whom she has worked have been her most difficult assignments.

"These people have given their entire lives over to Scientology in exchange for the promise of 'total freedom,' " says Savage. "But what they really get is the exact opposite. Scientology is a textbook example of systematic mind control and totalism."

To support her assertion that brainwashing techniques are an inextricable part of Scientology practice — especially with staff members — Savage refers to one of the world's definitive works on mind control, the much heralded "Chapter 22 — Ideological Totalism" of Dr. Robert Jay Lifton's book entitled *Thought Reform and the Psychology of Totalism*. Here, Lifton describes how such psychological tactics as "milieu control," "mandatory confession" and "language loading" are used to control masses of people (in his specific case, the Communist Chinese). It is Savage's contention that Lifton's theories, although they can be applied to many subcultures, are especially applicable to Scientology.

"What we have with Scientology is a subculture that insists on absolute control of every aspect of a person's life," says Savage as she sips herbal tea in her small Van Nuys office. "Adults are greatly discouraged from having relationships with non-Scientologists. They are worked so many hours per week, either doing staff activities or auditing sessions, that they have no time for outside activities. The church encourages an all-or-nothing, us-versus-them, everything-outside-the-church-is-bad-everything-inside-is-good ideology that can be very harmful. And if you question this, you're labeled a 'suppressive person' who doesn't have the ability to understand. The insular inbreeding in Scientology is incredible."

(Statistics and statements provided by Scientology seem to lend at least partial credence to Savage's claim. Church demographics indicate that nearly half of all Scientologists have family in the church, while Ken Hoden confirms that many Scientology children attend private schools run by Scientologists — such as Delphi in Monrovia — or the Apollo Training Academy, a church-operated afternoon "day-care center" that operates after regular schools let out. "But the church hopes to run its own schools soon," added Hoden.)

One Scientology practice that critics single out as a form of control is the church's "ethics" system. Scientologists are subject to a highly detailed code of ethics drafted by L. Ron Hubbard and governed by "ethics officers" and "justice officers." This ethics code is divided into four categories of "offenses" against the church: "Errors," "Misdemeanors," "Crimes" and "High Crimes."

According to Hoden, "The purpose of 'ethics' is to keep a person living in such a way that auditing can keep them living an ethical life." But former members claim that its motives are less noble.

Jerry Whitfield claims to have served on "several" Committees of Evidence. "They were just a reason to get people out of the church," says Whitfield. "We were instructed by seniors on how to decide cases. If the higher-ups didn't like a certain member, they were history."

Another Scientology policy Savage singles out as a control mechanism is known as "disconnection," which takes two forms, Savage argues. First, current church members are often encouraged by auditing ministers to "disconnect" themselves from "suppressive" relatives. Ken Hoden uses an example from *The Color Purple* to illustrate what he feels is the positive result of such disconnection.

"In *The Color Purple*, Celie was connected to a suppressive husband," explains Hoden. "He used to beat her around and treat her mean. But let's say one day she walked up to the Church of Scientology. We'd tell her, 'Celie, you look like you've got a problem with your husband. We want you to sit down and communicate with your husband and try to work it out.' But if that didn't work, we'd say, 'If you don't disconnect from this person, then your life is going to be miserable forever.' Disconnection is just common sense in some cases. It is left up to the individual, though."

Critics claim, however, that Scientology encourages far more than disconnection from harmful persons, which every psychologist urges. Instead, critics say, Scientologists are often urged to sever ties with loved ones whose only "problem" is their distaste for Scientology — a practice that reinforces the insular, inbred world of "milieu control" criticized by Savage.

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Cult Clinic social worker Juliann Savage.

"Robert" is a former member who agrees with Savage. Last year, after 16 years with the church, the 37-year-old departed. He recalls that shortly after he joined the church, his parents sent him news clippings critical of Scientology. Robert claims his "ethics officer" (who determines if Scientologists stay within the ethical guidelines of the church) told him he had to disconnect from his parents if he was to achieve total freedom.

"Here I was, a 20-year-old kid looking for a little meaning in my life," recalls Robert, "and all of a sudden there's this ethics officer telling me I should never talk to my parents again. In retrospect, I can see that my folks were trying to look out for me. But I did what the ethics officer said. I wrote my parents a letter telling them I never wanted to see or speak to them again."

A second form of disconnection requires church members to sever all ties with Scientologists who leave the church, no matter how close the friendships. This on pain of being labeled "suppressive" themselves. This practice has proved effective in keeping people in the church, since no one wants to lose all their friends. And "disconnection" from the church has been found to be debilitatingly traumatic to a number of people who have left the fold.

"Betty" is one such person. After spending more than 14 years in and $80,000 on the church, she decided "it was just not economically feasible for me to stay." Interviewing her, her pain was still apparent, as it was with other former members who agreed to talk to us.

"The entire year after I left was the

worst time I ever went through," Betty said. "I had lived for many of my Scientology years with the same seven people in a small apartment. We did everything together. We loved each other. But when I said I had to leave, none of these people who I'd known and loved for years would even say hello to me. It was absolutely traumatic."

