

Waco/Branch Davidian  
Compound

File NO# 63-HQ-1050305  
Section NO# 9

SUBJECT Waco Branch Denial Request

FILE NUMBER 63-HQ-1050305

SECTION NUMBER 9

**EXEMPTIONS**      **b6 b7c**

(See Section 1 for Explanation of Exemptions)

June 21, 1993

324

Honorable Richard Shelby  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510-0103

Dear Senator Shelby:

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This is in further reply to your May 13th correspondence on behalf of [REDACTED]. Your constituent questioned whether the FBI flew the Alabama state flag during the siege at the Branch Davidian compound in Waco, Texas, and whether any Agents were assigned there from Alabama.

I appreciate the opportunity to address your constituent's concerns. Members of the FBI's Hostage Rescue Team (HRT) flew the American flag on the Bradley Fighting Vehicles (BFV) used to move in and out of the Branch Davidian compound. During the 51-day siege, it was necessary to augment the HRT with members of the FBI's Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) teams from 12 different field offices. Many of these SWAT teams brought with them the state flags from the different states they represented. The flying of these state flags provided the HRT command structure with a readily identifiable means of ascertaining the disposition of the individual SWAT teams. This was a critical command and control aid during periods when the entry hatch of the BFVs were closed and radio communications were often poor.

The SWAT team from Mobile, Alabama, flew the Alabama state flag. During the tactical resolution of the siege after the compound became engulfed in flames, the Alabama contingent acted as a medical evacuation group and responded to the immediate front of the compound in their BFV. The fact that this vehicle was flying the Alabama state flag allowed the HRT Commander to instantly recognize it as the medical evacuation vehicle. Individuals who evacuated the compound and had been badly burned were rushed to this vehicle to receive immediate medical attention shortly before being evacuated from the scene to area hospitals.

- 1 - SAC, San Antonio - Enclosures (2)
- 1 - SAC, Birmingham - Enclosures (2)
- 1 - Mr. Coulson (Room 5012)
- 1 - Mr. Collingwood (Room 7240)
- 1 - [REDACTED] (Room 5042) - Enclosures (2)
- 1 - [REDACTED] (HRT-Quantico) - Enclosures (2) (FOR INFO)
- 1 - Congressional Affairs Office (detached)

63-HQ-1050305-589

63-HQ-1050305  
(12)

SEE NOTE PAGE TWO

MAIL ROOM ☐

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JUN 28 1993

- Dep. Dir. \_\_\_\_\_
- ADD Adm. \_\_\_\_\_
- ADD Inv. \_\_\_\_\_
- Asst. Dir.:
- Adm. Servs. \_\_\_\_\_
- Crim. Inv. \_\_\_\_\_
- CJS \_\_\_\_\_
- Ident. \_\_\_\_\_
- Info. Mgmt. \_\_\_\_\_
- Insp. \_\_\_\_\_
- Intell. \_\_\_\_\_
- Lab. \_\_\_\_\_
- Legal Coun. \_\_\_\_\_
- Tech. Servs. \_\_\_\_\_
- Training \_\_\_\_\_
- Off. of EEOA \_\_\_\_\_
- Off. Liaison \_\_\_\_\_
- & Int. Affs. \_\_\_\_\_
- Off. of Public \_\_\_\_\_
- & Cong. Affs. \_\_\_\_\_
- TCM Office \_\_\_\_\_
- Telephone Rm. \_\_\_\_\_
- Director's Office \_\_\_\_\_

Honorable Richard Shelby

Likewise, SWAT teams from Colorado, Texas, Oklahoma, and Mississippi flew their state flags. In addition to aiding the HRT on the ground, the use of these flags on the BFVs greatly aided the HRT helicopter pilots in fulfilling their responsibilities. I would like to add that use of state flags in operations of this type is not unusual. The FBI HRT often utilizes National Guard members during crisis situations, and they often carry the state flag or emblem of the state from which they originate.

I hope this reply will help you respond to your constituent.



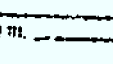
Sincerely yours,






Danny O. Coulson  
Deputy Assistant Director  
Criminal Investigative Division

NOTE: Reply coordinated with SSA [REDACTED] CID, and SSA [REDACTED] HRT.

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APPROVED:   

Director _____	Adm. Serv. _____	Inspection _____	Off. of EEO Affs. _____
Dep. Dir. _____	Crim. Inv. _____	Intell. _____	Off. of Liaison _____
Asst. Dir. _____	Crim. Inv. Info. _____	Laboratory _____	& Int. Affs. _____
Ident. _____	Ident. _____	Legal Coun. _____	Off. of Public _____
Rec. Mgmt. _____	Rec. Mgmt. _____	Tech. Servs. _____	& Cong. Affs. _____
		Training _____	TOM Off. _____

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*[Handwritten signature]*

004, I.  
Congr

Enclosed are three copies of Phil Clarke's commentary based on my write-up of the Muslim fundamentalist terrorists case in New York which I sent you July 2nd. The commentary is scheduled for use nationally August 2nd. The 160 plus radio stations which receive Clarke's commentaries were listed in the enclosure to my April 29th memo on the Waco matter. Aside from the newspapers which receive the commentary, I have made some independent dissemination of my original write-up. If it is used by these recipients, I'll let you know.

Enc. (3) "ENCLOSURE ATTACHED"

X-Ray

63-HQ-1050305-590

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ОЖАРЕ [REDACTED]  
по вопросу  
необходим  
гос 7/14/93

*In the aborted bombing of U.N. headquarters, New York City's Federal Building and its Lincoln and Holland Tunnels, Hollywood could not have scripted a better scenario to illustrate the vital importance of counterintelligence.*

Philip Clarke reporting BEHIND THE HEADLINES.

Last February, as light snow drifted over New York's World Trade Center, a nation watched the televised scene in stunned disbelief. Thousands of employees streamed from the bomb-damaged buildings. More than 1,000 had been injured and 6 were dead. Rescue workers feverishly sought access to a 60-foot deep subterranean crater to locate other possible victims. This Summer, America was spared a potentially far deadlier series of bombing attacks - thanks to a highly successful counterintelligence operation by the combined FBI/New York City Police Department Terrorist Task Force.

On June 23rd, a complaint filed by the FBI charged one Siddig Ibrahim Siddig Ali and seven Muslim fundamentalist cohorts with conspiring to "damage and destroy, by means of fire and an explosive, buildings used in interstate and foreign commerce and in activities affecting" such commerce.

Siddig had confided to an associate - who actually was an FBI undercover informant - that he and some of his co-conspirators had been involved in the February bombing of the World Trade Center. And he boasted of having connections that would allow him to drive a car carrying a bomb into a parking lot in the U.N. building. To bomb the Federal Building in lower Manhattan, he proposed killing the security personnel stationed outside in order to gain access. Other plans called for assassinating several U.S. political figures, as well as the bombing of New York City's diamond district.

Shortly before their arrest on June 24th, five of the conspirators had met at a "safe house" to mix their so-called "witches' brew" explosives. They also discussed other potential bombing targets, military and governmental. Siddig earlier had unwittingly told the undercover FBI informant that three bombs would be detonated in three different locations at different times of the same day - first the U.N. building, next the Lincoln and Holland Tunnels, and finally the Federal Building. A fire would be set in one of the tunnels as a diversion.

Fortunately, the evil intentions of these "mad bombers" were frustrated by outstanding counterintelligence work. New Yorkers must still shudder at the thought of what could have happened. In any event, a debt of gratitude is owed to the FBI/Police Terrorist Task Force, supported in large part by the federal intelligence budget allocated by Congress.

Ironically, in early 1992 a reduction in that budget forced a 25% cutback in the FBI's counterintelligence personnel. The fact that the Bureau was still able to develop an informant within Siddig's terrorist ring and operate him so effectively is remarkable - perhaps fortuitous would be a better word.

The lives and wellbeing of our citizenry and the security and economy of our country should not, however, depend on good luck. Intelligence and counterintelligence operations must be adequately funded and manned. Any relaxation of FBI efforts to counter terrorist activities would certainly send signals to the terrorists themselves and result in an escalation of their efforts.

Siddig is said to have boasted that the World Trade Center bombing sent a message that "we can get you anytime." A vigilant FBI and supporting counterintelligence authorities have now sent a return message that terrorists can't get away with it.

Editor's Note: Retired FBI Assistant Director W. Raymond Wannall contributed to this report.

[REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED]

May 23, 1993

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Mr. William Webster  
Director, FBI  
The J. Edgar Hoover Bldg.  
Washington, D. C. 20510

OWaco Tx

Dear Mr. Webster:

I predicted that you would respond to the recent Waco tragedy as per your recent letter to TIME. TIME is not an appropriate outlet for a deposition concerning an interpretation of this tragic event, and your submission is a sad reflection of the administration of this proud and important government agency. The leadership and mission of the FBI, and the ATF, needs to be rejuvenated.

Congressional hearings are where the truth shall prevail, and where leaders will justify their actions.

In perhaps the penultimate violation, it is now clear that the FBI audiotapes of this tragedy were "doctored-by deletion", reflecting absence of professionalism and lack of respect for the Constitution of the United States of America.

This event was a tragedy: a tragedy for our country and its basic constitutional guaranties, a tragedy for the four ATF agents that died in the George Armstrong Custer-like attack on the Branch Davidian compound, and last, but certainly not least, a tragedy for the people who died in the compound.

The tragedy can be clearly traced to ill-designed actions of the administration of ATF, and later the FBI, and NOT the agents who executed their orders. And, certainly NOT at the feet of Attorney General Reno: who were the law enforcement/investigative "professionals"? Who were best equipped to interpret the problem and provide solutions?

The clue that reason and professionalism had been replaced by irrational thinking and disregard of human rights may have been revealed the day of the fire: Mr. Ricks, who assumed the FBI "spokesman" role for a period after the FBI took over the operation, reacting to the fire at the compound apparently said, the same day, something like: "he (Koresh) was going to come out and surrender, with grenades strapped around him, and would blow himself up in public. But he 'chickened out' and did not do this".

"Chickened out"? Was this statement appropriate for the situation, for professionalism? Did it reflect the mentality of revenge? I must add, however, that I have doubts about the press coverage. Did Mr. Ricks indeed make these statements after the fire? This should be easy to establish from tapes of the events. Perhaps the press rearranged the order of the events—like the FBI deleted sections of the telephone conversations?

That this error was perceived by others was soon evident: it seemed that Mr. Ricks was then replaced by another spokesman, who was far more professional.

It is clear that changes need to be made at the highest level in designing strategies to meet future events, inevitable, that might have similar complexities. Such strategies need to

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protect the Bill of Rights for all Americans. The previous strategy. The Branch Davidian event will be replaced by other more threatening situations such as neo-nazi's and lunatic fringes that may clearly represent a threat our constitution and to law and order in our country. The FBI has served with distinction in handling these latter situations. The key is discriminating the nature of the "threat" and establishing appropriate responses.

Respectfully,



xc: Sen. Bob Graham, FI  
Sen. Connie Mack, FI  
Rep. Cliff Stearns, FI

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JULY 14, 1993

310 P-5

MR. SESSIONS,  
Waco TX

I ONLY SAW YOUR LETTER  
IN TIME MAGAZINE TODAY. (JUNE 14, 1993)

I AM ENCLOSING MY LETTER  
THAT I WROTE AROUND THE  
MIDDLE OF MAY, 1993.

THANK YOU FOR  
DOING THE IMPOR-  
TANT JOB YOU DO.

- ENCLOSURE

63HQ-1050305-592

JUL 23 1993

(50 DAYS WAS PLENTY OF TIME  
FOR THEM TO COME OUT)

ACK  
7/23/93

MAIL ROOM

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on-Sea, England

### Support for the FBI

I READ WITH INTEREST YOUR SUMMARY of the mail you received about the stand-off in Waco, Texas [LETTERS, May 24]. Interestingly, the results were just the opposite of our experience and of various public-opinion polls published after the event. The FBI received 660 telephone calls and 554 letters on the incident. Approximately 70% of those were supportive, many focusing on David Koresh as the ultimate cause of the tragic outcome. While this represents support for the FBI, it also shows that the American public recognizes the difficult circumstances frequently faced by law enforcement. No one in the FBI is satisfied with the outcome. We are especially saddened by the loss of the children, whom we wanted so desperately to save. We deeply appreciate the public's recognition of the difficulties confronting the FBI and other law-enforcement agencies in combatting violent criminals.

William S. Sessions, Director  
Federal Bureau of Investigation  
Washington

TIME-JUNE 14, 1993



62-HQ-1050305-592  
ENCLOSURE

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[REDACTED]  
May 17, 1993

Federal Bureau of Investigation  
Technological Office  
9th and Pennsylvania Ave., NW  
Washington, DC 20535

Dear Sir or Madam:

Hi! My name is [REDACTED] I am going to ask you a couple of questions. I will be asking you about Waco, Texas. I wrote you this paper for an English class. First let me tell you about my school. I go to MacArthur Junior High. In our school we have many activities. My favorite is basketball. Well that is the fun part and anyway on to the questions.

I wanted to know if you started the fire in Waco, Texas. If you did how did you get away with it? If you didn't start the fire, who did, and why? I also want to know when you are going to crack this case and how?

These are all of my questions. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,  
[REDACTED]

63-HQ-1050305-593

ack

7/14/93  
[REDACTED]

July 14, 1993

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428

[REDACTED]

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Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your May 17th letter to the FBI concerning the unfortunate ending to the standoff with the Branch Davidians in Waco, Texas.

While I would like to answer your specific questions, I am not at liberty to do so because longstanding FBI and Department of Justice policy prohibits other than general comments on ongoing investigations. I can tell you, however, that unfortunately, our trained negotiators were unable to convince David Koresh to bring this situation to a peaceful resolution. The events of April 19th were tragic for everyone involved--those who lost their lives, their families and friends, and the dedicated law enforcement officers who have spent time away from their families in unselfish service to our country. As you can imagine, no one wanted this situation to peacefully conclude more than the FBI Hostage Rescue Team who worked for 51 days to try to end this confrontation without further loss of life.

