



Depressed, insecure, unstable? The scientology office in Plymouth has expensive answers

Doctor advised scientology cure for depression

TWO West Country doctors have been channeling patients to the controversial Church of Scientology.

A Sunday Times investigation has revealed that Dr Edward Hamlyn and his wife, Dr Dorothy West, who run a surgery in Ivybridge, Devon, are members of the Church of Scientology and both act as local recruiting agents for the cult. They refer patients to Plymouth Scientology centre for a commission.

Scientology is the money-spinning brainchild of the late Lafayette Ronald Hubbard, an unsuccessful postwar science fiction writer who found fame with his book, *Dianetics: The Modern Science Of Mental Health*.

There have been allegations over the last decade that the cult is responsible for brainwashing victims and for dividing families. Two years ago a British judge, Justice Lacey, said Scientology was "corrupt, immoral, sinister and dangerous" and described Hubbard as "obnoxious, a charlatan, like Hitler".

Both Hamlyn and West specialise in allergy complaints. They are among 40 doctors recommended by the London-based Action Against Allergies group, which said it

by Mazher Mahmood

had no knowledge of Hamlyn or West's links with Scientology.

Last week a Sunday Times reporter visited Hamlyn at his mansion-cum-surgery set in 10 acres of Devon countryside, complaining of a recurring stress rash.

Hamlyn, 60, who qualified as a doctor at Bristol in 1944, conducted a 15-minute consultation, during which the reporter was asked to fill in a questionnaire about his general health and asked a series of questions about his personal circumstances and the incidence of the rash.

Hamlyn, who also works one day a week from another surgery in Plymouth, diagnosed depression and prescribed a stringent two-week diet supplemented by vitamin pills, "to find-out if you have any food allergies".

Hamlyn completed the consultation by recommending that he "read a book about the mind". Reaching into a cupboard box beneath his desk containing over 50 copies of Hubbard's *Dianetics* book, he added: "This is a study of mental health. It's the real McCoy.

It's the bible on the mind."

Hamlyn charged £30 for the consultation and £3.50 for the book. He also recommended a course at the Dianetic centre in Plymouth. He wrote down the address of the centre.

The address in Ebrington Street, Plymouth, is the Church of Scientology's office where potential recruits are first invited to complete a free 200-question personality test. If the result of the test shows the candidate to be depressed, insecure, and unstable Scientology treatment is recommended.

There, after being asked to take the test, the reporter was told he had failed miserably. "Your mind is at the moment unstable, you're very depressed and nervous," Chris Whittam, director of the Plymouth Church of Scientology, said.

Hamlyn and West are well known to the local Scientology group. Both have been on prolonged courses at East Grinstead in Sussex, the British headquarters of the cult and regularly refer patients to the local Scientology group for a commission.

Whittam said: "Dr Hamlyn sends about one patient here

a month. There are two or three doctors who send patients here. Dr West is another who sends people here. If they think it's not medical or if it's depression they send people here."

As a cure for depression Whittam recommended a drastic course of "auditing" — 25 hours of aggressive one-to-one sessions with a staff member designed to break resistance to traditional values.

It would also be essential to attend a three-day basic course about scientology. Each stage of the programme seems incomplete without the next one and the fee soon mounts. The cost quoted for the initial sessions was £345. Whittam said 10% of this fee would go to Hamlyn as commission. The price for extensive package courses can be as high as £6,000.

Whittam said: "You don't have to pay Dr Hamlyn for this. You just pay him for your sessions with him. We pay him 10% of this fee as his commission."

When the reporter phoned Hamlyn back to express surprise at the course he had recommended Hamlyn said: "Dianetics is a part of Scientology. By joining Scientology you will do the wisest thing you'll ever do in your life."

Action Against Allergies (AAA) is a charity set up to promote medical research into allergic conditions. When a reporter originally rang the charity, Amelia Nathan-Hill, its chairman, suggested that he made an appointment for a private consultation with either Hamlyn or West, using the charity as an introductory reference.

