



Letters to the Editor



20a London Road, East Grinstead, West Sussex, RH19 1AB

The Scientology debate

Pinning our hopes on Old Doll Body

I READ with interest Denise Harrison's statement of incredulity that a new religion could be the work of a science fiction writer.

According to the saying, truth is stranger than fiction, so what about this one?

In his early lectures, Ron Hubbard mentioned "Old Doll Body", a mythical figure from the past, who travelled freely in the universe in his flying saucer.

In 1964, I was driving up the Turners Hill Road one night and, lo and behold, there was Old Doll Body making heavy weather of the grass verge, which was much wider in those days. According to Ron, Doll Body could control six bodies at once, but I saw only three.

I hasten to add that he was seen by others, even driving a car, and the incidents were duly recorded by the Church of Scientology HCO Dept, Saint Hill.

I mention all this because it is an important date in the annals of Scientology and I hope Saint Hill will write and confirm my statement and add any further data.

After all, if Doll Body is still roaming the universe freely then there is hope for us all.

J. REVILL

Bricklands
Crawley Down

I HAVE read with increasing amazement and concern the continuing correspondence and articles about the "church" of Scientology.

The Christian clergy have regularly expressed their concern at the activities of the cult, but their warnings earlier this year seem to have induced a persecution complex amongst some of the cult's followers.

A simple letter warning of the links between the new Dianetics bookshop, the so-called personality tests and Scientology, has provided a knee-jerk reaction. The letter and the attack by vandals on the Dianetics Centre seem to have been construed by the "church" of Scientology as an attack on its members' religious freedoms.

When the Rev Stephen Bowen went to Saint Hill to give moral support to a man who wanted to leave the cult's elite Sea Organisation, he was harassed, vilified and branded a Nazi. Is that the reaction expected from a group claiming to be a religion?

The opening of the Dianetics bookshop has, I am told, brought complaints to the police from shoppers fed up with being pestered by the Scientology "body routers" trying to bring in new recruits, and from Scientologists who object to the presence of the occasional lone Christian standing outside the London Road shop. Whilst on the one hand accusing anyone who dares oppose it of taking part in a hate campaign, the cult has engaged in an increasingly hostile letter writing and leaflet campaign aimed at denigrating opponents, whether they be clergymen or former members. Now we can even have the cult publicly accusing opponents of drug-takers.

Signs of persecution complex

One local author who has done much to publicise the truth about the cult has been the subject of a leaflet campaign. In the past few weeks the "church" has declared at least five people to be "suppressive persons", and accused them of psychotic or criminal activity. In my opinion, the actions are nothing short of harassment aimed at silencing opposition.

I was surprised by the lack of public for Mr Bowen and Canon Roger Brown. Has the town become apathetic or are people over-awed, overwhelmed, or simply too afraid to speak out?

Once, whilst editing this newspaper, I was severely criticised by the cult for pointing out the lack of love in its philosophy. When the "church" of Scientology publicly attacks the Christian clergy for doing their duty, and engages in a campaign which, in my opinion, constitutes harassment, it only serves to strengthen my view that there is no love in Scientology.

MICHAEL RICKS

Former editor, East Grinstead Courier
Address supplied

● **EDITOR'S NOTE:** Mr Ricks no longer has any connection with this newspaper, and the views expressed are personal ones.

THE SCIENTOLOGY debate has droned on and on now for several months. We have become used to reading the same letters in

the same strange and robotic style which seem to be either written or inspired by the Church of Scientology's "Office of Special Affairs".

Unless there are any new developments, a debate on a specific issue is normally brought to an end after a decent period. However, on this issue, you letters editor himself seems to be encouraging the debate to sink to new and degrading depths.

Not only have we heard that the leaders of our local Christian community are to be compared to Nazis, but a named local resident was actually accused of criminal activity in a letter from a Scientologist published on July 30.

Like others who are critical of the Church of Scientology, this individual has been labelled an anti-Scientologist, an anti-social personality and a suppressive person. In fact, he is a valuable and caring member of the community who has helped families whose lives have been ravaged by cults.

In their letters the Scientologists have tried to appear very reasonable, compared themselves to the persecuted early Christians and appealed for religious tolerance.

However, their concept of persecution is very different from that experienced by the early Christians. The Church of Scientology regards as persecution the slightest questioning of its ethics or conduct.

The Christian Church has long since

learned to bear criticism. The Church of Scientology has not. They have their own ways of dealing with critics or ex-members. According to their Fair Game law, people considered to be suppressive persons may be deprived of property or injured by any means by any Scientologist. They may be tricked, sued, lied to or destroyed.

Currently, there is a pamphletting campaign throughout the East Grinstead area against this particular individual with the intention of destroying him. The resources of a multi-national organisation are ranged unfairly against a lone individual. The Courier's action supports this unjust campaign.

JOHN ABLETT

Acorn Close, East Grinstead

● **EDITOR'S NOTE:** We have stated publicly that we aim to give citizens of all persuasions the right to have their say on all matters, including Scientology. Where an individual is criticised we offer the right of reply.

MRS MARY HUNT writes to you to speak from hearsay (her words) about how some members of the Church of Scientology allegedly made themselves unpopular.

When I and my wife (members of the Church of Scientology) were neighbours of Mrs Hunt between 1984 and 1986 I am sure we were good neighbours, and I can say that Mrs Hunt was a very Christian and good neighbour to us.

When Christianity was very young all manner of lies and gossip were spread about it, and hearsay and innuendo were the order of the day. The trouble was that certain members of the Church made themselves so unpopular that not only practising Jews, but also many other people, were put on their guard against it.

Perhaps the violence that was done to the body of the founder of Christianity resulted from the populace listening to hearsay. And there are probably those who will say that this was a good thing because otherwise the world would not now have the wonderful legacy of those events of 2,000 years ago.

But let's be practical in 1993. The world doesn't really need any more crucifixions. And it certainly doesn't need hearsay as a primary source of information upon which to build a case against anyone.

RUFUS FRASER

Selsfield Road, West Hoathly

THE Church of Scientology leaflet about Conflicts and the Third Party Law reminds me of a leaflet put out by the same people about 10 years ago about Mr David Mayo.

Both David Mayo and Jon Atack obviously know too much, and therefore have to be personally blackened and bad-mouthed in a concerted and determined campaign.

Perhaps there is in East Grinstead a Third Party; my vote says it is the Church of Scientology at Saint Hill, driving a wedge between ordinary Scientologists and townfolk alike.

Jon Atack's very truthful accounts of Scientology and Ron Hubbard can be found in his book A Piece of Blue Sky. It must be true or the church would have sued him for libel.

Name and Address Supplied