As we examine our efforts in the days and months to come, I believe it will be clear that, given the circumstances, the actions taken by law enforcement were responsible and reasonable.

Sincerely yours,

63-HQ-1050305-594

Michael F. Knapp  
Inspector-Deputy Chief  
Office of Public and  
Congressional Affairs

- 1 - SAC, San Antonio (PERSONAL ATTENTION) - Enclosure  
1 - [REDACTED] (Room 5042)  
1 - Mr. Collingwood (Room 7240)  
63-HQ-1050305

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(6) b6 b7c

MAIL ROOM

Dep. Dir.	_____
ADD Adm.	_____
ADD Inv.	_____
Asst. Dir.:	
Adm. Servs.	_____
Crim. Inv.	_____
CJIS	_____
Ident.	_____
Info. Mgnt.	_____
Insp.	_____
Intell.	_____
Lab.	_____
Legal Coun.	_____
Tech. Servs.	_____
Training	_____
Off. of EEOA	_____
Off. Liaison	_____
& Int. Affs.	_____
Off. of Public	_____
& Cong. Affs.	_____
TQM Office	_____
Telephone Rm.	_____
Director's Office	_____



DEPUTY MAJORITY WHIP

COMMITTEE ON  
APPROPRIATIONS

SUBCOMMITTEES:

VETERANS AFFAIRS, HOUSING AND  
URBAN DEVELOPMENT, AND  
INDEPENDENT AGENCIES

FOREIGN OPERATIONS, EXPORT FINANCING,  
AND RELATED AGENCIES

# Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515-0534

ESTEBAN E. TORRES

34TH DISTRICT, CALIFORNIA

May 26, 1993

WASHINGTON OFFICE:

1740 LONGWORTH HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-0534  
(202) 225-5258

DISTRICT OFFICE

6819 WHITTIER BOULEVARD  
SUITE 101  
PICO RIVERA, CA 90660  
(310) 699-0702

LA PUENTE, VALINDA,  
HACIENDA HEIGHTS AND BASSETT  
(PHONE ONLY)  
(818) 961-3978  
MONTEBELLO, EAST LOS ANGELES  
(PHONE ONLY)  
(213) 720-1904

Ms. Linda K. Davis  
Chief of the Criminal Section  
Civil Rights Division, Justice Department  
10th & Pennsylvania Ave., N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20530

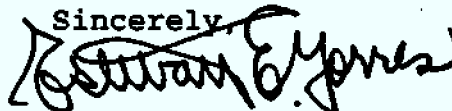
Dear Ms. Davis:

Enclosed please find a packet from an organization that is located in my congressional district.

They would like to see an investigation regarding the activities of a group called the Cult Awareness Network (CAN) and its link to the WACO incident.

I would appreciate a response regarding their allegations. Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



ESTEBAN E. TORRES  
Member of Congress

EET/ret  
Enclosures

Additional bulky  
enclosures detached

4 sent to [redacted]  
Quinticio

Final ack  
7-16-93

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63-HQ-1050305-595

OPEN- [redacted]

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b7c

REPRESENTING: BASSETT, EAST LOS ANGELES, HACIENDA HEIGHTS, INDUSTRY, LA PUENTE, LOS NIETOS, MONTEBELLO,  
NORWALK, PICO RIVERA, SANTA FE SPRINGS, VALINDA AND WHITTIER

THIS STATIONERY PRINTED ON PAPER MADE OF RECYCLED FIBERS

Interim response  
dated 6-16-93 [redacted]

(IMPORTANT! PLEASE READ & FILE IMMEDIATELY!)



# The Family

MA: 12 1993

A Fellowship of Independent Christian Missionary Communities

14118 Whittier Blvd. Suite 116, Whittier, CA 90605  
Phone: (310) 497-0175 Fax: (310) 694-6685

CONGRESSMAN HAMILTON FISH JR.  
2354 RAYBURN HOB  
WASHINGTON DC 20515

*Rob Towner 1740*

**RESPECTFULLY REFERRED  
NOT ACKNOWLEDGED**

## WACO WHO'S RESPONSIBLE?-- CULT AWARENESS NETWORK? (CAN)

-- "The role in Waco of the Cult Awareness Network... may well have been crucial." (Alexander Cockburn - Los Angeles Times, April 27)

-- "I was a consultant offering ideas, input that was filtered by their team and used when they felt it was appropriate." (Rick Ross, CAN deprogrammer - Today Show, April 19)

-- "The FBI should use any means necessary...including lethal force." (CAN Director Patricia Ryan - Houston Post, April 9)

### OUR PROPOSAL:

- THAT A THOROUGH INVESTIGATION INTO CAN'S ACTIVITIES BE CONDUCTED
- THAT ACCREDITED, UNBIASED ACADEMICS BE CONSULTED ON RELIGIOUS GROUPS
- THAT AN EDUCATION CAMPAIGN BE LAUNCHED TO COUNTER MIS-INFORMATION

Dear Congressman Fish,

Thank you for taking your time to read this. We appreciate your willingness to take public office to represent the people of this land and to tackle the serious issues and responsibilities involved in forging the direction of our country. Our prayers are with you.

We are a Christian missionary movement known as *The Family*. We are writing you to express our concern that the actions and stance taken by our government in the Waco situation portend to set a serious precedent for future unconstitutional hostilities and bigotry which will threaten the freedom of religion in our country.

One of the major issues we feel needs to be addressed is how our well-intentioned law enforcement agencies seem to have been deliberately misled by an anti-religious organization known as the Cult Awareness Network (CAN). This organization of so-called "cult experts" injected prejudice, distrust and fear into what should have been an objective, unemotional investigation of the Branch Davidians. In fact, CAN leaders, including convicted felon and deprogrammer Rick Ross, have openly boasted of influencing FBI and ATF authorities, both before the initial raid as well as during the standoff. Instead of common sense and reason prevailing, the misinformation spread by CAN led to the tragic mishandling of the entire Waco incident, resulting in the sad loss of life on the part of the authorities, and a tragic ending for this small religious group.

**63-HQ-1050305-595**

ENCLOSURE

These self-styled "cult experts" of CAN have falsely established their credibility to the point they have now become the advisors of our nation's law enforcement agencies. This is in spite of the fact that the vast majority of our nation's academic and professional community clearly do not endorse the views or activities of this biased, anti-religious organization. Had our country's accredited and internationally recognized authorities on religion and human behavior been consulted, their sensible and educated counsel could have helped officials make sound judgements based on fact and empirical evidence, thereby averting this tragedy.

Our apprehension is that this anti-religious propaganda will endanger many innocent people whose beliefs and practices happen to run outside those of this country's mainstream religions. We feel that the media, politicians, law enforcement agencies and the general public are being heavily prejudiced and swayed by these anti-religious elements. The whole world has now seen the devastating power of this 'provocation by misinformation' tactic in Waco, much akin to those coercive techniques used by totalitarian states this nation has condemned.

We, The Family, have also been targets of CAN's "dirty tricks department" via media smear campaigns and deprogramming attacks. CAN and its affiliates have frequently stirred up local officials, often via the media, to take action against our Christian communities in several countries, causing untold trauma and heartache for our children and parents. Of course none of their slanderous accusations have ever been proven true--To the contrary, our community involvement, as well as our home education and childcare programs have been hailed as exemplary by educators, sociologists, psychologists and government officials the world over.

Therefore, having stated the above, we would like to make 3 proposals:

1) That a thorough investigation be conducted into CAN's activities, including its influence on decisions made in Waco.

2) That accredited, unbiased academics, who have scientifically studied New Religious Movements (NRMs) for years, be put in a position to consult with local and federal officials should situations such as this arise again.

3) That an education campaign be launched, by these same professionals, to disseminate factual and unbiased information regarding NRMs.

We appeal to you, Congressman Fish, as an elected official of our democratic society, to help preserve our legacy of freedom. It seems this generation has forgotten that our government was largely founded to protect the rights of minority religious movements, most of its founders having been members of just such religious groups in its inception. Please help stem the rising tide of ignorance, hate and fear now being fostered by these enemies of our country.

We're keeping you and your service to our nation in our daily prayers. If you would like more information or would like to meet with us personally, please contact us at the address above. Thank you for your kind attention. God bless and keep you!

Sincerely yours,

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b7C  
For The Family

*"No man shall...suffer on account of his religious opinions or belief, but all men shall be free to profess and by argument to maintain, their opinions in matters of religion." --Thomas Jefferson*



# Our Stance Against Physical Violence

Issued by *World Services* on the Collective Behalf of the Fellowship of Independent Missionary Communities Commonly Referred to as *The Family*

(Compiled March, 1993)

**I**N LIGHT OF THE RECENT tragic developments outside Waco, Texas, involving the loss of life at the Branch Davidian compound, *The Family* wishes to make the following statements concerning our beliefs and practices

regarding violence:

1. We deplore the loss of life in Waco. Had the authorities and the members of the Branch Davidian group been more level-headed and exercised more restraint, we believe the tragedy could have been averted. It is our earnest prayer that the standoff will be resolved peaceably, with no further casualties. We extend our condolences to the families and loved ones of those who have died.

2. *The Family* does not have and has never had any formal or informal ties of any kind with the Branch Davidian group.

3. *The Family* has always abhorred the use of violence. We do not condone the use of firearms as a means of settling disputes. Rather than rely on force or weaponry, our founder, Father David, has always advised us to rely primarily on God, and secondarily on the police and civil authorities, for needed protection from hostile forces.

The conduct of our membership worldwide makes it clear that nonviolence is not only the belief of our fellowship, but also very much the practice.

4. The only situations in which we feel the use of force may be justified are in cases of self-defense, the defense of property and the defense of loved ones. This is only if the threat is clearly an illegal one, and all other solutions have failed. We do not espouse any means of self-defense prohibited by law.

5. *The Family* has always advocated respect for and compliance with officers of the law engaged in the performance of their duties. We have never approved of obstructing such officers. We adhere to the Scriptural admonition which states that they are "the ministers of God, who bear not the sword in vain" (Romans 13:4).

Over the years, due to some authorities being grossly misinformed by our detractors, several of our communities in different countries have been the target of police raids. Even though our members knew that such intrusions were misguided, and that their communities were innocent of any wrongdoing, they always peacefully yielded to and complied with the law enforcement officials. (Each of these communities

were subsequently exonerated of any criminal wrongdoing.) We feel that such conduct clearly proves our commitment to respect and obey the law enforcement agencies.

6. *The Family* has never sanctioned, much less promoted, suicide as an acceptable act in the eyes of God.

7. We express concern and alarm at the way the anti-cult movement (ACM) is currently exploiting the tragedy in Waco. By lumping all new religious movements (NRMs) together, despite the extreme diversity of beliefs and practices held by the various NRMs, the ACM is attempting to label and stigmatise all such groups as "destructive cults" capable of violent antisocial acts. We decry such broad generalisations which we believe foster intolerance, bigotry and hatred.

## QUOTATIONS FROM FATHER DAVID

**T**HE FOLLOWING DIRECT QUOTES are taken from the writings of our founder, Father David. Spanning a period of over twenty years, these excerpts make it clear that the above stated policies are long-standing and consistent. (The italicised references after each quotation by Father David indicate the specific Letter and paragraph number that is being quoted, as well as the year of publication.)

### A. Physical nonviolence is our rule.

**"We are not violent, and we are even somewhat pacifistic."** (ML# 183:18, 1972)

**"We are not fighting the government!"** (ML# 123:11, 1971)

**"We are not physically violent, but we are talking about a spiritually violent revolution, that absolutely rends your heart right out completely and gives you a new spirit, the Holy Ghost of God!—Violent spiritual revolution! That's the kind of revolution we've got!"** (ML# 148:39, 1971)

### B. We are even opposed to mock violence.

**"Question [from a member]: We have two boys in the Home, aged 13 and 7. What is Dad's [Father David's] opinion on kids playing with toy soldiers and pretend guns in the house?"**

"Answer: We forbid it! Ours have never had a toy gun or played anything but a Roman or Christian soldier in Bible skits! Why should they want to? We should abhor violence even pretended in play! Why should you let them even play bad behaviour?" (ML# 1566:83, 1983)

### C. Physical violence is not tolerated in The Family.

"Anybody who beats his children or beats up his wife. I said throw 'm out at once! Get rid of 'm [excommunication]! You can't trust 'm, they might kill somebody! God's Word says, 'Keep not company with an angry man!' (Proverbs 22:24) Somebody that's apt to do violence and harm and actual bodily harm and cause all kinds of trouble, get rid of 'm! It's not worth it to take a chance on it! It's not worth it to endanger a family and women and children to put up with such characters!" (ML# 1880:56, 1985)

### D. We have always been diametrically opposed to suicide.

"I'd sure hate to catapult myself into the presence of God, or the Death Angel for that matter, by my own hand, having destroyed the life that God gave me. Look at the difference in the way the Christians died as martyrs at the stake or on the cross, killed by their enemies! Look what a testimony they were, willing to die for their faith!—But not at their own hand! (ML# 1402:6, 1982)

"Self-destruction is no victory. I think it would come under the classification of the Scripture, 'Abuse not your body, which is the temple of the Holy Ghost' (1 Corinthians 3:16,17). That would be the final abuse, the worst of all, to kill your own body. (ML# 1402:7, 1982)

"God knows when and how you're supposed to die, and you'd better wait for God to make the decision and have His way, whatever it is, and not die at your own hand in your own stubborn wilfulness, unwilling to face something! (ML# 1402:12, 1982)

"Suicide is surrender of the worst kind!—Not only surrendering to the Devil and letting him destroy you, but letting him destroy you by your own hand! I don't think that's any way to die as a good witness or testimony!" (ML# 1402:24, 1982)

"I was thinking today about Jonestown, where they all committed suicide—a horrible, terrible thing to do! I certainly don't think that was of the Lord, to finally give up and quit and force everybody to die! . . . He [Jones] got to the end and he didn't stand up, he gave up! . . . [and has been] such a terrible testimony to the world, to where they use him and his bunch now to accuse us and every NRM: 'Oh, they're apt to do that!'" (ML# 2843:11,14, 1993)

"We are in the business of saving lives!—Not destroying or taking them! We believe that suicide is selfish, and that anyone who commits suicide is rob-

bing God of the . . . He has given them to serve others!" (Q/A:324, )

### E. We believe in protecting our Homes, but not with deadly weapons.

"We're putting bigger and heavier bolts on the doors just in case of would-be intruders, so they can't easily butt a shoulder against the door or kick it in. They'd have to do a lot of kickin' and a lot of buttin' to get in!—And we may be there waiting for them with a baseball bat! So we're going to try to make it very inconvenient for them and very unpleasant for anybody who tries to get in who shouldn't!