Robert was also disconnected from longtime friends. "I realized a couple years ago that Hubbard was in this whole thing just for the money and power," he says, adding that he spent $50,000 to reach the highest level of Scientology study (OT-7), only to become disillusioned when the church added "revised" levels. "So I decided to leave. When I officially left the church I tried talking to the friends I had been closest to for years, tried to tell them that I now thought Scientology was a fraud. But they didn't want to hear it. They started ignoring me. When I sent them Christmas cards this year, I got back several disconnection letters."

One letter, from a longtime girlfriend, reads: "This is a disconnection letter. I do not wish *any* [thrice underlined] type of communication from you. You have chosen to be a squirrel and I am a Scientologist. It makes it very black and white. Do not have any comm to [Scientology-speak for "communication with"] me until you have handled your scene and are back in good standing with the church and moving on the bridge (in Scientology, not your squirrel group)." The letter noted that copies had been sent to the church's "International Justice Chief" and the "Advanced Organization Master at Arms."

"[Sending copies to ethics and justice] is to let her masters know that she is a good little robot who is still properly brainwashed," says Robert. "If she'd bothered to talk to me, she'd have found out that I'm not in any 'squirrel group' [a church term for groups of former members who practice Scientology without church sanction]. She's probably scared shitless that her cult-member peers saw her get a card from a suppressive and will file a 'knowledge report' on her. [A church member is required to file such a report if he or she witnesses a fellow member commit such an anti-Scientology crime.] But I don't really blame her — she's just another victim of Scientology's brainwashing techniques."

The church's answer to this is that the only individuals considered to be "suppressive" when they leave the church are, in Hoden's words, "those who are expelled for doing something in violation of the ethical codes and practices of the Church of Scientology. In that case, people from the church should not associate with that person. But if a church member still wants to associate with the expelled person, fine. But he has to leave the church." Hoden denied that this is an intimidating practice, though obviously members find it just that.

In arguing for the "thought control" vision of Scientology, Savage and other critics point to other church practices such as "Rehabilitation Project Force" (RPF) duty, "Training Routines" and "security checks." RPF duty, they say, is forced labor intended to help the church minimize costs, and is used frequently as punishment for church members believed to be out of line.

Though Hoden first explained the RPF as little more than "a work force where church members are assigned so they can get five hours of exercise a day while accomplishing something constructive, like repairing Scientology buildings and mowing lawns," he later conceded that any senior Sea Org member can put any underling on the RPF as punishment for not working up to his ability. "I was RPFed for nine months in 1982," says Hoden. "I had been slacking off in some of my administrative duties. But I liked the RPF. I could have gotten off earlier, but I asked to stay on."

"Who wants to scrub floors or cart trash for a year?" says one former church staffer. "The idea is to make you think twice before doing or saying anything that church officials will RPF you for."

Critics claim also that "training routines" (TRs) are used to control members in a similar fashion. Former Scientologists have testified that in TRs, Scientologists are often made to sit absolutely still without moving at all, not even blinking. They claim this drill is often carried out for hours at a time, every day, for weeks.

While being escorted by Hoden through the deep recesses of the basement of the Scientology "mother church," we inadvertently stumbled upon a TR session. From a distance, we heard a man shouting. When questioned about the source of the screams, Hoden led us to a small room. As we approached, it became clear that the man was shouting "Thank you, thank you" as loudly as he could to a Scientology official. The unusual nature of the scene was not lost on Hoden, who seemed momentarily flustered. "This is a TR," Hoden then explained. "Did you ever know someone who was so timid that you could barely hear him speak? This man is being taught to express himself more loudly and clearly."

"Security checks" are yet another form of control, disgruntled former members allege. These "sec-checks" are performed while a member is hooked up to an E-meter. One sec-check form submitted as evidence in a recent trial included the following questions:

"Have you ever had any unkind thoughts about LRH [L. Ron Hubbard]?" "Have you ever had anything to do with pornography?" "Have you ever assisted in an abortion?" "Have you ever practiced sodomy?" "Have you ever been a newspaper reporter?" "Do you know of any plans to injure a Scientology organization?" "How do you feel about being controlled?" (Hoden confirmed all but the "reporter" and "control" questions, while adding that members are asked only if they had "done" anything against Hubbard.)

To outsiders this is obviously a significant invasion of a person's privacy, but Ken Hoden and many current and former church members insist that the ends justify the means in these practices. "I've been in Scientology for 10 years, and I'm here on my own free will," says Kimberly Nesbig, a non-staff Scientologist who simply takes auditing courses. "Those claims [of brainwashing] are ridiculous. Scientology has saved my life. I was on drugs and on my way out. Scientology has given me the technology to do what I want in life."

"Claims that we're insulated, isolated and out of touch with the world is just pure propaganda," adds Tim Skog, 34, who has served as a Sea Org public-affairs staffer since 1983. "I read the papers, I listen to the radio, I go outside. More than any other religion, we don't lead monastic lives." (Skog added that there is no "us versus the wogs" encouragement in the church. "Definitely us against the psychiatrists, but that's fine.")

