

# Scientology testimony marked by jargon

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TORONTO STAR

A bewildering array of jargon and terminology characterize the first day of testimony at the trial of the Church of Scientology's Toronto chapter and five of its members on breach of trust charges.

The opening witness, Bryan Levman, left Mr. Justice James Southey of Ontario Court, general division, confused and frustrated as he tried to explain the organization's complicated management structure.

Southey stopped the proceedings several times to ask the crown and the witness to slow down so he could complete his notes about the testimony.

Levman and four other witnesses granted immunity from prosecution are expected to testify during the next month into allegations of illegal activities authorized by a branch of the organization called the Guardian's Office Worldwide.

"One of the things we were doing at the time ... was basically walking into various offices (of people) Scientology deemed enemies ... looking through their files and copying them," Levman said.

Such operations were known as "rip-offs," Levman testified, adding that members received training in picking locks.

Levman said he was told by Jane Kember, a senior member under founder and science fiction writer L. Ron Hubbard, that the Metro branch was being investigated by the Ontario Provincial Police, Metro police and the provincial attorney-general.

"She (Kember) wanted the files, and it was my mandate to get them," Levman said.

In his opening remarks Tuesday, Crown Attorney James Stewart told the court some Scientology members acted as plants, obtaining jobs with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, the OPP, Metro police and the attorney-general's office.

Levman testified he was forced to call a "committee of evidence" against himself in 1976, knowing

it would remove him from his position.

But it wasn't until 1983 that he was expelled from the church. He received a list of charges in the mail, including the accusation he was a "squirrel" — someone who tried to alter Hubbard's philosophy.

The trial, expected to last from eight to 12 weeks, promises to be a complex and contentious affair.

Charges were laid 18 months after a 1983 OPP raid, but some have since been set aside, and numerous legal challenges by defence lawyer Clayton Ruby to prevent the case from coming to trial have been dismissed.

Ruby made it clear from his opening statement last Tuesday that he thought five witnesses, including Levman — all of whom were granted immunity — should be sitting in the defendant's box.

"These wretched people captured this church — for a time," Ruby said.

Levman acknowledged, under Ruby's questioning, that the five defendants were underlings who received their instructions through him.

The court has already heard Levman relate how Scientology members made unauthorized copies of government and police files, usually through a "plant" or agent who obtained a job in the office.

Other members, he said, were engaged in "rip-offs," entering the offices of government and private lawyers to copy files and obtain information.

But Levman laid the blame for his actions and others on church policy, and at the door of its founder.

"Hubbard said you defend Scientology from your enemies. He has a share of the blame for Scientology coming to where it has today," Levman said.

"I was responsible — but clearly not solely responsible, or more responsible than any of my staff — as were my seniors in Scientology, right up to the top," Levman said.

"It was my job. I felt I was doing my part to save the planet, to use Scientology terminology," Levman said.

But Levman made it clear that, though he may have received immunity, the case has left him and his wife, Rose Marie, far from being unscathed.

"This is extremely difficult for me ... because of the notoriety, the things I did in my youth, because of my former allegiance to an organization I have no particular desire to attack, because of their view of me," he said.

The second major issue of the case is that charges have been laid against the Church of Scientology of Toronto itself.

"There has never been a criminal charge brought before a jury against a church itself anywhere