"I believe in protecting our Homes, and Jesus Himself said, 'A strong man armed keepeth his goods in peace' (Luke 11:21). Well, we're not armed in the way of arms as the world thinks of them, 'Our weapons are not carnal, but are strong to the tearing down of strongholds' (2 Corinthians 10:4,5), and certainly to the protection of this house, God willing. It's illegal in many countries for us to bear arms, especially as tourists and non-citizens. Though we can't bear arms, we can put bolts on the doors and then we can expect the Lord to do the rest to protect us." (ML# 2037:134, 1985)

"We do everything we possibly can to protect ourselves to begin with and to show the world outside that we are protected!—'Armed,' Jesus said! 'Dad, you don't mean we keep guns around here!' We don't have to have guns to be armed, we've got clubs! You don't have to be armed with guns, you can be armed with wariness!—Not weariness, wariness!—Being security-conscious! You can be armed with good walls and good fences! You can be armed with good night security lighting! You can be well-armed with protection of every kind without having to shoot guns!" (ML# 2244:83, 1987)

### F. Even in the case of unlawful trespassers, we avoid violence and rely on police assistance.

"If the invader still manages to evade your main security force, and keeps running on into your property looking for whatever he's after, don't be afraid to give chase and tackle him on the spot. You may have to use a little force to prevent even greater violence. Try not to hurt anyone, but definitely, forcibly, restrain them from further trespassing and violence with whatever force it takes to do so. Jesus drove the wolves out of the fold with a whip! You may have to do the same!

"Don't use guns or weapons or anything which could seriously injure someone, if possible. Usually if you have enough strong hands and arms, these will be sufficient to grab him and hold him. He may himself get in a few licks at you, but try not to sock him back if you can help it! Your main purpose is just to grab



and hold him and restrain him further violence, damage, or injury until the police come! Whether you then actually press charges against him or not depends on the seriousness of the case." (ML# 143A:21, 1971)

## G. Our regard for the authorities:

**T**hank God for the laws and the police which are usually on the right side! Sometimes they make mistakes because they're human, and sometimes they get the wrong people, including us, instead of those who are really to blame! But usually they're on our side and have protected us from our enemies! So don't hesitate to call them when necessary!" (ML# 143A:94, 1971)

"The Lord says He sent the police and He has the powers-that-be in power to keep the peace and to keep everybody from turning into criminals and anarchists and robbers and murderers and slaughterers!—If those police didn't carry those guns, brother, we wouldn't be safe anywhere! 'He carries not the sword in vain!' (Romans 13:4) So thank God for the government! Thank God for the police!—Amen?" (ML# 1780:9, 1984)

"The Lord Himself approves of armed forces in the 13th chapter of Romans! It says we are to 'obey the power', which is the government, because He calls the officers of the law 'ministers of God' three times, and that they 'bear not the sword in vain.' Therefore they're supposed to use it if people refuse to do right and refuse to live in peace and refuse to obey! The officer of the law is supposed to use his weapon! (Maria: And that's what the Bible considers 'the government, the force that has the arms to keep things under control.) The power, which is the government, they are supposed to keep the peace, and that's what the Lord's Word says they're supposed to do. They're here for our protection, for our good, and we're supposed to obey them so that we can have peace. (Maria: That's their part of the contract, to keep the peace.)—Yes." (ML# 2242:24, 1986)

"If the cops come and you know they are legally authorised to have 'm [to remove children in our communities], then you have to give 'm up. I've said that time and again.—When the police come, officials of the local government come, then you have to yield. How many times have I said that?—But call your lawyer first to make sure." (ML# 2496:52, 1988)

"Thank God for the government! Thank God for the border guards! Thank God for the customs men that keep 'm from taking in arms and whatnot! Thank God for the electronic equipment that detects weapons, etc., so your plane doesn't get hijacked! Thank God for 'm! Be thankful you don't have anything to worry about, that you don't have any equipment or any guns or weapons or anything that they care about. Be thankful for those machines, be thankful for those x-rays and whatnot, because you shouldn't be carrying a thing that they would be interested in or afraid of." (ML# 1889:86, 1985)

## H. We do not attack our enemies. Vengeance is the Lord's, He will repay them!

**G**od will take care of them, we don't have to worry about that. We don't have to try to attack our enemies and destroy them or wreak vengeance, because the Lord says, 'Vengeance is Mine, saith the Lord, I will repay! Stand back and see Me fight! It is not thy battle but Mine! He that toucheth you toucheth the apple of Mine eye!' (Romans 12:19; 2 Chronicles 20:15,17; Zechariah 2:8) The Lord will take care of them, don't worry!" (ML# 1817:1, 1984)

## I. Ours is a spiritual warfare, our weapons are not physical.

**W**e're at war, and we fight not against flesh and blood! (Ephesians 6:12.) We're not fighting inanimate objects, we're fighting spiritual wickedness in spiritual places in the realm of the spirit! Therefore our weapons are not carnal." (ML# 1369:179, 1983)

"The only answer is this: the Love of God, the Love of Christ, nonviolence, mercy, the Spirit of Jesus Christ. That's the only thing that will ever do it, the only thing that will ever bring real revolution. Communism, Marxism, Leninism, Socialism, any other kind of ism might be able to overcome the world with guns and bullets and propaganda of the mind, but only God can change hearts. Only this truth here [in the Bible] can bring freedom." (ML# 1336:38, 1968)

"War is the Devil's own weapon to slaughter and destroy Man and maim and kill and cause agony and suffering. But God's Love is just the opposite! Love and salvation are God's weapons to create life and save life and help people to live to love and have peace and no more war." (ML# 368:14, 1975)

"The pen is mightier than the sword! Ours is a war of words and ideas to thrill men's minds with faith and hope and fill their hearts with love and peace and joy to set their spirits free, as well as acts of love and deeds of kindness to free their bodies from pain! We must therefore wage a war of words against the ideas of evil, a war of faith against fear, a war of hope against doubt. We must inspire men's spirits to believe in God and His Love and His Plan for the glorious future of Man in the Kingdom of God on earth, run by the righteous, in which there shall soon be no more sorrow nor crying nor pain nor death, but all shall be light and health and happiness and peace and plenty for everyone!" (ML# 335A:8, 1975)

\* \* \* \*

"Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves" (Matthew 10:16).

"Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God" (Matthew 5:9).

## U.S. Justice Department Indicts Deprogrammer a Second Time

*Press Release from Dr. Isaac N. Brooks, Jr.*

*President of Deprogramming Survivors Network*

*March 8, 1993*

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- A man who stood trial in December 1992 for conspiring to kidnap and deprogram an heir to the duPont fortune has been indicted for kidnapping the second time in five months. The indictment is for kidnapping and imprisoning a Washington, D.C. woman.

The Federal grand jury charges were brought in the Alexandria Division of the US District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia against Galen Kelly, a self-styled kidnapper and deprogrammer.

Kelly, according to court papers, helped kidnap Debra Dobkowski off the streets of Washington, D.C. and transported her in a van from Washington, D.C. to Leesburg, Virginia. It was discovered upon arrival that they had mistaken Dobkowski for her roommate, the real objective of the kidnapping.

At the end of the duPont conspiracy trial, presiding Judge T.S. Ellis III admonished Kelly saying: "Mr. Kelly, I don't know where matters stand with you, but this trial ought to be a clear message to you that under no circumstances is it ever justified to snatch, lift, or pull anybody off the street against their will."

Edgar Newbold Smith, co-defendant and millionaire in the duPont trial, testified that Priscilla Coates, head of the Los Angeles chapter of the Cult Awareness Network, (CAN) referred him to deprogrammer Galen Kelly. Critics have charged for years that CAN is an anti-religious group and clearing house for kidnapping and deprogrammings. Kelly is a long-time paid consultant to CAN.

The victim told the FBI that she was grabbed near her car when leaving work in Washington, D.C. about midnight May 5, 1992, and pinned against the hood of the car. "The taller one had hold of my legs..." said Dobkowski. "I thought I was going to be raped....The other guy (Galen Kelly) grabbed my upper body, twisting my arm and banging me against the car. I was thrashing and screaming as loud as I could."

The victim said Kelly threatened her: "He said they could do things to make me cooperate...that they had a whole slew of techniques, from drugs to other various methods that would force me to cooperate."

Only after Kelly threw her into a van and drove her across state lines did he learn that he had kidnapped the wrong woman. He then drove her back to Washington, D.C., and dumped her in the streets in the early hours of the next morning.

Dr. Isaac N. Brooks, Jr., president of the Deprogramming Survivors Network (DSN) said, "The tragedy of the Debra Dobkowski, the duPont man, and other similar incidents can be laid at the feet of the Cult Awareness Network and the deprogrammers, like Kelly, for whom CAN constantly drums up business. These deprogrammers are only interested in profiting from the violence they create."

DSN is an organization of religious leaders and victims of deprogramming who work to eradicate deprogramming and stress meaningful dialogue in place of violence.

The Cult Awareness Network has been fomenting hatred against religious groups, churches, and political organizations for years. They have kidnapped Evangelical Christians, Catholics, Scientologists, Episcopalians and others. It is time their violations of the law and the Constitution of the United States come to an end.

63-110-102050-11  
FBI



# The Family

A Fellowship of Independent Christian Missionary Communities

14118 Whittier Blvd. Suite 116, Whittier, CA 90605 - (310) 497-0175 - Fax: (310) 694-6685

## Children of God?/Family of Love?/ The Family!

Dear Friend,

Thank you for taking your time to read this. We are writing this letter to introduce ourselves. We are a Christian missionary movement known as *The Family* and have been actively involved in missionary outreach in over 100 countries worldwide.

We are, contrary to some accounts, a very constructive religious fellowship, comprised of individuals and families from many cultural backgrounds. We believe that faith in God and His Word provides the answers for the problems of our modern, stressful and often fear-filled world. Thus, the members of our fellowship are devoted to sharing God's Word with all we meet, giving them the message of His love and salvation through Jesus. We minister to people in all walks of life, through music, Bible classes, Gospel literature, personal counselling, videos, cassette tapes, seminars, etc. We also believe that, like the Good Samaritan Jesus spoke of, compassion for others must be more than an ideal, and that Christians should actively try to help others in need. Hence, in many parts of the world you will find the members of our fellowship involved in helping out in disaster relief efforts, ministering in refugee camps, working to rehabilitate drug addicts and gang members, visiting and encouraging the elderly, the sick, the disadvantaged and those in prisons or juvenile detention centres.

Our origins are traceable to *The Children of God* movement and we still retain the main ideals of that organisation, of going into all the world to preach the good news of salvation through Jesus Christ. However, *The Children of God* was disbanded in 1978 when our founder, Father David, who had retired from administrative functions some years earlier to concentrate on his writing, discovered the mismanagement that was going on within the group. At this time he promptly dismissed the leadership and dissolved that organisation. Those who so desired continued to follow the writings of Father David, and established a new group. That fellowship became known as *The Family of Love*. After years of growth and maturity and changes in methods of operation, and the stopping of some controversial outreach approaches, our name was simplified to *The Family*.

From the first, we have always committed ourselves to preaching and living the entire Gospel message. We have modelled our communal living on the lifestyle of the first Christians, as portrayed in the New Testament's Book of Acts. We have asserted that active missionary work is the duty of every Christian and not just a task for a few. We have preached that the love and saving power of Jesus Christ knows no limits or discrimination. We have chosen to home school our children because of the increasing violence, drug abuse, crime, low academic standards, and the prevailing anti-God sentiment in most of today's schools. We have, like the prophets of old, exposed and warned against the evils that are rampant in today's society. We have proclaimed that the world is now in the era the Bible calls the Endtime, when an evil, anti-God, new



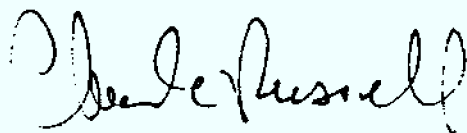
world order will soon . . . to dominance, led by the cruel, devil . . . incarnate dictator known in the Scriptures as the Antichrist. We are exposing the conspiracy now afoot to perpetrate this horror, and for these things we have suffered persecution, often at the hands of a hostile media.

We prefer not to become embroiled in battles to defend ourselves, knowing that this leads to the neglect, or at least a slowdown, of our missionary activity. However, the time has come when we must take a stand against some of the more outrageous fallacies and lies told about our fellowship. We have been greatly encouraged in this by our many friends and supporters, including many former members, and senior lawyers and barristers in the general community, who, knowing our good works, have urged us to explain ourselves and our work to the public so that sensible and level-headed people can see that we are a force for good and renewal in society.

It is to this end that we have written this letter. We have prepared a series of Statements to explain our beliefs and practices. These are summarised in the enclosed article "An Overview of Our Beliefs and Practices as Expressed in Our 'Statements'". (Also included are two articles entitled respectively "Religious Persecution" and "Victory for 'The Family' in Sydney".) If you would like to receive the full versions of these Statements, please write to us requesting the ones you would like to read and we would be happy to send these to you free of charge. If you do, however, care to include a donation to cover costs, we would be grateful, as ours is a volunteer work.

Thank you again for your time and consideration. We pray that you will avail yourself of this information, as we believe it will enable you to make a more knowledgeable appraisal of our fellowship.