Says Mike Rinder, a 30-year-old administrative supervisor who's been with Sea Org since 1973, "I consider [allegations of church mind control] to be a joke."

Other Scientologists also add that their practices are not unlike those of more mainstream religions, an assertion that Juliann Savage is quick to rebut. "The difference with Scientology lies in the degree to which these control practices are carried out and the amount a Scientologist is forced to sacrifice. If a person wants to become a Catholic, they are fully apprised of what they are in for and they are given time to prepare. With Scientology, you are not told that you may have to spend $100,000 or give up your former friends and family.

"The mandatory loss of one's self into the Church of Scientology is more severe than in any other group I've ever dealt with. I don't know of any group whose members are more fearful and intensely angry after they leave."

Breach of Faith?

One particular church policy has been partially at the root of the fear and anger: Scientology's alleged use of personal information in members' "confidential" Pre-Clear (PC) folders, information confessed during auditing. There is substantial evidence that this information has been culled, perhaps to pressure members either into staying in the church or into not criticizing the church if they do leave.

Although Hoden denies such practices ("In all my years here, I have never known of any such action on the part of any church member; the confidentiality of a person's folder is the most sacred rule of Scientology"), testimony and documents supplied by former church members indicate that, with or without Hoden's knowledge, there has been abuse of confidential PC folders. According to the testimony of and an interview with one former Scientology intelligence operative, the now-defunct church intelligence division known as the Guardian's Office asked that files be culled for such desirable PC information as "specific things to use for blackmail such as sexual promiscuity, sexual problems, problems with the family, troubles with parents, any alcoholic problem . . . anything a person would not want others to know about."

Several memos from various church offices to the GO seem to confirm claims that

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PC folders have been culled for incriminating information. One 1972 memo supplied to the *Weekly* clearly notes that "the following data was gotten from [name deleted by the *Weekly*]'s PC folders." It then details a female member's auditing history: "Several self-induced abortions . . . two weeks' psych treatment . . . due to alcohol problems . . . Drug history: Librium, Valium, Miltowns, alcohol, LSD, opium, heroin . . . Son is in jail . . . Connected to a suppressive group . . . probably the IRS . . . That's about it. Love, [name deleted by *Weekly*]."

A second mid-'70s memo (which Hoden claims was not culled from a PC folder but from general church files) graphically details the sex life of another female member: "She slept with four or five men during [an early Scientology course] . . . She has quite a record of promiscuity . . . She let [three men] touch her genitals during sessions . . . She has masturbated regularly since she was 8 years old, mentioning doing it once with coffee grounds . . . and once had a puppy lick her . . ."

Presented with the memos during a recent Sunday morning meeting in the blue building, Hoden was visibly disturbed. "Okay. Fine. Good," he said after a long pause. "But was there ever any mention that this was used against her? She's still with the church. She's testified for us. She knows this exists. I don't know why someone in the GO would have needed to see this, but I can honestly say that I don't know of one case in the Church of Scientology [where] stuff in a person's folder has been used against them. And this stuff is 10 years old. What I'm saying is very simply this: Nothing has ever been used against a person out of their folders."

California Superior Court Judge Paul Breckenridge found differently in a 1984 decision in which he agreed with Scientology's critics that the church has abused the "confidential" folders for unethical purposes. "Each [of the former Scientologists] has broken with the movement for a variety of reasons, but at the same time, each is still bound by the knowledge that the church has in its possession his or her most inner thoughts and confessions, all recorded [in PC folders] or other security files of the organization, and that the church or its minions is fully capable of intimidation and other physical and psychological abuse if it suits their ends," wrote Breckenridge, siding with several former members — including former church archivist Gerald Armstrong — sued by Scientology. "The record is replete with evidence of such abuse . . . The practice of culling supposedly confidential PC folders or files to obtain information for purposes of intimidation and/or harassment is repugnant and outrageous."

The GO was officially disbanded in 1981, and the church now officially disavows its activities, which Hoden insists are not currently being duplicated by other church departments. However, several former church members told the *Weekly* that abuse of PC folders continues. One former member claims he was contacted as recently as last month by a church operative who warned him that "if I didn't sign a confession implicating myself and my friends in trumped-up crimes against the church, he would go to authorities with information from my folders that might be incriminating."

Told this, Hoden again adamantly denied that such abuse of PC folders could happen under the "strict" guidelines in force today. He insisted it was unfair to quote the former member anonymously because the church could not then rebut the allegation. "Maybe the reason they want anonymity is because they are lying to you," said Hoden, and later added, "Get me the name of the person making this allegation and I'll report it to the police."

"The thing that I find disgusting," Hoden said with an edge to his voice, "is that someone gave those memos to you. Somebody went and dug them up and said, 'Wow, boy, this will do it . . . ' just so they could get some negative article in your paper. And that's a shame."

The Minutemen at the Ready

[A 'suppressive person' is] Fair Game. May be deprived of property or injured by any means by a Scientologist without discipline of the Scientologist [sic]. May be tricked, sued or lied to or destroyed.

