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# Casting adrift this loathsome sect



ABSURD: Ron Hubbard

I WAS somewhat surprised by the High Court judge last week who described the 'Church' of Scientology as 'immoral, corrupt, obnoxious and dangerous'.

Not surprised, mind you, by the words themselves — just by the fact that no judge has used them before.

It is true that foreign adherents of this loathsome sect were originally banned from Britain in 1968 by then Labour Minister of Health Kenneth

Robinson. But I always felt this was rather a half-hearted move — and in any case, the ban was lifted in 1980.

It was the Greeks — or more precisely, the good people of Corfu — who first rumbled the California-based 'Church' back in 1967, and awarded it the order of the boot.

The sect's leader, the absurd Lafayette Ron Hubbard — who claims to have visited Heaven twice, and who today is not known to be alive or dead — sailed into the island's harbour with his cronies aboard his converted British mine-sweeper.

They were met by furious Corfiots who refused to allow them ashore after a patriarch of the Greek Orthodox Church denounced them from the cliff-top as 'apostles of the Devil'. As a result, they were driven out of Greek territorial waters and have never been allowed back.

## Confused

But perhaps we should not blame the Scientologists, so much as our own Church. For since this has become little more than a branch of the social services, with its emphasis on community politics and other 'relevant issues', it is no wonder that some of its confused parishioners turn to more exotic packages of salvation.

The fact that these come at a fancy price should surprise no one. After all, indulgences sold like hot cakes in the Middle Ages.