

# The cult of evil

Hubbard's church grew out of fiction

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TO his followers Lafayette Ron Hubbard is a Messiah whose teachings have inspired millions to change their lives.

He founded the Church of Scientology, the cult condemned by a judge yesterday as 'sinister' and 'corrupt'.

It has grown into a world-wide organisation with six million members, 200,000 of them in this country.

The cult has an annual turnover of £2 million in Britain alone, money raised mainly from expensive counselling courses which members are required to attend.

Hubbard—known to his sect as L. Ron Hubbard and described in the High Court by Mr Justice Latey as a charlatan and a liar—conceived the plan for Scientology more than 30 years ago.

He developed it from the ideas he had for his job as a part-time science fiction writer.

Hubbard, now 73, says the cult is based on reincarnation and the removal, by processes thought up by himself, of bad thoughts and



'Up the Bridge' in yachting gear: L. Ron Hubbard. A charlatan and liar, said the judge

Once a follower is 'cleared' of such thoughts and deeds he becomes in the cult's jargon an Operative Thetan and begins spiritual passage 'up the Bridge'.

Hubbard, a recluse rarely seen even by his family in his later years, is at present in hiding in Southern California with three teenagers.

Meanwhile his church is under

France and Germany, and a recent court hearing in the U.S. was told that he had 'milked' the cult of £80 million.

Hubbard, born in Tilden, Nebraska, spent his early life on a farm. Scientology lore claims he was a prodigy, reading and writing at the age of three and becoming a student of philosophy and literature at 12.

in Britain is Saint Hill, a castle-style mansion in spacious grounds, at East Grinstead, Sussex.

There British followers must attend counselling courses which can cost up to £4,000 for a 12½-hour session. Harsh discipline awaits those who fail to turn up.

Scientologists working for the church are required to do long hours for their keep and what the

For them Scientology must come before family or friends.

New recruits must relate their innermost thoughts and details of criminal offences and transgressions of any kind, to an 'auditor'.

The cult had made 'corrupt, indeed criminal, use of the confessions,' said the judge. They were used, if necessary, to control