—L. Ron Hubbard

On February 15, six police officers stood near the door of Leo Baeck Temple, awaiting the confrontation. They had been called by leaders of Freedom for All in Religion (FAIR), a group of former Church of Scientology members who were sponsoring a speech that evening by Boston attorney and anti-Scientology leader Michael Flynn. Flynn, who has represented many former church members in lawsuits against the church, was appearing to discuss a new class-action suit intended to compel Scientology to release PC folders of former members. Because of the nature of the evening's topic, FAIR leaders anticipated a visit from a group of Scientologists who call themselves the "Minutemen" (because of their ability to mobilize quickly). To members of FAIR and other church critics, they are known as "Scientology's 'Fair Game' Gestapo." (Though Hoden stresses that Hubbard's "Fair Game" doctrine was officially rescinded 20 years ago, it has emerged through the years as a rallying cry among former church members.)

Current church members allegedly had made their presence felt at the temple throughout the week preceding the speech. A prominent Jewish Scientologist had phoned temple leaders to warn that Michael Flynn attracted troublemakers. Other anonymous calls stressed similar warnings. And according to the temple's event coordinator, Nancy Lachman, "A group of men came by claiming to be security for the Flynn speech. They asked to check out the auditorium. But since I hire all security, I knew they were not who they said they were."

Fearing confrontation, FAIR leaders refused entry to what they say were 70 known Scientologists. Despite the tight security, disruptions began less than a minute into Flynn's speech to the 200 FAIR members. A man stood up in the audience and shouted, "Isn't it true, Mr. Flynn, that you are in this for the money?" The heckler was quickly escorted from the auditorium amidst a hail of boos, but minutes later another man stood up and shouted at Flynn. Then another. And another. Before the evening's conclusion, nearly a dozen alleged Minutemen were escorted from the temple.

"The hassle gets frustrating, but I'm used to it," said Flynn, who has been sued by the church more than a dozen times. Flynn asserts he has been followed by Scientology detectives (including two who took the room next to his at the hotel where he stayed for the speech) and has been set up for the forgery of a $2 million check written on a Hubbard account. "It was actually a quieter evening than I expected."

Hoden dismisses Flynn's charges with accusations of opportunism, describing Flynn as a major "point man" in the global conspiracy against the church. (See "Conspiracy" sidebar.) Flynn does indeed have a financial stake in his cases against the church. But irrespective of his motives, the Church of Scientology's history of harassment of its "enemies," real or imagined, undermines its claims of humanistic priorities.

"Minutemen" line courthouse halls.

The seeds for aggressive defense were sown by Hubbard himself in several policy statements, which were fueled by increasing governmental and journalistic attacks. Hubbard was convinced that the "central agency" carrying out the concerted, global conspiracy to destroy Scientology was the World Federation for Mental Health, which he believed controlled the FBI, the CIA, the IRS, the Better Business Bureau, the American Medical Association, the American Psychiatric Association, and the news media.

"Only attacks resolve threats," wrote Hubbard in 1966. " . . . Spot [anyone] who is investigating us. Start investigating them promptly for FELONIES or worse using our own professionals, not outside agencies . . . Start feeding lurid, blood sex crime actual evidence [sic] on the attackers to the press. Don't ever submit tamely to an investigation of us. Make it rough, rough on the attackers all the way . . . Remember: Intelligence we do with a whisper. In-

vestigations we do with a yell."

To carry out these intelligence and investigative activities, Hubbard formed the Guardian's Office (GO) in 1966 and named as director his third wife, Mary Sue. Headquartered in Los Angeles, the GO's purpose, according to Mrs. Hubbard, was "to sweep aside opposition sufficiently to create a vacuum into which Scientology could expand."

"Use all possible lines of approach to obtain files, i.e., job penetration, janitor penetration, suitable guises utilizing covers, etc.," instructed one GO policy. It wasn't long before these counterattack theories were put into practice. Hoden, himself a critic of the GO, confirms that the GO soon had agents working in the AMA and California Attorney General's Office, and breaking into IRS, Justice Department and FBI offices. The World Federation of Mental Health was (coincidentally?) burglarized of stationery and a list of delegates for an upcoming conference. Soon after, those delegates received notices on Federation stationery that the location of their conference had been changed from Washington, D.C., to Havana, Cuba.

The AMA was the target of an alleged GO campaign in the mid-1970s. Known as the "Sore Throat" case, it involved the leaking of international AMA memoranda detailing its often unethical political maneuvers and secret attempts to kill a 1970 generic-drug bill that it publicly supported. An FBI investigation showed that the memos were most likely leaked by a Scientologist who had recently been hired by the AMA — but who also served as Pacific Secretary of the GO. (This operative's husband had been director of Scientology's covert activities in Washington, D.C., and was later indicted by a federal grand jury for bugging a high-level IRS meeting in which Scientology's tax-exempt status was discussed.)

Scientology officially disavowed itself of any knowledge of the "Sore Throat" case and no charges were brought against the Scientologist who had leaked the memoranda. But information made public by the leaks led to IRS, Post Office, Federal Election Commission and congressional investigations into the AMA before the case blew over.