Yours faithfully in Christian service,



Charles Russell  
For The Family

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE  
EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT CONTROL DATA SHEET

From: TORRES, CONG. ESTEBAN E.

To: CRT

7-19-93

ODD: 07-12-93

Date Received: 06-01-93 Date Due: ~~07-12-93~~ Control #: X93061111950

Subject & Date

05-26-93 LETTER (REC'D FROM CRT) ON BEHALF OF [REDACTED]  
REGARDING THE ACTIVITIES OF A GROUP CALLED THE CULT  
AWARENESS NETWORK (CAN) AND ITS LINK TO THE WACO INCIDENT.

b6  
b7c

Referred To: Date:  
(1) FBI;SESSIONS 06-11-93  
(2)  
(3)  
(4)

Referred To: Date:  
(5)  
(6)  
(7)  
(8)

INTERIM BY:  
Sig. For: FBI

DATE:  
Date Released:

W/IN:  
PRTY:  
2  
OPR:  
MMH

Remarks

(1) RETURN CONTROL SHEET WITH SIGNED AND DATED COPY OF THE  
RESPONSE TO EXEC. SEC., ROOM 4400-AA.

Other Remarks:

OLA CONTACT:

FILE:

*Copy sent to Exec Sec*

REMOVE THIS CONTROL SHEET PRIOR TO FILING AND DISPOSE OF APPROPRIATELY  
\*\*\*\*\*

July 16, 1993.

Honorable Esteban E. Torres  
House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515-0534

Dear Congressman Torres:

This is in further reply to your May 26th correspondence to the Department of Justice which was referred to the FBI on June 11th on behalf of [REDACTED] who represents a group called The Family. This group is requesting that the Cult Awareness Network (CAN) be investigated, particularly regarding its alleged role as an advisor in the standoff with the Branch Davidians in Waco, Texas.

As an investigative arm of the United States Department of Justice, the FBI investigates violations of Federal law which fall within our jurisdiction. We do not, however, infringe on the rights of groups to participate in activities protected by the First Amendment. If there is evidence that any group or member of a group has violated a law within the FBI's investigative authority, we would, of course, initiate an investigation. If you have such information regarding CAN, you should bring it to the attention of our local office.

The FBI became involved in the Waco situation because Federal officers were killed, a violation of Federal law that falls within our investigative jurisdiction. A principal FBI negotiator during the standoff with the Branch Davidians has advised that to his knowledge, the Cult Awareness Network did not contact the FBI about the Branch Davidians, nor was it a driving force behind law enforcement's strategy in handling this siege.

I hope this information will assist you in responding to your constituent.

Sincerely yours,

E. Michael Kahoe  
Section Chief  
Violent Crimes and Major  
Offenders Section  
Criminal Investigative Division

Mailed from FBICR  
7/20/93 [REDACTED]

b6  
b7c

63-HQ-1050305-596

1 - Executive Secretariat - Enclosure  
Room 4400-AA, DOJ

1 - SAC, Los Angeles - Enclosures  
1 - SAC, San Antonio - Enclosures

Recal 7/8/93 to [REDACTED] OPCA, from SSRA [REDACTED]

1 - Mr. Collingwood (7240)

1 - [REDACTED] (5030)

1 - [REDACTED] (5042) - Encs.

63-HQ-1050305

1 - [REDACTED] (5214) - Encs.

1 - [REDACTED] (Quantico) - Encs.

1 - CAO (7240)

1 - FBICR (4913A)

[REDACTED] (15)

SEE NOTE PAGE TWO

MAIL ROOM ☐

Honorable Estel E. Torres

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NOTE: SSA [REDACTED] TD, suspects that [REDACTED] group, THE FAMILY, may have been labeled as a cult by the CULT AWARENESS NETWORK (CAN), and this is what may have prompted her to write and seek an investigation of CAN. According to SSA [REDACTED] CAN is made up primarily of direct or indirect victims of cults, such as family and friends of cult members. They send out newsletters about groups they have labeled as cults and try to aid law enforcement and families of cult members and concerned citizens by providing information about various groups based on what they have learned from former members of said groups. While CAN has disavowed any participation in the kidnaping and deprogramming of cult members, some radical branch members have been known to do so. CAN has established its own criteria for labeling groups as cults, and those so labeled, such as the Church of Scientology and Lyndon LaRouche and his followers, have worked vigorously to avoid such classification by discrediting CAN through various publications, the media, letter-writing campaigns, and other methods. SSRA [REDACTED] Austin RA, advised that to his knowledge, CAN did not contact the command center during the siege in Waco, nor was it a driving force during the negotiations to peacefully end the standoff. This inquiry was also discussed with SSAs [REDACTED], Violent Crimes Unit, and [REDACTED] Domestic Terrorism Unit, CID. Bufiles checked.

APPROVED: *CRD/K*

Asst. Dir.:	Adm. Servs.	Inspector	Off. of EEO Affs.
Ident.	Crim. Inv.	Intell.	Off. of Liaison
Lab.	Crim. Jus. Info.	Laboratory	& Int. Affs.
Legal Coun.	Servs.	Legal Coun.	Off. of Public
Rec. Mgmt.	Ident.	Tech. Servs.	& Cong. Affs.
Training	Intell. Inq.	Training	TOA Unit

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*put*

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Honorable Bill McCollum  
House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C.

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Dear Congressman McCollum:

I am writing in response to your December 6th letter in which you enclosed a videotape from the American Justice Foundation (AJF) entitled, Waco: The Big Lie.

The videotape produced by the AJF has undergone an initial review and at best, constitutes a very selective editing process which does not accurately depict the events as they occurred at the Branch Davidian Compound. While I wish it were possible to go into greater detail concerning this tape, longstanding Department of Justice and Federal Bureau of Investigation policy prohibits me from commenting further on a pending matter. As you are aware, the events at the Branch Davidian Compound near Waco, Texas, are currently the subject of a pending FBI investigation. While this policy is sometimes frustrating, it is extremely important and aids the integrity of our criminal justice system by ensuring premature and/or inaccurate comments do not affect or prejudice future judicial proceedings.

In your letter you expressed specific concern regarding the start of the fire. I will quote a portion of the report, now public, which was completed for the Department of Justice as part of the Waco Review: "The Justice Department has sifted through a mountain of information, some of which, in accordance with Federal Statute cannot be publicly revealed. This evidence overwhelmingly proves that David Koresh and the Branch Davidians set the fire and killed themselves...."

While I have not been able to answer the specifics of your letter, I hope I have provided information which is of assistance to you. At the conclusion of judicial proceedings, should you so desire, a more detailed briefing may be possible.

Sincerely yours,

63-HQ-1050305-597X

Philip B. Heymann  
Deputy Attorney General

- Dep. Dir. \_\_\_\_\_
- ADD Adm. \_\_\_\_\_
- ADD Inv. \_\_\_\_\_
- Asst. Dir.: \_\_\_\_\_
- Adm. Serv. \_\_\_\_\_ 1 - Executive Secretariat, Room 4400-AA - Enclosure
- Crim. Inv. \_\_\_\_\_ 1 - FBI Central Registry, Room 4913A - Enclosure
- Ident. \_\_\_\_\_ 1 - SAC, Tampa - Enclosure
- Insp. \_\_\_\_\_ 1 - Mr. Potts - Enclosure
- Intell. \_\_\_\_\_ 1 - Mr. Collingwood - Enclosure
- Lab. \_\_\_\_\_ 3 - Mr. Mandigo - Enclosure
- Legal Coun. \_\_\_\_\_ 1 - [REDACTED] - Enclosure
- Rec. Mgnt. \_\_\_\_\_
- Tech. Serv. \_\_\_\_\_
- Training \_\_\_\_\_
- Cong. Affs. Off. \_\_\_\_\_
- Off. of EEO \_\_\_\_\_
- Off. Liaison & Int. Affs. \_\_\_\_\_
- Off. of Public Affs. \_\_\_\_\_
- Telephone Rm. \_\_\_\_\_
- Director's Sec'y \_\_\_\_\_

MAIL ROOM ☐

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**CHANGED TO**

89B-SA-38851-407K4

- 407K5

3027-18-94

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE  
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION  
COMMUNICATION MESSAGE FORM

## TRANSMIT VIA:

☒ Teletype

DATE: 3/2/93

^PAGE 1 OF 4

## PRECEDENCE:

☐ Immediate  
☐ Priority  
☐ Routine

## CLASSIFICATION:

☐ TOP SECRET  
☐ SECRET  
☐ CONFIDENTIAL  
☐ UNCLAS E F T O  
☒ UNCLAS

FM DIRECTOR FBI

TO ALL SACS/PRIORITY/

BT

UNCLAS

CITE: //0081//

SUBJECT: FUNERAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR BATF AGENTS KILLED, FEBRUARY  
28, 1993, AT WACO, TEXAS.

INFORMATION PERTAINING TO FUNERAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE BATF  
AGENTS THAT WERE KILLED AT WACO, TEXAS, ON FEBRUARY 28, 1993, ARE  
AS FOLLOWS:

SPECIAL AGENT STEVEN DAVID WILLIS OF THE ATF HOUSTON FIELD  
DIVISION WORKED OUT OF THE HOUSTON POST OF DUTY. BORN DECEMBER  
18, 1960, HE GRADUATED FROM SOUTHWEST TEXAS STATE UNIVERSITY IN  
SAN MARCUS, TEXAS, WITH A B.S. IN CRIMINAL JUSTICE, IN DECEMBER  
OF 1986. BEFORE JOINING ATF IN HOUSTON IN JULY OF 1990, HE

63-HQ-1050305-597

\*\*\*\*\* FOR COMM CENTER USE ONLY \*\*\*\*\*

NOTE: Copy Designations Are On The Last Page Of This Teletype!!!

Approved By \_\_\_\_\_

MRI/JUL \_\_\_\_\_

Transmitted \_\_\_\_\_

ISN \_\_\_\_\_

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670

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE  
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION  
COMMUNICATION MESSAGE FORM

^PAGE 2 UNCLAS

WORKED FOR THREE YEARS AS A SPECIAL AGENT WITH DEFENSE  
INVESTIGATIVE SERVICE.

VISITATION WILL BE FROM 6 PM UNTIL 9 PM ON THURSDAY, MARCH  
4, 1993, AT EARTHMAN FUNERAL HOME, HUNTER CREEK CHAPEL, 8303 KATY  
FREEWAY, HOUSTON, TEXAS 77024. SERVICES WILL BE HELD AT 10 AM  
ON FRIDAY, MARCH 5, 1993, AT SECOND BAPTIST CHURCH, 6400 WOODWAY  
STREET, HOUSTON, TEXAS. GRAVESIDE SERVICE WILL FOLLOW.  
EXPRESSIONS OF SYMPATHY SHOULD BE ADDRESSED TO EARTHMAN FUNERAL } ?  
HOME.

SPECIAL AGENT ROBERT J. WILLIAMS OF THE NEW ORLEANS FIELD  
DIVISION WORKED OUT OF THE LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS POST OF DUTY.  
BORN MARCH 1, 1966, HE WORKED FOR ATF FOR FOUR YEARS, ENTERING  
DUTY ON OCTOBER OF 1988. SPECIAL AGENT WILLIAMS, A GRADUATE OF  
FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY, WAS FROM JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI, AND IS  
SURVIVED BY HIS WIFE.

VISITATION WILL BE FROM 6 PM UNTIL 8 PM ON TUESDAY, MARCH 2,  
1993, AND AGAIN FROM 3 PM UNTIL 8 PM ON WEDNESDAY, MARCH 3, 1993,  
AT THE BALDWIN AND LEE FUNERAL HOME, 3780 HWY 80 E, PEARL,  
MISSISSIPPI 39288, {601} 939-6110. THERE WILL BE A CHAPEL  
SERVICE HELD AT 2 PM ON THURSDAY, MARCH 4, 1993, AT BALDWIN AND



DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE  
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION  
COMMUNICATION MESSAGE FORM

^PAGE 3 UNCLAS

LEE FUNERAL HOME. GRAVESIDE SERVICE WILL FOLLOW. EXPRESSIONS OF  
SYMPATHY SHOULD BE ADDRESSED TO: [REDACTED] }

SPECIAL AGENT CONWAY LEBLEU OF THE NEW ORLEANS FIELD  
DIVISION WORKED OUT OF THE NEW ORLEANS POST OF DUTY. ORIGINALLY  
FROM LAKE CHARLES, LOUISIANA, THE 30-YEAR-OLD SPECIAL COUNSEL WAS  
A GRADUATE OF MCNEESE STATE UNIVERSITY AND HAD BEEN WITH ATF FOR  
OVER FIVE YEARS. HE IS SURVIVED BY HIS WIFE AND TWO SONS.

VISITATION WILL BE FROM 4:30 PM UNTIL 10 PM ON TUESDAY,  
MARCH 2, 1993, AND FROM 8 AM ON WEDNESDAY, MARCH 3, 1993, UNTIL  
THE TIME OF SERVICE AT THE JOHNSON FUNERAL HOME, 4321 LAKE  
STREET, LAKE CHARLES, LOUISIANA 70605, {318} 478-8687. THERE  
WILL BE A SCRIPTURE SERVICE HELD AT 7:30 PM ON TUESDAY, MARCH 2,  
1993, AT THE JOHNSON FUNERAL HOME. THE SERVICE WILL BE AT 11 PM  
ON WEDNESDAY, MARCH 3, 1993, AT OUR LADY QUEEN OF HEAVEN CATHOLIC  
CHURCH, 3939 LAKE STREET, LAKE CHARLES, LOUISIANA. HE WILL BE  
BURIED AT CONSOLATA CEMETERY, 2300 COUNTRY CLUB ROAD, LAKE  
CHARLES, LOUISIANA. EXPRESSIONS OF SYMPATHY SHOULD BE ADDRESSED

TO: [REDACTED] }

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE  
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION  
COMMUNICATION MESSAGE FORM

^PAGE 4 UNCLAS

SPECIAL AGENT TODD W. MCKEEHAN OF THE NEW ORLEANS FIELD DIVISION WORKED OUT OF NEW ORLEANS FIELD DIVISION, AND HE HAS BEEN AN ATF AGENT FOR OVER THREE YEARS. THE 28-YEAR-OLD WAS FROM ELIZABETHON, TENNESSEE, AND A GRADUATE OF EASTERN TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY. HE WAS A VETERAN OF DESERT STORM. SPECIAL AGENT MCKEEHAN IS SURVIVED BY HIS WIFE.

