

Frantic father fears for son

By RENE POLLETT
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'They've turned his mind around,' says worried dad

The Church of Scientology has turned a 24-year-old Winnipeg man into a different person, his father claimed yesterday.

The worried father, who asked to remain unnamed, said his son has been involved in the organization for about two years, and even though he works for the church, he has nothing to show for it.

"I've asked him a few times, 'What the hell are you doing there seven days a week?' " he said. "They've turned his mind around."

The son got involved in the Church of Scientology through a friend, and his wife is also a member of the church, he said.

"They got married last November ... I couldn't get over the wedding. I walked in-

to the motel (the wedding party was staying in). Each one of them had the Ron Hubbard book with them."

L. Ron Hubbard is the founder of the Church of Scientology, and his beliefs are in his book Dianetics.

In May, after the couple had been married about six months, the church sent his son's wife to Los Angeles for a course, the father said.

"I couldn't see what kind of marriage that could create," he said.

The man said his son, who has also attended Scientology courses in Toronto and Los Angeles, claims his wife will only be there for six to eight months, and will be a supervisor when she returns.

Until then his son is living with him for free, he said.

"I can see what my son is taking me for," the man said. "He's a sensible, intelligent kid. I love him. He's my son."

"I taught him. He got an education. (But) because he's over 18 years of age,

they can do what they like with him."

The man said he has tried unsuccessfully to contact people and organizations who might be able to help get his son out of what he calls "a cult."

He also contacted his MLA to try to get the province or federal government to take some action against the church.

"They've got time to put new taxes in place. They've got time to freeze the wages. But they haven't got time for this." "Politicians are sound asleep on this thing."

But the man said he's reached the point where he wants the public to know what's happened to his son.

"This is tough ... but these are the facts."

The man's son couldn't be reached for comment.

Scientology called 'daddy' of cults

By RENE POLLETT
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The Church of Scientology is a cult interested in making money, claims a local cult expert.

Gordon Gillespie of the Manitoba Cult Awareness Centre calls Scientology — which is linked to the drug-rehabilitation program Narconon, currently fund-raising in the city — the "daddy" of cults.

Gillespie said Scientology's church status gives it tax breaks, but it doesn't have churches and services like other reli-

gions.

"I'd like to say 'No, they're not successful,' but they're still here and they're persistent."

Winnipeggers who find flyers in their mail advertising a book called Dianetics, written by Scientology founder L. Ron Hubbard, should be aware it's a big money-maker for the organization, he said.

And people who get involved in the controversial group could end up in expensive training courses, he said.

"What they attempt to do is make you a better person. They have their own funny

system for evaluating you. They say, 'We see all these weaknesses,' and they get (money) from you and they sell you a course to improve yourself," Gillespie claimed.

"That course leads to another and another."

And once a person becomes heavily involved in Scientology it's very difficult to get them out, he alleged.

"People who counsel kids coming out of cults are really reluctant to deal with Scientologists," he claimed. "It's really difficult."