The GO's covert harassment was not restricted to operations against faceless government agencies. Individuals who church officials claim were "attacking" Scientology were the target of GO efforts as well. A Hubbard policy released at the GO's inception offered a blueprint for Scientology operations against individuals:

"As soon as one of these threats starts, you get a Scientologist or Scientologists to investigate noisily. You find out where he or she works or worked, doctor, dentist, friends, neighbors, anyone [sic] and phone 'em up and say, 'I am investigating Mr./Mrs. . . . for criminal activities as he/she as been trying to prevent Man's freedom and is restricting my religious freedom.' Just be NOISY — it's very odd at first, but makes fantastic sense and WORKS."

An earlier Hubbard statement was even more explicit: "People who attack Scientology are criminals. Politician A stands up on his hind legs in a parliament and brays for condemnation of Scientology. When we look him over we find crimes — embezzled funds, moral lapses, a thirst for young boys — sordid stuff."

Perhaps the most damaging GO operation against an individual had as its target one Paulette Cooper, a New York freelance journalist whose 1971 book *The Scandal of Scientology* examined early Scientology abuses. Upon publication of the book (which Cooper later admitted contained numerous factual inaccuracies), members of the GO initiated a comprehensive campaign, the purpose of which was, according to files uncovered in a 1977 FBI raid of the church's L.A. offices, "getting [Cooper] incarcerated in a mental institution or in jail." (A file labeled "P.C.'s Personal Diaries" was also found.) Scientology quickly filed several lawsuits, and Cooper's publisher chose to cease publication.

In 1973, Cooper found herself under federal investigation on bomb threat and perjury charges after a Scientology undercover agent allegedly stole her personal stationery and used it to forge two threatening letters to a high-ranking Scientology official. Only after two years of unsuccessfully defending herself in the courts did Cooper agree to take a "truth serum" test, which she passed. Cooper's total costs in clearing her name exceeded $28,000. (Hoden says that the church has since paid Cooper's attorney's fees under the condition that Cooper not speak to the press regarding the case, and has "mended the fence" for this old GO activity.)

The GO's most embarrassing operation took place in 1976, when two Scientologists were caught late at night inside the Federal Courthouse in Washington, D.C. One of the intruders turned government witness, and an ensuing investigation led to the conviction of nine top Scientology leaders — among them, Mary Sue Hubbard — on conspiracy and theft charges. Although Mrs. Hubbard appealed the conviction to the U.S. Supreme Court on the grounds that the FBI raid on the Scientology offices that followed her indictment (in which 90,000 documents, burglar tools and electronic surveillance equipment were confiscated) was unconstitutional, she was sentenced to five years in prison (of which she served one) and fined $10,000.

Church documents provide startling insight into the detailed nature of the GO's intelligence and subsequent cover-up operations. One 1975 document (marked at the top, "DO NOT COPY!!!") notes as its "PURPOSE: To clean . . . files of legally actionable evidence against the GO and it personel [sic]." After first explaining the legal definition of "evidence," the memo describes the proper way to "vet" (or censor) internal intelligence reports of "illegal evidence."

"Using a razor blade, cut out all parts of reports written by us that would indicate something illegal was happening, already did happen or was being planned," reads the memo. " . . . When shredding all the pieces you have to cut out please ensure you put the particle into the shredder so that the teeth of the shredder cut the line and not between the lines (put it in crosswise)."

The same memo outlines the types of information that should be vetted: "Evidence that anything was stolen by one of our guys . . . Implications of posing as a government agent . . . Evidence of tapping phone lines or illegal taping of conversations . . . Mentions of harassment of an individual . . . Any evidence of bribery . . . Wordings like 'this will get him' or 'let's wipe him out' . . . Any mentions of entrapment setting up someone to commit a crime either directly or indirectly."

Hoden is quick to admit that "a handful" of GO members were out of control. But he repeatedly stresses that "we got rid of the GO and all those people in 1981 and restructured the church to make sure those abuses never happen again. It's unfair to keep criticizing us for things that took place 10 years ago and have since been rectified."

In fairness, there *is* another light in which to view all these activities. According to Hoden, "there was not one criminal violation on the part of the church from 1950 until 1966" — but then, faced with a coordinated attack from government agencies (see sidebar story), the church decided it had to strike back — and the GO overdid it. "The fools cost us a big black eye," Hoden says.

Scientology president Jentzsch goes even further, claiming the GO was driven to some of its acts by "agent provocateurs" infiltrated into the organization by government agencies under the federal Cointelpro program (for more information, again see sidebar). Although he cites only one person by name — Michael Meisner, a former member who became a key government witness in the trial against Mary Sue Hubbard — Jentzsch notes accurately that there is considerable documentation that U.S. government agencies did mount a Cointelpro operation against the church and that the use of infiltrated agents to drive organizations into acts they would not otherwise commit was standard Cointelpro fare. Jentzsch, however, does not deny that the GO did some ugly things on its own. "So we've had some bad people do some bad things. But look at the whole person. Look at who we are now."