THE FAMILY WILL RECEIVE FRIENDS FROM 6 PM UNTIL 9 PM ON THURSDAY, MARCH 4, 1993, AT HATHAWAY PERCY FUNERAL HOME, F & ROAN STREET, ELIZABETHON, TENNESSEE 37643, {615} 543-5544. THE SERVICE WILL BE AT THE FUNERAL HOME ON FRIDAY, MARCH 5, 1993, AT 2 PM. BURIAL WILL BE AT HAPPY VALLEY MEMORIAL PARK, ELIZABETHON, TENNESSEE. EXPRESSIONS OF SYMPATHY SHOULD BE ADDRESSED TO:

b6  
b7C [REDACTED]  
70470. IN LIEU OF FLOWERS: CENTRAL CHURCH OF CHRIST BUILDING FUND, C/O JULY CLARK, ROUTE 6, BOX 276, JUNCTION CITY, TENNESSEE 37601.

BT

////

63-HQ-1050305-597X

**CHANGED TO**

89B-SA-38851-387X4

302

7-18-94

148  
[REDACTED] b6  
[REDACTED] b7C  
August 15, 1993

Judge Louis Freeh  
Office of the Director  
Federal Bureau of Investigation  
J. Edgar Hoover FBI Bldg.  
10th and Pennsylvania Ave. N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20535

Dear Judge Freeh:

I hope at this time you have taken over as head of the FBI and are getting the organization out of politics and the political vendettas of the past couple of years and back to obeying and enforcing the law. The Waco incident was a fiasco from the start and the FBI definately didn't improve on it much. BATF was probably wrong in conducting an armed raid when their search warrant listed nothing illegal after the local sherrif had no trouble serving arrest warrants there in the past. I feel both federal agents and a number of citizens died needlessly because Mr. Sessions was trying to impress President Clinton with an apparent anti-gun action.

Sincerely,  
[REDACTED] b6  
[REDACTED] b7C

63-HQ-1050305-598

b6  
b7C  
[REDACTED]

b6  
b7C  
[REDACTED]

September 2, 1993

[Redacted]

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Dear [Redacted]

Your recent communication to Director Freeh about the unfortunate ending to the standoff with the Branch Davidians in Waco, Texas, has been referred to me for reply. We appreciate your interest in sharing your views and observations with us.

All of us in the FBI share your anguish over the needless loss of life, both Agents and Davidians. Unfortunately, our trained negotiators were unable to convince David Koresh to bring this situation to a peaceful resolution. The events of April 19th were tragic for everyone involved--those who lost their lives, their families and friends, and the dedicated law enforcement officers who spent time away from their families in unselfish service to our country. Our efforts are currently under review, and I believe it will be determined that, given the circumstances, the actions taken by law enforcement were responsible and reasonable.

Sincerely yours,

151

Michael F. Knapp  
Inspector-Deputy Chief  
Office of Public and  
Congressional Affairs

63-HQ-1050305-599

- Dep. Dir. \_\_\_\_\_
- ADD Adm. \_\_\_\_\_
- ADD Inv. \_\_\_\_\_
- Asst. Dir.:
- Adm. Servs. \_\_\_\_\_
- Crim. Inv. \_\_\_\_\_
- CJIS \_\_\_\_\_
- Ident. \_\_\_\_\_
- Info. Mgmt. \_\_\_\_\_
- Insp. \_\_\_\_\_
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- Lab. \_\_\_\_\_
- Legal Coun. \_\_\_\_\_
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- Training \_\_\_\_\_
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- Off. Liaison \_\_\_\_\_
- & Int. Affs. \_\_\_\_\_
- Off. of Public \_\_\_\_\_
- & Cong. Affs. \_\_\_\_\_
- TOC Office \_\_\_\_\_
- Telephone Rm. \_\_\_\_\_
- Director's Office \_\_\_\_\_

- SAC, Detroit - Enclosure
- Bufiles contain no record of
- Mr. Collingwood, Room 7240

(5)

[Redacted]

MAILED 1

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FBI

C/W/T

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b7c

[Redacted]

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1P-5  
310/54  
[REDACTED]  
September 1, 1993

Mr. Louis Freeh  
Director, Federal Bureau of Investigation  
9th Street & Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20535

Dear Mr. Freeh:

As you are now responsible for the conduct of the FBI, I am urging you to ask for an independent prosecutor's investigation of all events and evidence of the attack on U.S. citizens in Waco, Texas on February 28, 1993. In making this demand I stand behind Amendment 14 of the United States Constitution.

We, the American people, have been lied to about this entire incident, and are outraged that our government could and would target for murder citizens of this nation. You need to know, however, that the truth is coming out.

Document research and videotape show:

- 1) The warrants used by the ATF contain numerous errors.
- 2) The ATF agents who died on February 28 were probably killed by the ATF.
- 3) U.S. Military men and equipment were used, a violation of the Posse Comitatus Act (Title 18, USC).
- 4) After the 28 Feb raid, approximately 100 citizens, many of them women and children, were subjected to vulgar, disgusting and illegal psychological warfare. In addition, foreign military personnel (British SAS) aided in the surveillance of these citizens.
- 5) On April 19, 1993 these citizens were murdered by the United States Government. The fire was started by tank-mounted flamethrowers that were supposedly dispensing tear gas. During the fire those same tanks are seen pushing parts of the house into the fire, thereby destroying criminal evidence.

The facts of this entire case have been kept from the American people. You are hereby advised that We The People demand an immediate, fully independent investigation, with swift prosecution of those criminally responsible.

Sincerely,  
[REDACTED]  
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b7C  
63-HQ-1050305-600  
b6  
b7C  
OPCA [REDACTED]

154  
310

September 22, 1993

[REDACTED]

b6  
b7c

Dear [REDACTED]

Your recent communication to Director Freeh about the standoff with the Branch Davidians in Waco, Texas, has been referred to me for reply.

No one feels the loss of life during an investigation more acutely than the FBI and other law enforcement personnel who are charged with the protection of others and who daily place their own lives on the line in the discharge of their duties. In the FBI, as with any incident that involves loss of life, we very carefully examine all of the aspects of the investigation, and we use what we learn to make us better at what we do.

Although the vast majority of the people who wrote or called us about the situation at the Branch Davidian compound voiced approval for the actions taken, we are both mindful and respectful of those who disagreed. Our actions in this matter are currently under review, and I believe it will be found that, given the circumstances, we acted reasonably and responsibly.

FBI

Sincerely yours,

Michael F. Knapp  
Inspector-Deputy Chief  
Office of Public and  
Congressional Affairs

63-HQ-1050305-601

- SAC, Dallas - Enclosure
- Mr. Collingwood, Room 7240
- [REDACTED] Room 5042

NOTE: No record of [REDACTED] in Bufiles.

Dep. Dir.	
ADD Adm.	
ADD Inv.	
Asst. Dir.:	
Adm. Servs.	
Crim. Inv.	
CJIS	
Ident.	
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Legal Coun.	
Tech. Servs.	
Training	
Off. of EEOA	
Off. Liaison	
& Int. Affs.	
Off. of Public	
& Cong. Affs.	
COM Office	
Telephone Rm.	
Director's Office	

MAIL ROOM ☐

(6) b6  
b7c  
MFC

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310 54

201-11/2-3

[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

19th August 1993

Waco TX

Dear Sir,

I have always been an avid admirer of the FBI and the work it does, and have from as far back as I can remember always felt a compelling trust towards the organization, a trust that surpasses reasoning.

A few months ago I was angered at how the media was attacking the FBI, for the way it had handled the Waco incident, with no consideration for the four agents who had lost their lives, standing up for justice and their belief in America. My mind thus filled with an idea, I started working on a poem with this subject as my main theme. Although I started this poem in March 93, with the first four verses being written within a few days, I hit a mental block, and have only recently been able to complete it to my satisfaction.

As most of my poems lay dormant within the confines of a draw, I thought you might like a copy, which I thus enclose. If you would like a larger hand written version, to thus display, I would be pleased to draft a copy which will be given freely.

There are those, even in foreign countries, who appreciate the FBI, and feel an extra sense of security because of its existence.

63-HQ-1050305-602

b6  
b7C

Yours faithfully

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

b6  
b7C

EPCH  
[REDACTED]



**Murder In The Name Of God**  
-----

Another four brave operatives, lay murdered in the dust,  
For standing up for justice, and all we hold so right,  
Another four brave operatives, give their greatest sacrifice,  
So we may live in harmony, in peace, and without plight.

Yet as I write these words of verse, in memory, to the dead,  
They seem to be forgotten, by the media, and the press,  
As we are told, what should have been; by those whom would presume,  
A knowledge, far supreme than those; concerned, but without reason.

The firery flames brought Waco down, ever kindled by the night,  
As self proclaimed, Messiah as thee, was taken from one's sight,  
Unto thy end, thou did bequest, a reason for thy being,  
Which unlike any other, required the slaughter of our children.

The FBI; stands in splendour here, for numerous and all to see,  
For whatever course thou did take; there would be those; who disagree,  
Those without an answer, those without a cure,  
Those with nothing better to do, but complain; until their blue.

Maybe a thought, for those who ponder, or those who might complain,  
Would be to imagine our world today, without your existence or domain,  
Imagine also, if you will, the turbulent zones of torment,  
That might engulf your life today, if not for those; of the bureau.

-----  
[REDACTED] 9-3-93 (England) b6  
b7c

Dedicated to the members of The Federal Bureau of Investigation,  
past and present.

63-10000-1000

310

154

SEP 17 1993

AIRMAIL

[Redacted]

b6 b7c

Dear [Redacted]

Thank you for your August 19th letter expressing your support of the FBI and its handling of the siege at the Mount Carmel Compound in Waco, Texas. It's good to hear from our friends and supporters in England and to know the FBI's work is appreciated in the international arena.

I also appreciate your sending me a copy of your poem. All of us in the FBI regret the needless loss of lives in the Waco compound, and our hearts go out to the families of the four Special Agents of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms and those of the Branch Davidians who died as a result of this tragic situation.

I know my colleagues will join me in thanking you for your thoughtfulness in writing.

Sincerely yours,

Louis J. Freeh

Louis J. Freeh  
Director

63-HQ-1050305-603

MAILED 18

SEP 21 1993

FBI

- LEGAT, London - Enclosures
- Mr. Collingwood (Room 7240)
- Mr. R. Bucknam (Room 7176)
- Mr. Shapiro (Room 7176)
- [Redacted] (Room 7176)
- LSG (Room 5991)

NOTE: Bufiles contained no record of [Redacted]

(9)

b6  
b7c

APPROPRIATE

Adm. Servs.

Comm. Inv.

Crim. Inv.

Ident.

Intell.

Lab.

Legal Coun.

Plan. & Insp.

Inspection

Intell.

Lab.

Legal Coun.

Plan. & Insp.

Rec. Mgmt.

Tech. Servs.

Training

Off. of EEO Affs.

Off. of Liaison

Off. of Public Affs.

Off. of Cong. Affs.

Off. of Int. Affs.

Off. of Legal Coun.

Off. of Plan. & Insp.

Off. of Rec. Mgmt.

Off. of Tech. Servs.

Off. of Training

MAIL ROOM

☒

157  
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Congress of the United States  
House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

September 1, 19 93

Waco TX

TO: CONGRESSIONAL LIAISON  
Federal Bureau of Investigation  
Office of Public &  
Congressional Affairs  
10th and Pennsylvania N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20535

[REDACTED] b6  
b7C

Sir:

The attached communication is sent  
for your consideration. Please investigate  
the statements contained therein and for-  
ward me the necessary information for  
reply.

Yours truly,

63 HQ-1050305/604

BOB STUMP, M.C.  
Third District, Arizona

PLEASE RETURN TO:

2001 Federal Building  
Phoenix, Arizona 85025

ATTN: Bruce Bartholomew

Interim response  
dated 9-9-93

Final Rck  
12-4-93  
[REDACTED]  
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OPCH  
[REDACTED]  
b6  
b7C

Sunday, August 22, 1993



**WILLIAM P. CRESSHIRE**  
Senior Editorial Columnist

# Looking beyond the Waco smoke

**A**n anonymous tipster sent me a videotape the other day describing in startling detail the government's shootout, siege and ultimate destruction — possibly deliberate — of the Branch Davidian compound outside Waco, Texas.

The tape is the production of Linda D. Thompson, an Indianapolis lawyer who traveled to Waco to protest the government's initial assault on the compound, which left four agents dead, and now devotes most of her time to investigating how 80 or so people died 50 days later when the place was torched.

According to agents of the FBI and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, the followers of guru David Koresh set fire to their own building when it was stormed by tanks and a small army of heavily armed government agents. But the videotape, clearly shows one of the tanks crashing into the building, then backing out again, just belching from its turret.

## Eyewitnesses lacking

This received virtually no publicity because the media were kept under wraps. On a story of this magnitude, reporters and cameramen normally would have been on the scene providing first-hand coverage. But in this instance the press acquiesced in extraordinary restraints.

Search and arrest warrants were sealed, and when government agents settled down for what was to be a seven-week siege, the press was allowed to get no closer than two miles from the Branch Davidian compound. As the tanks rolled and the feds broke out their grenades and submachine guns for the final assault on April 19, reporters and cameramen gathered behind distant roadblocks, waiting for government handouts. Miles away the compound was being burned to the ground.

A school board can't meet in secret without the media going ballistic. Thompson says, but here the government conducted a massive armored assault on civilians, unencumbered by witnesses.

"I'm very discouraged that reporters weren't being more aggressive in Waco," Phil Record, ombudsman for the Fort Worth Star-Telegram, told Mark Holmberg of the Rutherford Institute in Charlottesville, Va. "If there had been a few neutral eyes up there, I would feel much better about it."