Later when Nathan-Hill was told about the doctors' connection with the cult she said she was "shocked and disturbed".

The charity has received more than 300,000 letters, asking for help with allergies since it was set up in 1978. She said hundreds of inquiries from the Devon area had been referred to Hamlyn and West.

She said: "We are certainly not connected with this cult in any way. We have in the past had complaints about a doctor in Manchester who was passing patients to the local Scientology group, but as soon as we found out we wiped his name from our list. After what you have told me we shall strike both the doctors off the list."



Dr Dorothy West: she attacked the photographer

Scientology has 6m members worldwide and 200,000 in Britain. It has an annual turnover of about £2m in Britain.

When confronted at his home Hamlyn refused to comment and slammed the door. His wife then came out and attacked The Sunday Times photographer, breaking his flash unit.

A spokesman for Cultists Anonymous, which monitors the activities of the Scientologists, said: "Doctors are credible professional people and extremely valuable re-

cruits for Scientology. We have evidence of a case where a girl left her family and joined the Scientologists through AAA and Dr Hamlyn."

Later a Scientology spokesman said: "Whatever Dr Hamlyn may be doing down in Plymouth pales by comparison with what Cultists Anonymous are doing. I don't actually think Dr Hamlyn is doing anything illegal or unethical."

Additional research by Wendy Robbins.

Sect members mount campaign against author

By STEPHEN CASTLE

SUPPORTERS of the Church of Scientology have unleashed a campaign of harassment and intimidation against the author and publishers of a book which is highly critical of the cult.

The author, Stewart Lamont, has been inundated with threatening letters and telephone calls from members of the sect, both before and since the publication of his book "Religion Inc" this summer.

On one occasion Mr Lamont's neighbours were questioned about his private life by callers posing as future employers. Although it was never proved that the Church of Scientology was behind the incident, Mr Lamont now regards it as "too coincidental to be true."

Last week the South African distributors of his book were contacted by a man claiming to be a legal representative of the cult who told them they were in breach of a worldwide legal action by the Church of Scientology.

POWERFUL FIGURES

Speaking from his home in Glasgow, Mr Lamont said last night: "As a journalist I have written a number of fairly controversial articles, but I have never been subjected to anything like this. I really cannot see what this type of nonsense will achieve."

Mr Lamont began the project with the co-operation of the Scientologists who granted him access to some of their most senior and powerful figures.

The relationship was soured when Mr Lamont refused to hand over a copy of the manuscript to the Scientologists before publication. Lawyers acting for the Scientologists claim Mr Lamont agreed to submit the book for review by Church representatives before going to press — a charge which the author strenuously denies.

In the months leading up to publication, Mr Lamont received numerous telephone calls from Scientologists, many appealing to him to hand over

sonal visit from the Church's international vice-president.

The publishers, Harrap, have also received numerous letters and telephone calls, many threatening legal action. Mr Eric Dobby, their managing director, who personally received around 15 telephone calls, said: "The whole thing has been an attempt to intimidate, with the intention of frightening us from publishing the book."

When it appeared in June the book contained many extremely unfavourable judgments on Scientology, which it describes as a religion "without morality" and "self-seeking, paranoid and vindictive."

Within hours of the book appearing in East Grinstead, the British base of the Church of Scientology, all copies had been bought by one man. This was interpreted by the publishers as another crude attempt to prevent the public reading the work.

Church of Scientology spokesman Mr Peter Mansell said:

publication when it became apparent that Mr Lamont was going to break his agreement with us. But they were purely legal steps, taken through our solicitors."

Mr Mansell added: "Lamont's book has been a flop in its first two months of publication and contains no new data."

"The suggestion that we have gone to any unusual lengths to prevent its publication is just an attempt by Lamont to use Fleet Street to peddle free advertising for a failing business venture."