Hoden confirmed, however, the existence of the Minutemen, describing them as "a loose organization of church people who stay in very close contact with each other and can be instantly called to respond very quickly to a problem." Hoden stresses, however, that "they rally against *court* attacks on the church, not against individuals." One such Minutemen operation, said Hoden, took place last year when thousands of Scientologists converged on a Portland, Oregon courthouse to protest a $39-million penalty against the church. (That decision was subsequently overturned and must be retried.) Another occurred last November, when 3,000 Scientologists jammed three floors of the L.A. County Courthouse to block public access to the OT-3 "Xenu" documents temporarily made public by a judge in the Wollersheim trial.

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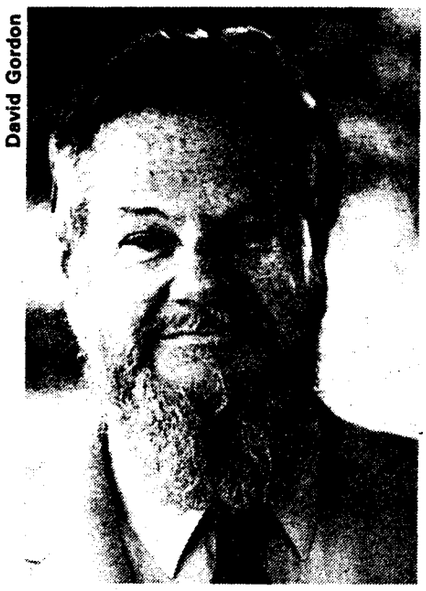
David Gordon

Early church member Fred Stansfield, alleged "Minutemen victim."

Nevertheless, Hoden insists that the disruption of the FAIR meeting at the Leo Baeck Temple was not a church-sanctioned Minutemen effort. "If I had wanted to organize something, we could have put 4,000 people in there," says Hoden. "But I feel they have a First Amendment right to do what they're doing, though what they're trying to do is create a fight, create a disturbance so it'll get covered by the press and make the church look like it's something it's not. They sent a mailer to people within the church announcing the meeting. That's really stupid. That's like running into a Jewish temple and saying it was great what Hitler did to the Jews. But, no, we didn't do anything out there."

Hoden added that he would definitely know of any such harassment operations. However, in a letter to temple Rabbi Leonard Beerman dated February 13, Hoden made it clear that such harassment can take place without his knowledge and that he has no intention of intervening or stopping it. "[Scientologists] are, as a rule, strong-minded, independent and ready to voice their opinions and feelings," wrote Hoden. "If any of these protests have been distressing to your temple's staff, I apologize. However, I cannot control the individual lives of members of my congregation, nor would I consider doing so."

When asked on another occasion about a recent "Stamp Out Squirrel Tech" demonstration at an independent auditing center (the Advanced Ability Center in Santa Barbara) — one of 20 such incidents identified by church critics as alleged Minutemen operations over the past two years — Hoden admitted, "Oh yeah, I heard something about that."

Church critics adamantly dispute Hoden's assertion that the Minutemen do not carry out church-sanctioned, GO-like harassment campaigns. David Mayo, who claims he was abducted by Scientology agents and "imprisoned" on ethics charges in Gilman Hot Springs (the Scientology compound near Palm Springs where Hubbard resided before going underground) before "escaping," as he puts it, to form the Advanced Ability Center, claims that Scientologists and private investigators hired by the church have harassed him.

"They've held demonstrations out front, physically attacked members and circulated 'wanted' posters putting a price on our heads," says Mayo. "I feel Scientology is a religion or philosophy, and I feel people who believe in it should be allowed to practice it . . . [The attitude of church leaders] is a huge contradiction. The church says it can give you the ability to reach self-determination, yet it handles dissent in exactly the opposite way."

Three alleged Minutemen incidents involved Fred Stansfield, a disaffected church member who was one of Hubbard's earliest followers in the mid-'50s. Stansfield claims he received a death threat from a Scientologist "friend" on March 24, 1984 (a threat reported to the FBI). An October 20, 1985, incident allegedly involved a physical attack on Stansfield by four long-time church members who also pelted his house with eggs, while a November 11 attack saw Stansfield verbally harassed by several people who identified themselves as Minutemen.

"These Minutemen and Hoden's office work as the new GO," says Stansfield. "The harassment is even more prevalent now than it used to be."

Hoden dismisses the claims of Mayo and Stansfield — and, indeed, of most church critics — as a combination of sour grapes and financial motivation. "We kicked these people out of the church because we didn't want them anymore," says Hoden, who notes that a federal court judge recently ruled that Mayo must refrain from using certain religious scriptures until it is determined whether they were stolen from the church. "And many are now involved in lawsuits against the church. But those few people aren't our problem. They're just pawns being manipulated. Our actual problem is that we have cut across various plans by psychiatric associations and certain people in government, backed with millions of dollars, to control man with drugs. That's our real problem."

• • •

None are more hopelessly enslaved than those who falsely believe they are free.
—J.W. von Goethe

The question of who is enslaved and who is free — Scientologists or their critics — is a matter of personal judgment. However, two things seem evident. First, Scientologists should be allowed to practice their religion as long as it operates within the law. The majority of Scientologists seem happy (whether they are being controlled or not) and the First Amendment guarantees their right to freely choose their beliefs. However, it's equally clear that if Scientology is to achieve the mantle of "major religion" it insists it deserves, it must set aside its hyperparanoia and consider the constructive criticisms offered by people who obviously care about the Scientology process.