Thompson is more blunt. "Reporters sucked up everything the ATF and FBI told them," she says. "They're a bunch of weenies and sheep. None of them had the guts to ask challenging questions or the intelligence to ask constitutional questions."

## Flame thrower identified

I reached Thompson by phone at the American Justice Federation, a civil liberties group she operates. She now has identified the tank seen backing out of the Branch Davidian building, she told me.

"It was an M67A1 tank manufactured by Chrysler," she said. This tank, equipped with a flamethrower, is no longer in service and, according to Thompson, had to be taken from "the graveyard" for the Waco assignment. The clear implication is that the government deliberately set fire to the Branch Davidian compound, killing some 17 children and 69 adults.

Arizona Enquirer  
6115 North 32nd Avenue  
Phoenix, AZ 85017-1511  
(602) 973-2425

**WACO**

Was it the most shocking, horrifying crime in U.S. history?

Did the FBI and the BATF murder the Branch Davidians?

See videotape evidence that will shock and enrage you. Watch as military tanks use flame-throwers to start the fires.

Decide for yourself whether the BATF agents were killed by their own men! (Strangely enough, the first three agents killed were all former Clinton bodyguards)

This 30 minute tape was compiled from hundreds of hours of video evidence obtained and analyzed by the American Justice Federation.

Wide distribution of this evidence may be the only way that the American people will get at the truth about our government's actions in Waco.

Proceeds from tape sales will be used to see that every member of Congress gets a copy. They won't be able to say they don't know what went on!

Buy this tape! Show it to as many others as possible. Order from:

American Justice Federation  
3850 S. Emerson Ave., Suite E  
Indianapolis, IN 46203  
\$20.00 (includes postage)

I asked how she found out about the M67A1, a little-known weapon to which even Jane's Armour and Artillery gives only brief mention. "The driver who drove it from Fort Hood called me," she said.

At the end of the Waco madness, President Clinton said that the Branch Davidians had "burned themselves up" — an allegation that, in the light of Linda Thompson's allegations, Congress needs to investigate.

Already, *The Washington Post* reports, the Waco embarrassment has prompted a major reshuffle at the ATF. Some officials may be forced to retire, the *Post* says, and the chief of the intelligence division could be denied "future promotions."

Such punishments seem hardly proportionate.

As a consequence of the Rodney King beating in Los Angeles, two police officers were tried for the assault and acquitted, then tried again for civil rights violations and sentenced to two and a half years in the federal penitentiary.

How is it that federal agents responsible for the death of more than 80 men, women and children may be permitted to retire or even to keep their present jobs?

43 157  
82 141

**Dear Congressman Stump:**

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b7c

GCT 05 1993

I hope this information will be of assistance to you in corresponding with your constituent.

S

[illegible]

63-HQ-1050305-605  
b6 b7C  
e, Room 7240 (detached)

(10)

MAIL ROOM ☒

b6  
b7c



# CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES

September 1, 1993

RECEIVED  
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

93 SEP -9 P2:36

EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT

The Honorable Janet Reno  
U.S. Attorney General  
Department of Justice  
Room 5111  
10th & Constitution NW  
Washington, D.C., 20530

Dear Attorney General Reno:

[REDACTED] is a constituent of mine who is involved in the issue of cult awareness as the result of a personal experience.

I have enclosed some information assembled by [REDACTED] that may be of interest to you in light of the investigation of the recent cult activities in Waco and the ensuing tragedy.

I hope this information is helpful.

Sincerely,

*Christopher*  
Christopher Shays  
Member of Congress

CS:wh

Enclosure

Congressman  
Christopher Shays  
Fourth District Connecticut

Offices  
10 Middle Street, 11th Floor  
Bridgeport, CT 06604  
579-5870

Government Center  
888 Washington Boulevard  
Stamford, CT 06901  
357-8277

City Hall  
125 East Avenue  
Norwalk, CT 06851  
866-6469

34 Longworth Building  
Washington, DC 20515-0700  
225-5541

ENCL. BEHIND FILE

Final Ack  
10/5/93

Interim response  
dated 9-21-93

63-HQ-1050305-606

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& PCH

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE  
EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT CONTROL DATA SHEET

From: SHAYS, CONG. CHRISTOPHER

To: AG.

ODD: 10-13-93

Date Received: 09-09-93 Date Due: 10-13-93 Control #: X93091420836

Subject & Date

09-01-93 LETTER ON BEHALF OF

REGARDING HER INVOLVEMENT IN THE ISSUE  
OF CULT AWARENESS AND HER GOAL TO EDUCATE THE PUBLIC  
ABOUT THE HARMFUL EFFECTS OF MIND CONTROL AS USED BY  
DESTRUCTIVE CULTS.

b6  
b7c

Referred To: Date:

(1) FBI; FREEH 09-14-93

(2)

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INTERIM BY:

Sig. For: FBI

Referred To: Date:

DATE:

Date Released:

W/IN:

PRTY:

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OPR:

DEB

Remarks

INFO CC: OLA. ORIGINAL TO AG. FILES.

(1) RETURN CONTROL SHEET WITH SIGNED AND DATED  
COPY OF THE RESPONSE TO EXEC. SEC., ROOM 4400-AA.

Other Remarks:

FILE:

Rec'd with OPR  
9/24

REMOVE THIS CONTROL SHEET PRIOR TO FILING AND DISPOSE OF APPROPRIATELY  
\*\*\*\*\*



[REDACTED]  
August 15, 1993

b6

b7c

The Honorable Christopher Shays  
House of Representatives  
1034 Longworth Building  
Washington, DC 20515-5541

Dear Mr. Shays,

The recent events at Waco prompt this letter. That tragic affair makes it obvious that the lessons of Jonestown have been lost on our Government officials. In the years between Waco and Jonestown, many books and articles have been written about destructive cults, much research has been done, many educational conferences have been held, many letters have been written by people like me who have been affected by cults—evidently all to no avail. The Branch Davidians were treated as hostages. In reality, they were victims of a man obsessed with the need for power and sex who deceptively recruited them and maintained his control over them through sustained manipulation. They lost the power of rational thought and became, in effect, his slaves. David Koresh is responsible for those deaths and there may have been no way to prevent the holocaust. However, in the face of all the painfully acquired knowledge about destructive cults acquired over many years, it was sad to see all the wrong approaches being used and the wrong people consulted.

My interest in destructive cults derives from the fact that my younger son has been a member of one such group for many years. He became a member of the Divine Light Mission (now called Elan Vital) at a time of turmoil in his life, the result of a failed romance. An idealistic youth, he was lured into the DLM by the Guru's promise to bring "peace to the world." The sole result of our son's years of hard work and lean living has been to assist in bringing wealth to the Guru so that he (the Guru) can maintain and expand his playboy style of life.

Followers of the Guru are explicitly taught not to think for themselves. Control of their minds is achieved through constant meditation, listening to tapes which expound the Divine Light philosophy, and attendance at nightly meetings called Satsang, which are partly worship, partly witnessing. Besides donating money and material goods, all devotees are expected to give service, i.e. free labor. They are also told to cut ties with former friends and family (unless they can get money from them). This is a common thread in destructive cults and, as you may imagine, the cause of much anguish for families.

To my mind, the most destructive thing about cults (aside from causing death or severe physical or mental disease) is that they destroy individuality. Cult leaders want their members to be stamped from the same mold. Obviously this makes control easier. So they are discouraged from developing their talents, in many cases are told to drop out of college. They are to do what the leader wants them to do, regardless of their own abilities or desires. This is devastating for the individual and, again, anguishing for the parents.

I am a member of the Connecticut affiliate of the Cult Awareness Network, a national organization of volunteers whose goal is to educate the public about the harmful effects of mind control as used by destructive cults. CAN confines its concerns to unethical or illegal practices and does not judge dogma or beliefs. Cult abuses are manifold including, to quote from CAN literature, "child abuse, neglect and death; illegal and fraudulent immigration; drug dealing; smuggling money, cars, guns, gems; fraud and deceit in

recruiting, business, financial records and fundraising; theft; harassment of families and former followers with threats, law suits and foul play; stockpiling and smuggling weapons and ammunition; beatings; sexual abuse and prostitution; kidnapping; murder; attempted murder, and psychological and emotional damage." In spite of these well documented abuses, the First Amendment is almost always invoked whenever there is an attempt to prosecute leaders of a so-called religious cult. At the time when Sun Myung Moon was being tried for tax evasion, obstruction of justice, and other crimes, a coalition of religious and civil liberties groups attempted to prevent his conviction. A similar coalition has urged Congress to refrain from investigating new or unpopular religious groups in the wake of Waco, according to the June, 1993 issue of "Church and State". "The organizations- including the American Baptist Churches, , the National Council of Churches, the American Civil Liberties Union, the Episcopal Church, the National Association of Evangelicals, the Presbyterian church(U.S.A), and the Union of American Hebrew Congregations - said they were concerned that Congress would use hearings it convened after the tragedy to attack minority religious groups labeled as 'cults' ".No religious group should be above the law. Of course, a number of cults call themselves religions in order to avoid taxes. If all religious groups were required to disclose their finances, it would deal a blow to those destructive cults, such as the Unification Church, which abuse their tax exempt status. The legitimate religions would have nothing to fear.

In their article, "How Many Jonestowns Will it Take?", (copy enclosed) Herbert Rosedale, President, and Michael Longone, Executive Director, of the scholarly research organization, the American Family Foundation, comment that "society, including the FBI, still does not understand the special features that set cults apart from other groups". and "The centrality of sustained, exploitative manipulation distinguishes cults from benign new movements and mainstream religions." Mind control, coercive persuasion, and behavior modification without informed consent are some of the terms used to describe what happens to keep people in cults, once they have been deceptively recruited. Psychological manipulation is real . It is what makes cults possible and explains why normal, intelligent people will follow such leaders as Jim Jones and David Koresh to their deaths. It is my hope that you and other government leaders will come to understand that mind control is a crime and should be prosecuted as such. I recommend the book Combatting Cult Mind Control by Steven Hassan.

Sincerely yours,

[Redacted Signature]

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# The Cult Experience: Myth and Reality

Cult Observer Report

June 1, 1988

By Paul Engel, M. S. W.

There are a great many myths about the cult experience that need to be exposed and publicized, and there really is no better way to do this than to relate the major points of a talk on the subject given by renowned cult expert and clinician Professor Margaret Thaler Singer of the University of California (Berkeley) at a conference of the Cult Awareness Network several years ago. As an ex-cult member myself, who has has twelve years' experience in counseling cult-involved individuals and families, I find Professor Singer's insights right on the mark.

The myths to which I refer include the following notions: that people freely choose to get involved in a cult; that they get what they are looking for; that they are "suckers"; and that cult members are always happy and content. In fact, many cult recruits are unwitting and unhappy victims of a manipulative process which, according to Professor Singer, leads to "an enforced dependency position as a result of being subjected to a thought reform program."

The notion of free choice is a myth because the cult member is subjected to mind-altering techniques which gradually induce him to allow important decisions to be made by others, for example, to join the group, to shun family, friends, and old associations, and the like.

The myth that only the weak-minded or psychopathological (that is, "sick") get involved in cults is belied by the fact that the best recruits are usually open, intelligent, and sincere persons. They are also often idealistic, naive about cults' manipulative practices, and vulnerable principally because they are undergoing life transitions involved in such events as the loss of a loved one, moving into another phase of life, or some change in identity. Professor Singer says that persons undergoing such traumatic transitions

comprise two-thirds of cult members. The fact that everyone is thus susceptible to cult involvement at one time or another in his life also gives the lie to the opinion, unfortunately still held by many professionals, that there are certain personality features characteristic of cult joiners. This has been found to be simply untrue.

The belief that cult members are suckers, who deserve whatever pain and suffering they get from membership because they secretly desired it, is similar to, and just as wrong, as the "blame the victim" attitude many have toward those who have been raped.

The final myth is that the cult member must be happy or satisfied in the group because he or she remains in it. But much of what appears to be satisfaction is a front; members are not allowed to show discord, pain, or any "negativity." If they do, punishment by the group, or even self-punishment, will result. Indeed, guilt and fear are two major factors keeping people from leaving. Guilt is instilled for deviation when the cult convinces the member that his way is the only way to salvation or to worldly success. Fear is produced through the circulation of stories about the tragic results of leaving the group: death, institutionalization, loss of grace.

There is no real relief for the confusion and pain which this guilt and fear induce. The individual is essentially trapped inside of a closed totalitarian system. That is why I feel that outside help is generally needed to deal with the problems created by living in such a system, even if the member leaves without the intervention of family or friends. In any case, I believe that people should not simply be left in a cult, or blamed for their involvement. They should be treated as victims, and in a respectful, ego-enhancing way, as well.

Author Paul Engel, himself a former cult member, has for twelve years counseled cult-involved individuals and



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**"The myth that only the weak-minded or psychopathological (that is, "sick") get involved in cults is belied by the fact that the best recruits are usually open, intelligent, and sincere persons."**

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families. He was also one of the founders of FOCUS, the Former Cult Members Support Network, and is currently a vice-president of the Cult Awareness Network, a nationwide affiliation of grassroots groups working in the field of cult education.



## FEATURE ARTICLE

## Waco a microcosm of problems with extremist groups

by Patricia Ryan

The Rodney King case has rightfully led to much soul-searching, going beyond just the trials of the four men to examine the problem of racism in America, and what equality and justice really mean in our pluralistic society.

By contrast, the events of Waco have brought a markedly different reaction. One caller to WAMU radio in Washington, D.C. recently characterized the followers of Waco as "weirdos, who deserved to die." A homemaker, herself a mother, told a reporter that she could never understand "how a mother could allow her child to burn to death." The general reaction of the public has been to distance itself from the Waco tragedy, as if Waco were somehow merely a minor blemish on the face of American society.

However, if we were to place Waco in the wider context of how extremist groups function in this country, beneath the beauty of the American system—of democracy, freedom and human rights for all—there may fester an infection that, if unchecked, is every bit as harmful to innocent and vulnerable Americans as racism.

