

Scientology leader is ordered: Stay away

THE head of the Church of Scientology, L. Ron Hubbard, whose organisation was described by a High Court judge as 'dangerous, immoral, sinister and corrupt', has been ordered to stay away from Britain.

The 74-year-old recluse, himself declared a 'charlatan' by the judge, had hoped to reverse a Home Office ruling which barred him from coming to this country to address his followers at the British headquarters of the sect, Saint Hill, at East Grinstead, Sussex. But when he

refused to talk to British Immigration officials who wanted to question him about a fraud conviction in France, the Home Office re-affirmed its decision to keep Hubbard out.

His elusiveness has fuelled stories that Hubbard is, in fact, dead. His own son unsuccessfully argued this before a U.S. court in an attempt to share his father's vast fortune and Hubbard's attorney has said that his dealings with Hubbard are 'sporadic'. Scientology, which has 200,000 followers in Britain, was

attacked in the High Court last week during a 'tug-of-love' child custody case.

The judge, Mr Justice Lacey, said that the tactics used by Hubbard and his helpers are 'grimly reminiscent of the ranting and bullying of Hitler and his henchmen'.

This was echoed this week by one disenchanted teenage Scientologist who told The Mail on Sunday that Hubbard's young acolytes 'behave like the Nazi youth'. This is his story.

Hubbard

Youth

IT IS the Children of Scientology who run the cult today, strutting young acolytes who shout abuse and instil among other followers an awe bordering on fear.

'Some of them act like the Nazi youth,' says 14-year-old Gulliver Smithers who walked out of Saint Hill, the cult's East Grinstead headquarters in disgust six weeks ago. 'They are arrogant bullies who must be obeyed.'

They wear U.S. naval uniform with a distinctive blue lanyard around the neck which marks them out as members of the Commodore Messenger Organisation — children to be feared.

The teenage bullies who reign supreme over a sinister cult

Devotion

The Messengers are young, very young. Three are just 14, one is only nine. Even their leaders are only in their early 20s — children weaned into adulthood on Scientology and devotion to the cult's founder L. Ron Hubbard.

They have been given the reins of power by a signed edict from Hubbard, a recluse whom many believe may be dead. It says that no Messenger may be told what to do, unless by a senior within the group.

At Saint Hill the children are all powerful. They hand out work targets, jobs to be done within a specific time. Failure to obey or achieve can mean a black mark on internal files and loss of status.

Worse, offenders receive harsh work duties. A Messenger can hand out 'sentences' of up to six months' menial labour.

Gulliver said: 'This means six months, seven days a week, cleaning or emptying rubbish. The

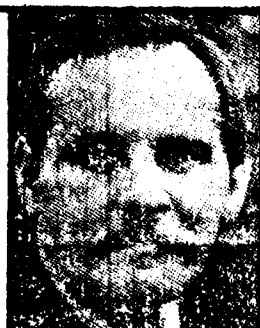
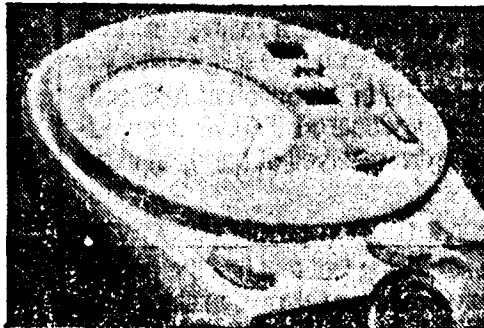
work begins at seven in the morning and goes on until four in the afternoon with only two half-hour breaks.

Now he is an outcast of the organisation, working in a community of other disaffected Scientologists at a country house near Aberdeen.

In his sparsely furnished room in the Scottish hideaway he keeps his 'E-meter', used by

Scientologists to measure electrical impulses around the body and thus, they claim, diagnose what is troubling fellow cult members.

Gulliver said: 'I knew right from the start what sort of power they had and what I could demand from other Scientologists. I tried not to be too unpleasant, but others above us in the Messengers shouted and demanded results. The kids felt they had to do the same. They are strange children, who have led a