Whether Scientology's problems are due to a global conspiracy outside the church or misplaced priorities and a "greedy, power-hungry" ruling elite inside, as critics charge, or a combination of both, the stubborn insistence of church leaders that the Church of Scientology is without fault — and that everyone who offers criticism is a "wog" pawn of psychiatrists and politicians who must be silenced — betrays, at best, an irresponsible tunnel vision or, at worst, a dangerous misunderstanding of the First Amendment and the church's own putative creed.

As one former member puts it: "The Scientology process has done wonderful things for me and can help a lot of people. But the people who run the church have to realize that these problems of high prices and aggressive defense are like engrams blocking Scientology's road to total freedom. Until they identify these problems and work to solve them, they can't fault people for questioning their motives." ■

The Government's War Against SCIENTOLOGY

Scientologists say the church is engaged in "a war for the human spirit" against a global conspiracy involving psychiatrists, the Rockefeller family, the International Criminal Police Organization (Interpol) and the U.S. government (including the FBI, CIA and IRS). According to Ken Hoden, Scientologists feel that although each of these diverse entities have different reasons for attacking the church, their enemies have banded together as one to achieve a common end — "destroying the Church of Scientology."

Whether a conspiracy as vast as this exists is problematical, but certainly Scientology has come under unwarranted investigation and unconstitutional attack from most if not all of these agencies, to an extent that might make any organization paranoid and defensive.

Scientology's adversarial relationship with the psychiatric community doubtless began with L. Ron Hubbard, whose 1950 *Dianetics* vilified Freudian psychiatry. Hubbard frequently compared psychiatrists to Hitler and Genghis Khan throughout the final 35 years of his life. In return, in the early '50s psychiatrists were quick to accuse Hubbard of quackery for his promises of what auditing could do. As the governmental and journalistic investigations into his controversial new religion multiplied during the mid-'50s, Hubbard focused his attention on the World Federation for Mental Health, a psychiatric society he claimed orchestrated worldwide criticism of the church.

Scientology officials still regard the psychiatric community, fearful of Hubbard's "bridge to total freedom," as the driving force behind the church's problems.

Scientologists believe, in fact, that it was a prominent German psychiatric clinic, one of the Max Planck Institutes, that first drew the International Criminal Police Organization (Interpol) into a "conspiracy" against the church. The Max Planck Institutes, named after the Nobel Prize-winning physicist, were organizations reconstituted after World War II from the Kaiser Wilhelm Society for the Advancement of Science and its subsidiary societies. A German Scientology magazine noted the connections between the Max Planck Institute's psychiatric wing and its predecessor, the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute for Brain Research, believed responsible for the murder of 275,000 people during the Nazi era. Scientologists claim the Planck Institute arranged for Interpol to execute an elaborate smear campaign against the church.

To counter this, one of the church's "reform" groups, the National Commission on Law Enforcement and Social Justice, soon began an investigation of Interpol. Scientologists say its commission discovered that Interpol, until as recently as 1972, had been led by former Nazis. (Their information was accurate.) The allegation infuriated Interpol leaders, who then turned to the U.S. government. Scientologists say the Nixon administration's shadowy Counter-Intelligence Program (Cointelpro) devised an international network of "harassment and black propaganda" against the church. (Cointelpro, of course, achieved notoriety in the Watergate era for its illegal activities against American citizens exercising their rights to freedom of speech and assembly. Two high-ranking FBI officials were ultimately sentenced to prison terms for their roles in Cointelpro.)

According to church officials, government operations involving the FBI, CIA and IRS had sought to undermine Scientology's credibility since the program's earliest days. "The strength of those government groups lies in control and manipulation," says Ken Hoden. "We encourage freedom, so there was immediate conflict. Cointelpro has since infiltrated and disrupted our church, accused us of selling drugs, and generally slandered our church around the world, just like it did to Martin Luther King."

Although there is considerable documented evidence that some Cointelpro actions against the church took place (including FBI insertion of undercover agents in the church), their extent is not clear. But certainly government agencies sought to get other agencies involved in a campaign against the church and, as Scientologists charge, its freedoms were not respected.

Whether or not at Interpol's prompting, the church and the U.S. government have been at each other's throats for more than 30 years. Scientology's Founding Church in Washington, D.C., was listed on Richard Nixon's infamous IRS "enemies list," along with such groups as the Black Panthers and Students for a Democratic Society. Scientologists claim several key letters between Scientology churches have mysteriously found their ways to IRS offices in Fresno and Ogden, Utah. And the FBI staged a massive raid on the church's Berendo headquarters in 1977 after Scientology operatives were caught in federal courthouses trying to steal government files on Scientology.