Bruce Perry, chief of psychiatry at Texas Children's Hospital, headed the team that interviewed the children of Koresh's followers who were released from the Waco compound in the early days of the siege. The children were disciplined regularly with a paddle called "the helper" or by being denied food. According to Perry they were "living in an environment which had an unhealthy, malignant and predatory quality of sexuality." Most of them, he said, felt "a great deal of fear of David Koresh."

January 17, 1991, seven members of Ecclesia, a Los Angeles-based group that had moved members to an isolated area of Oregon, pleaded guilty to conspiracy to deny civil rights, plea bargaining in exchange for dismissal of 29 counts of

involuntary servitude or slavery—for enslaving more than 50 children and regularly beating them with paddles and other instruments. One 8-year-old died from a beating she sustained for stealing food.

Is there a common thread here?

FBI documents report that Koresh and followers possessed illegal weapons such as fully-automatic assault rifles and grenades. Koresh's people spent \$199,715 on the weapons and ammunition, including .50 caliber armor-piercing bullets, in the months before the Feb. 28 raid.

On October 13, 1989, Ed Francis, husband of guru Elizabeth Clare Prophet of Church Universal and Triumphant, who lives at the 12,000-acre headquarters of the group in Montana, pleaded guilty to conspiring with another group member, Vernon Hamilton, to illegally purchase an estimated \$130,000 in weapons intercepted by law-enforcement officers. The cache included armor-piercing bullets, seven tripod-mounted Barret .50-caliber semi-automatic rifles equipped with sophisticated range finders, and more.

Is there a common thread here?

Koresh followers, including children, tell of suicide drills. Independent arson experts from the Houston Fire Department who have examined the remains of the compound say that the fire that destroyed Apocalypse Ranch was deliberately set by Koresh followers, not by any accident related to a knocked-over lantern. McClennan County justice of the peace David Pareya has revealed that several of the bodies removed from the compound show bullet holes.

Tapes removed from Jonestown, Guyana in 1978 reveal how Jim Jones had his followers practice "white night" suicide drills, and that on November 18 these followers participated in a "white night" by drinking cyanide or giving it to the children. The body of my own father, Congressman Leo J. Ryan, was one of



Patricia Ryan

the bullet-ridden bodies removed from Jonestown.

Is there a common thread here?

If we don't look closely, we're not going to be able to truly determine how many of these threads are, in fact, being woven through the fabric of American society.

Civil libertarians might cry that any examination of groups that are "religious" in nature is tantamount to a witch-hunt.

It was not a witch-hunt that NBC cameraman Bob Brown recorded for the American public to watch on the evening news in 1978 even as he lay dying on an airstrip in Guyana. Brown's footage captured my father—a respected member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee who had traveled to Guyana to investigate human rights violations of American citizens—being assassinated with Brown, Don Harris of NBC, Greg Robinson of the San Francisco Examiner and others because of People's Temple leader Jim Jones.

It was not a witch-hunt as Americans witnessed on April 19 on the national news at least 17 children and several dozen adults being burned to death because of David Koresh.

continued on page 6



## Spain, continued from page 1

ternationally, but educating youth and increasing the awareness about the harms and dangers of cults. The congress hopes to develop recommendations to present to the European Economic Community (EEC) to protect society against manipulation and coercive persuasion.

Topics discussed at the congress included a talk on sociocultural aspects of the cultic phenomenon, educational programs to prevent the influence of destructive cults, characteristics of cultic groups, a panel of former members of totalist groups, and methods of treatment



Conference speaker Peter Manoski discussed his experiences with a totalist group which operates in Europe and America.

and exit-counseling. Other panels consisted of dialogues on legal and political issues surrounding the cult phenomenon as well as psychological and psychiatric disorders caused by involvement in cults.

CAN National Board members Dr. Paul Martin and Rev. William Kent Burner were featured presenters at the conference. Other speakers from America included exit counselor David Clark and Michael Langone, Executive Director of the American Family Foundation (AFF).



Rev. Kent Burner, contributing author to *Cults, Sects and the New Age* by Rev. James LeBar, offered ideas for education programs on the cult phenomenon.

## IRS arrests Alamo, continued from page 2

claim against Alamo for failing to pay taxes on income earned from a variety of businesses that flourished during the 1980s. Alamo followers often worked in his businesses, including retail stores and manufacturing plants, where his designer clothes were made, for little or no money.

In 1985, Alamo was assessed \$7.9 million in taxes for operating businesses

as religious enterprises where his followers worked in sweatshop conditions for as little as \$20 a week.

(From "Evangelist Tony Alamo arrested on tax charges," *The Los Angeles Times*, April 24, 1993; and "Judge delays decision on bail for evangelist Alamo," *The Los Angeles Times*, April 27, 1993.)

## Waco, continued from page 5

A lasting image of Waco reported by the New York Times was that of two bodies found entwined, a mother holding a child. We can view that woman, whoever she was, as strange or crazy, not like anyone we might ever know. Or we can view her as someone's daughter, sister, mother and wife. As someone who slipped unnoticed under the spell of Koresh because neither her family, the community in which she lived, nor the state or federal government had a grasp of what destructive cults really are. As someone who, under different circumstances than life ultimately dealt her, might have raised a child who could have made a significant contribution to making this country a better place.

If the Rodney King case can teach us something about America's problems and how we must allocate resources to avoid these problems in the future, then why can not Waco teach us similar lessons?

Do we assign a higher priority to preventing the senseless burning of real estate than to the burning of children? If so, our message to the world is that our position on constitutional liberties, while important in the abstract, reveals a willingness to allow children to be murdered rather than coming to terms with what it really means to guarantee those liberties for the weak and the innocent.

The road from Jonestown to Waco is littered with the suffering of thousands of innocent victims who became caught up in fanatical, and often dangerous, groups. We can face responsibility for this issue now, or we can face it later, on the nightly news.

Patricia Ryan, M.P.A., is the president of the Cult Awareness Network. This is the full-length version of an edited article which, at press time, was scheduled to appear May 12, 1993 in the Los Angeles Times.

The Congressional Quarterly has published a special 24-page issue on "Cults in America: Is the alarm about new religious movements justified?" Single copies available for \$7.00 each from Congressional Quarterly, Inc., 1414 22nd St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20037, or by calling Customer Service a (202) 88708671. Ask for Volume 3, no. 17.

# How Many Jonestowns Will it Take?

Herbert L. Rosedale, Esq., President  
Michael D. Langone, Ph. D., Executive Director  
American Family Foundation

**T**he tragedy at the Branch Davidian compound in Waco has focused attention on the Justice Department's effectiveness in dealing with David Koresh and his followers. Lacking all the information pertaining to the ATF's and FBI's decision-making, we hesitate to join the "blame chorus." Perhaps the authorities made serious mistakes. Perhaps not. Their job was exceedingly difficult. The personal responsibility they must have felt and continue to feel ought to

elicit sympathy in all of us. We doubt that any level-headed person would have been eager to step into their shoes.

In our work with the American Family Foundation, we have conducted research studies and organized educational programs for professionals from many disciplines. What is clear to us as cult experts is that, despite Jonestown and a host of mini-tragedies, society, including the



Herbert Rosedale

FBI, still does not understand the special features that set cults apart from other groups.

Cults are not merely weird groups that crazy people find attractive. Cults are massive, enduring cons. Although individuals may join cults during periods of stress and demoralization, most cult joiners are more or less within the normal range psychologically. They do not join groups because they have made a rational and informed decision that these groups will benefit them. They join because they are seduced through a gradual, step-by-step process of deceit and manipulation designed to advance the leader's objectives, regardless of the harm caused to members. The centrality of sustained, exploitative manipulation distinguishes cults from benign new movements and mainstream religions.

**A**ll cult leaders are charismatic, persuasive personalities. Those that are at the top of their trade gain virtually absolute control over their followers. Some cult leaders are con men who are very much aware that their main goal is to make money. Others are psychopathic personalities whose primary motivation may be the pleasure of wielding power over others or the satisfaction of endowing their idiosyncratic delusions with the pseudo-reality of their followers' manipulated adulation. Such leaders may often come to believe in their own convoluted "theologies," the underlying purpose of which is to enhance their power and sustain their delusional systems. If David Koresh had been a mere "con man" who was in it for the money, the FBI probably

would have been able to work out a deal because Koresh would have been rational enough to save his own skin.

It is now obvious that Koresh became intoxicated by his own charisma and enslaved by his private voices of doom. There were many signs pointing to this conclusion before the Waco fire. However, because David Koresh was a mercurial egomaniac, it is quite possible that *no matter what the FBI did*, he would have led his group into tragedy of one sort or another. He apparently preferred death to surrender. His followers "followed" his lead.

We may never know how many people may have sought to escape during the final moments, just as many refused to take the poison at Jonestown. Nevertheless, enough people were willing to follow Koresh into a fire storm to prevent the others from leaving.

If the FBI can be faulted, it is for what they did and didn't do, not for the results, which may have been unavoidable. The ultimate responsibility for this conflagration lies with David Koresh.

The FBI, however, apparently did not appreciate the uniqueness of the cult mindset, and opted to consult experts on terrorists and hostage taking, rather than eminent cult experts, such as Dr. Margaret Singer of the University of California at Berkeley and Dr. Louis J. West of UCLA. If they had, they might have reconsidered their tactics of pressure, harassment, and psychological warfare. In a terrorist hostage-taking situation, authorities confront a small group of fanatics who are usually surprisingly rational, given their assumptions, and a group of hostages who *definitely* don't want to be there. In Waco, the authorities confronted an astoundingly persuasive, but fundamentally irrational man, whose "hostages," for the most part, wanted to be with him—even to the death. These differences make for markedly different group dynamics.

Cultists often depend upon psychological dissociation, a kind of splitting of the mind, to adapt to the pressures and contradictions of the cult environment. Koresh clearly had delusional tendencies. Consequently, standard psychological warfare tactics, such as depriving members of sleep by playing Buddhist chants in the middle of the night, probably made Koresh and his followers even more irrational and less open to constructive outside influences.

The primary enemy of the cult mindset is truth—

*Continued on page 11*



Michael Langone

## **How Many Jonestowns Will It Take ?** *Continued from page 2*

information from outside the closed, psychological walls of the group. Research on defection from cults suggests that those who become aware of the leader's hypocrisy and those who are able to share private doubts with others are much more likely to leave. This is why cult leaders so often control even the most mundane aspects of their followers' lives and why cult experts advise parents always to try to keep the lines of communication open. The leader's hold on members is powerful yet, paradoxically, fragile.

**B**efore pushing Koresh into a corner, the FBI should have permitted the families of the Branch Davidian members to talk at length to their loved ones in order to try to connect them psychologically to the outside world and find holes with which to pry open the psychological cap that made the people in the compound followers rather than hostages. However, given Koresh's psychopathology, this probably wouldn't have worked either. Nevertheless, it should have been tried.

The lesson to be learned from the Waco tragedy is that the way to handle such problems is not through technical psychowizardry. There simply may not have been a "solution"

to the Waco standoff. The best way to deal with these problems is to avoid them. We must as a society stop pretending that only "weak" people can be led down destructive paths. The Nazis didn't take over Germany because millions of "weak" people happened to have been born around the same time in history. We must teach the public, especially youth, how manipulators of all kinds work—the grand manipulators such as David Koresh and the run-of-the-mill manipulators who are all around us.

Cult tragedies help us see the ultimate consequences of treating people as objects, rather than persons. The cult path is merely another road leading to human degradation. As Rabbi Maurice Davis [Emeritus Director of the American Family Foundation] said more than ten years ago:

We know, and we must never forget, that every path leads somewhere. The path of segregation leads to lynching. The path of anti-Semitism leads to Auschwitz. The path of cults leads to Jonestown. We ignore this fact at our peril.

How many Jonestowns will it take before we understand?

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**"We know, and we must never forget, that**

**every path leads somewhere.**

**The path of segregation leads to lynching.**

**The path of anti-Semitism leads to Auschwitz.**

**The path of cults leads to Jonestown.**

**We ignore this fact at our peril."**

*Rabbi Maurice Davis*



By Bill  
Dodds

# Cults: How to spot them

*Catholic college students still their prime target*

**C**ULTS aren't in the media as much as they used to be, but they're still doing a thriving business, says Dominican Father Kent Burtner. One of their prime targets are college-age Catholics.

He has advice for parents and students to help young men and women avoid the soothing web of lies designed to trap them. His own experience began 20 years ago, in 1969, when he was a seminarian and a group tried to snare him.

The daughter of a school secretary had joined a community that was "beyond" politics and dogma and had the lofty - and vague - goal of "creating a basis for dialogue and discussion." The mother asked Burtner to talk with the young woman. She, in turn, invited him to attend a dinner and listen to a lecture at the group's center.

As a seminarian, he would have been a prize catch. There were other potential members at the dinner but he and the woman were given a special lecture. Two years later the group's founder moved from Korea to the United States. His name was Sun Myung Moon. By then the group had changed its name from The Unified Family to the Unification Church, more commonly known as the Moonies.

Over the next few years, Father Burtner and others from the area, including the president of the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, began to research the group and discovered it had 65 front organizations. Today, said Father Burtner, it has 300.

The researchers' work became known and there were requests from other parts of the country for information about Moon's activities. They began working



*Dominican Father Kent Burtner lectures on the chilling dangers of the cult world.*

with former members and parents. They started to arrange meetings where a parent and a former member could sit down with someone who was still in the group. It would be the first chance a member had to hear the whole story of Moon and his plans.

Later, different parents contacted the researchers. Their children were in other groups but they exhibited the same symptoms as those who followed Moon. "We were looking at a cultural phenomenon," Father Burtner said. "That was the beginning."

Since his ordination in 1974, Father Burtner has held a number of positions from campus minister to cathedral pastor but he has also continued his work fighting cults. Two years ago, he joined the staff at the Positive Action Center in Portland, Ore. The center provides family education

and counseling on cults and mind abuse. He now works part-time as the director of liturgy at The Grotto in Portland and part-time on cults from his office at Holy Rosary parish.