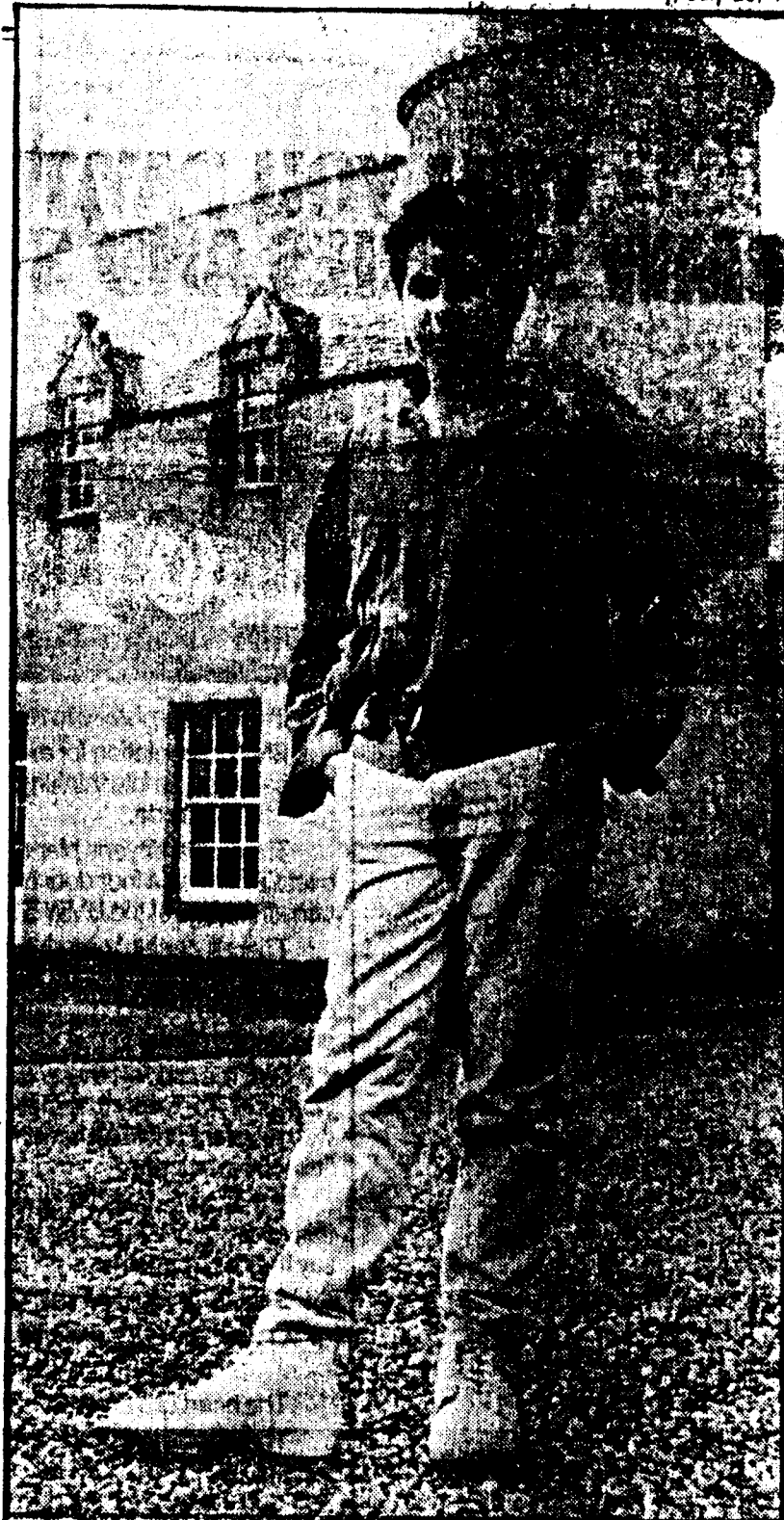


METERED: Gulliver's mysterious machine OUSTED: Jay Hurwitz

By PETER DOBBIE

CONT.

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GULLIVER'S TRAVELS: Outside his new home.

Pictures: Stuart Clarke

life sheltered within Scientology. Some are not very clever and the church has 'influenced their minds.'

Struggle

The Messengers were born out of a power struggle in the late 70s when the leadership was overthrown by a new second generation of 'Super-Scientologists'.

One to suffer under the change was American Jay Hurwitz, 42, of Sharpthorne, Sussex, a former senior executive at

Saint Hill, and another independent Scientologist, who agreed with the Hitler youth description.

He revealed that the changes had also resulted in financial upheavals and a sharp increase in course fees. Just over 12 hours of Scientology training now can cost nearly £5,000.

Morale at Saint Hill is low. The dormitory accommodation, poor food and wages of £4 a week, sometimes unpaid, give the place the air of a run-down

youth hostel, Gulliver says.

And documents handed to The Mail on Sunday confirm that the crude practice of 'disconnection' — cutting off a dissenter from family and friends — has been reintroduced.

'Disconnection is part of every day life at Saint Hill,' Gulliver said. 'It goes round by word of mouth when someone is an outcast. He or she is just ignored and shunned. It was what we were brought up to do.'

Aidan Williams: Page 9