The conflict has escalated in recent years as the church, desperate to ward off harassing government investigations and illegal government actions, stepped up its counter-investigation against the government. Scientology's *Freedom* magazine has broken several major stories embarrassing to its government targets, including a report of the Army's mid-1960s experiments in which unsuspecting travelers in Washington, D.C.'s National Airport were exposed to dangerous bacteria in simulation of a germ-warfare attack. *Freedom* has also printed confidential IRS memos documenting questionable IRS tax auditing practices, and the magazine continues to solicit testimony on IRS abuses through prominent newspaper ads.

According to church leaders, the current point man for the "legal assault" against Scientology is Michael Flynn, a Boston-based attorney who has represented several former church members in lawsuits against the church. Ken Hoden accuses Flynn of carrying out a "premeditated and very exact plan to destroy the church," backing the claim with alleged notes removed from Flynn's trash by Scientologists which detail a plan to enlist witnesses against the church, though not beyond what any good lawyer would do to support his case. Scientologists also accuse Flynn of forging a $2 million check against a personal Hubbard account, a charge that is currently being investigated by a Boston grand jury.

Flynn denies these accusations, and in turn accuses the church of hiring private detectives to follow him around the country and harass his family. Hoden concedes that detectives hired by church attorneys have followed Flynn around the country, but claims the act was justified. "He [Flynn] has worked with the government and taken money to sue the church from the Rockefellers, who feel that Scientology is a threat to their psychiatry and pharmacological interests, in an orchestrated effort to bring down the church." (Documents show that Flynn has received about $135,000 in grants from a Rockefeller philanthropic trust.)

Critics insist that church leaders have invented this conspiracy scenario to unify members into an "us against them" army fighting for mankind's freedom. But Ken Hoden and other church leaders express unwavering confidence in their conspiracy theory. "The proof is there," says Hoden. "Who's harassing whom?"

"Everybody always points at what the church has done, which was only to defend ourselves," says church president Heber Jentzsch. "But the real story that nobody wants to look at is what was done to us by government agencies acting illegally. *That*'s the story." ■ —R.C.

MONEY PROBLEMS

AS NOTED IN THE MAIN ARTICLE, the one subject church leaders would not discuss in detail is money — notably, how much the church takes in and where it specifically goes. With 40,000 members in L.A alone, some of them spending tens of thousands on auditing, the sums can clearly be large. A 1974 internal memo indicated the church grossed $24 million that year; former Scientologists have put the current gross at $100 million, a figure that cannot be proven or disproven.

What happens to the funds? In a pamphlet entitled "Where Your Money Goes," L. Ron Hubbard once told church members it goes toward administrative expenses and "fighting the worldwide conspiracy" against the church, particularly for court costs. He denied receiving any money other than the minimum salary, despite persistent reports to the contrary. Ken Hoden now will only say most church funds go for "dissemination" — to get the message out.

Critics are not so sure. They point to the fact that the church leadership is a closed operation: Top leaders were originally appointed by Hubbard and tend to be promoted on the basis of how many recruits — and how much money — they've brought it. They also note that an IRS investigation found that large sums were directed to individual church leaders and that former members have testified this was the case. Especially now with Hubbard's death, the critics point out, the church — and all its money — is controlled by a handful of people accountable to no one but themselves. No democratization of the church seems to be in sight, either — there are no elected trustees (local trustees are appointed) or elected officials, as exist in many other churches. When this is pointed out to Scientology leaders, they often cite the Catholic church — "no church is richer than the Catholic church," Hoden says — as a traditional example of a religion that does not divulge its financial resources and in which church officials are appointed, not elected — though the Pope is elected.

None of this stops critics from questioning whether the small group that controls the church is enriching itself to a substantial degree, despite their adamant denials to the contrary. Doubtless, the questions will remain until such time as the church democratizes its internal operations. ■

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— *Chick Corea*

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"Since learning about Scientology several years ago, my abilities as a singer and composer have continued to grow. I also care for others and myself more. I understand and control my emotions better and it becomes increasingly easy to decide what I want to do in life and then make that happen."

— *Gayle Moran*

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Award-winning Jazz Composer and Musician
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Singer, Composer, Recording Artist

Julia Migenes-Johnson
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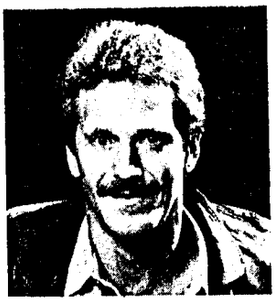
"For fifteen years, no more pills, no more weight problems, no more self-destruction. I can concentrate on living a healthy, happy life with a genuine feeling of positiveness."

"Through Scientology, my abilities have expanded, and my versatility and freedom as an artist have increased. Whatever is good in me has always been there, and that's me. The fact that anyone can see that at all is entirely due to Scientology.

"The fact that I am winning, the fact that I come back from losses (and each time I have come back I go further than before) — all that is entirely because of Scientology. Without Scientology, I would not have survived as an artist."



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"I have found that through my use of Scientology technology, not only can I handle the pressure in a positive manner, but my ability to communicate in the courts and with my clients has greatly improved. I have been more effective in the legal battles I am fighting, since success in the courtroom often relies more on my ability to communicate than on the actual law itself.

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