It's easy for the liturgist to understand why Catholics are susceptible to the approaches used by a cult. The use of symbols and language, the role of authority and the importance of community are three reasons the Church is so strong, Father Burtner said. But the "flip sides" of those same coins are why Catholics are likely prospects for joining a cult.

"The Church has a strong symbolic tradition," he said, "the ritualized use of gesture and language." He emphasized the use of language, explaining that there are patterns the Church uses. "The Lord be with you" brings the immediate response, "And also with you."

A passage from one of St. Paul's letters contains the phrase "now and forever."

When that verse is read during a Sunday reading the congregation always responds "Amen," Father Burtner said. It is an illustration of the kind of communication that is adopted by cults. There are standard responses that a recruit or new member learns. And something about using a pattern like that "feels normal, comfortable, like back home," he said.

That is one reason why Catholics make good recruits, he said. Another is that members of the Church are comfortable with the notion of an authority figure. Cults are very authoritarian.

A third is that Catholics have very high expectations and talk a lot about the importance of a strong community, but it is the rare parish that can actually match those high ideals.

How then does a cult differ from a legitimate church? What makes joining a

*See next page*

## Executive Council Prepares for General Assembly

The central concern of the Kyodan Executive Council in its regularly scheduled meeting July 14-15 was preparation for the 27th Kyodan General Assembly to be held November 10-12. The upcoming General Assembly will be a historic event, for delegates from the Tokyo District will be attending for the first time since the 16th General Assembly in 1968.

Heated controversies over plans for the ecumenically sponsored Christian Pavilion at the 1970 Expo to be located in Osaka exposed deeper theological differences in the Kyodan's national, district, and local constituencies. Failure to resolve these differences in several districts prompted some glaring delegate-absences in subsequent general assemblies. Tokyo was the only district, however, that failed to send delegates throughout the long 24-year interim.

Tokyo District's return to the church's biennial assembly is the fruit of careful and conciliatory deliberations among leaders of its six subdistricts. The Executive Council, feeling that similar care must be taken in planning for the November gathering, was unable to complete its preparatory work at its July session. Thus a second session has been set for Sept. 9-10.

The Council also recognized the difficulty of assuring adequate reflection of the district's varying views in the preparatory process. Accordingly, it appointed four additional persons from the district to join its September session.

The Executive Council consists of the three officers—moderator, vice-moderator, assembly secretary—and 27 council members, all elected at the previous general assembly. Sessions generally are attended by the moderators of the 14 district assemblies and Council-invited observers, as well as observers who apply and are accepted.

Tokyo District's participation in the general assembly adds 74 delegates to its roster, increasing the logistical burden proportionately. Moreover, initiatives can now be undertaken toward resolution of a number of basic issues that have been tabled during the extended absence of Tokyo's

of the Kyodan's Constitution. These vie with the union of the Japan and Okinawa kyodans as unresolved concerns. Districts have addressed many of these issues in recent assemblies.



Okinawa Dist. moderator Takazato addresses Council

The covenantal relation with three Korean churches is an item of long-term concern expected to reach fruition at this year's general assembly. The Kyodan's initial covenant was made in 1967 with the Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea, the Presbyterian Church of Korea, and the Korean Methodist Church. But it was not felt that it fully reflected the Kyodan's wartime responsibility. Since 1985 a series of meetings has been held to prepare revisions of the covenant, and particularly the accompanying articles of agreement, for approval by all parties.

The revised covenant has been vigorously debated in Executive Council to make sure that it is fully in line with the Kyodan's policy for world mission. Now it is expected that the three Korean churches will approve the proposed revisions prior to November, and thus it is hoped that the revised covenant can then be presented at this General Assembly for approval. Representatives of the three Korean churches will be present for a ceremony of signing the covenant.

Among other items of continuing interest, a report on discrimination problems will be received and deliberated. Also, candidates for ordination who have passed the ministerial qualification examinations will be recognized by the assembly. Routine business matters include the 1991 budget reports to be heard and approved for the Board of

## Kyodan Continues Struggle Against the Unification Association

by Timothy D. Boyle  
Ministry, Kanto District

Ever since its appearance on the Japanese religious scene some thirty years ago, the Unification Association (sometimes mistakenly called "Unification Church") has been a source of continuing controversy. As the cult's power and influence have increased, so has the alarm engendered in Christians here and elsewhere around the world.

Although it is of Korean origin, the Association's power base is decidedly Japanese. Most of its funding and many of its workers come from Japan, and thus this movement has attracted particular interest among Japanese churches.

Founded by the "Reverend" Moon Sun Myung, who proclaims himself the "Lord of the Second Advent," the "Holy Spirit Association for the Unification of World Christianity" is anything but what its name implies. Coming first to Japan in the 1960s, it has developed rapidly by successfully preying on unsuspecting young people. Callously exploiting Japan's postwar religious freedom, it employs all sorts of dubious tactics in recruiting youth to its cause.

### "Heavenly Deception" Pays

Its basic premise, put simply, is that everything outside the Moon organization is under the control of Satan; therefore it is quite permissible and even good to use any available means to wrest resources away from Satan's kingdom and place them in the hands of "God's true organization." What would normally be considered outright fraud and deceit, they refer to it as "heavenly deception." In Japan this takes several forms.

First, there is a constantly expanding number of organizations with impressive names that are in reality Moonie front organizations. These include such things as video centers and "family colleges," the "Asian Women's Association for Peace" and various other "peace" groups, and a wide variety of supposed charities that ostensibly collect funds for needy people. The ties these groups have with the Moon organization are generally hidden and, in fact, often denied outright.

Not only is the true nature of the many fraudulent charities grouped under the Moon banner disguised, but the stated purpose of a fund drive (such as helping Cambodian refugees) is

calculated to pull both the heart and purse strings of the unsuspecting public. But the millions of yen collected go directly to the Moon organization.

### Cleansing Bad Karma Pays Even Better

An even more insidious form of deception is known as *reikan shoho*, or "spirit-feeling sales method." Its meaning is suggested by a play on the component *kan* as "con"—it's a religious con man's gold mine! Its success in Japan has been mainly due to the underlying cultural concepts of karma and respect for the spirits of deceased ancestors.

A stunning example of this method is a recent Japanese TV report of a housewife who was approached by a compassionate-looking young woman and asked about her main concerns. When the woman confided that her biggest worry was whether her son would find a suitable wife, the undercover Moonie promptly got her registered in the "Tsuchiura Family College" and in time convinced her that her son's lack of success was due to bad family karma that had to be cleansed. The "cleansing" eventually cost the victim a whopping ¥58 million!

Such is by no means unusual. The National Lawyers' Association Against Reikan Shoho reports the all-time record fleecing at ¥5.2 billion—a case that involved a wealthy Japanese who was persuaded that his illness issued from family karma that could be "cleansed" by his Moon benefactors. If such cases are taken to lawyers, however, they are always resolved and the money is eventually returned. But many cases go uncontested, as the victims continue to believe that offended ancestral spirits have been appeased and bad karma has been cleansed.

### Mass Matrimonial Madness

On June 23 the Kyodan Committee on the Problem of the Unification Principle issued an open letter to both Foreign Minister Watanabe Michio and Justice Minister Tawara Takashi, along with a general appeal co-signed by the lawyers' group and the National Association of Parents of Victims of the Unification Association. Both the letter and the appeal dealt with the upcoming mass wedding scheduled for August 25 in Seoul's Olympic Stadium.

But the Kyodan Committee's open letter focused on the way Moon's trip to Japan from March 26 to April 1 was handled. He was invited by the Association of Diet Members Concerned for Northeast Asian Peace, supposedly for the purpose



of "exchanging views on peace" in this region. The committee complained that such a person as Moon, whose organization demonstrably has deceived thousands of Japanese people and ruined their lives, should not be allowed free access to Japanese society. Unfortunately, the Unification Association has used its fortune to influence many politicians here in Japan and elsewhere.

The joint appeal focuses on the mass nuptials of 50,000 couples on August 25. Several such mass weddings have been held in the past, but this will be the largest ever. The 100,000 persons involved, however, do not yet know whom they will be marrying; most couples will meet for the first time on their wedding day. While it seems incredible that rational people would do this, the Moonie doctrine—that this is the unique way God has prepared for cleansing original sin from people's lives—has been drilled into their heads. A significant proportion of these production-line brides and grooms will be Japanese, and each one has been instructed to bring along ¥1.4 million for expenses.

These revelations, together with recent public announcements that three well-known Japanese personalities plan to join the mass rite, has produced a wave of publicity, with various morning talk shows devoting much of their time to discussing these bizarre events. First to announce was Yamazaki Hiroko, a member of the 1988 Japanese Olympic rhythm gymnastics team. This happened during the last week of June at the same time that another pseudo-Christian cult, the "Children of God" (Ai no Kazoku, or "Family of Love"), was being exposed by the mass media. A few days later, former "teen idol" Sakurada Junko also announced, with obvious conviction, that she too was going to Seoul to be joined to the person God had prepared for her. Former badminton player Tokuda Atsuko has also announced her intention of joining the mass wedding. (Unlike many others, Yamazaki already knows her fiancé: Teshigawara Hideyuki, a Tokyo securities firm employee.)

Thus, for several days, these two groups were the focus of much public attention, giving opportunity to several Christian groups, including the Kyodan committee, to make statements clarifying the vast difference between both these groups and authentic Christianity, as well as warning the public of the dangers these groups present to young people. Whether these warnings will prove effective in counteracting the positive publicity the Unification Church stands to gain from this remains to be seen. □

## Japanese-Korean Church Relations

by Miyoshi Hiromu, Chair  
Committee on Ecumenical Ministries

As the Kyodan seeks a fuller cooperative mission with Korean churches in both Korea and Japan, it is essential to keep in mind our past relations, the present situation, and how future relations should be developed. Keeping all three in mind at once is difficult, but it must be done.

Generally speaking, Japanese have a tendency to be vague in their thinking, not considering all aspects of a problem. An example of this is the way the PKO (peacekeeping operations) bill was recently railroaded through the National Diet, with little reflection on past or present. I am quite concerned that this precipitous action may remove the restraint heretofore placed on the overseas deployment of Japan's Self-Defense Forces, an act that tends to push the problem of war responsibility into the distant past and strengthens the trend toward Japan's becoming once more a major military power. This situation makes our solidarity with fellow Korean Christians and their churches especially important.

### From Economic to Military Thrust

Defeat in World War II ended Japan's 36-year colonial rule of the Korean Peninsula—a harsh rule that imposed great hardship and suffering on countless people. It was a grave historical error that fully deserves expressions of regret by Japan's emperor and imperial rulers. We must never forget that the Japanese churches were regrettably drawn into the imperial system to the extent of positively cooperating with the colonial policies and war effort. We Japanese have not fully reflected upon and dealt with this historical record, and yet in the postwar era we have launched economic aggression toward our Asian neighbors under the banner of international cooperation. This economic thrust has served to accelerate us along the path toward remilitarization.

Given this situation it is imperative that the Japanese church firmly maintain its stand against those state structures that have been carried over from the war years.

### "Comfort Women"—Then and Now

The Korean government formally announced on July 3 that it had confirmed the existence of 74 survivors among the Korean women forced into wartime service as "comfort women" (prostitutes).

## Cults in Germany

### Scientology Extremism

Scientology has a penchant for espionage and political extremism, according to *Der Spiegel* (7/12/92). The group observes no legal ground rules and accepts no answerability to the government in power, majority rule, or the rights of the oppositions. Whatever would restrict Scientology's complete freedom is ignored. Further, Scientology has no internal democracy.

### Education

For 250 marks per child, Bremen Scientologists offer a "child communication course" that includes picture books on the teachings of founder L. Ron Hubbard. Children 1-6 are confined from noon to 7 pm in a basement apartment of the building where their parents study and are drilled on Hubbard's laws. In the evening the children are taken by minibus to two residences where they are picked up by their often single parents. Overlured, the last ones are picked up around 2 am. "The children see nothing of their parents." Required exercises include staring into each other's eyes for an hour. Any child who cries or does not cooperate has to start over again. They also take a sauna and vitamins. The children later attend a private Scientology school. (*Hamburger Morgenpost*, 7/24/92)

### Fronts

Management Academy AMK ("Privaten Akademie für Management & Kommunikation") is an active Scientology front. It is associated with WISE, the World Institute of Scientology Enterprises, which spreads the teachings of L. Ron Hubbard in industrial and economic circles and in the political world. (*Frankfurter Tag*, 12/16/92)

### Totalitarianism

The Christian Democratic Union [a major political party] has criticized Scientology for its "reckless money schemes" and "inhuman therapy" as well as its "totalitarianism [and] despising of healthy human thinking." (*Frankfurter Rundschau*, 12/15/92) The Hamburg State Security will observe Scientology, according to the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* (12/7/92), which associated with Scientology "an ideology with notably totalitarian principles" that has "nothing to do with religion" and is "predominantly political." *Impulse* (11/92), meanwhile, remarks that Scientology "wants to control us," and despite setbacks and bad press, the "raving" sect is again on an expansion course. It looks at eastern Germany as a new El Dorado and has planted a number of secret projects there; Scientology wants to control the economy through real estate holdings and front organizations. It's a Mafia strategy. . . Narconon [the Scientology drug rehabilitation program] substitutes one drug for another: Scientology.

### State Concerns

The Bavarian State Ministry for Public Worship, Education, Science and Art in April, 1992, responding to a state parliament request for advice on "youth religions and sects," and their activities, says that the state must be more than a neutral observer, but must play a role in enforcing existing statutes that apply to the situation. The ministry reply refers to a notable difference between the statements and activities of some cultic groups. (*Cult Observer Report*)



### Unification Church Recruiting

The Unification Church's Professors World Peace Academy [now in control of the University of Bridgeport in the U.S.] is actively recruiting members, even clergy, and offering pre-paid trips to conferences in Hawaii, plus honoraria and the same deal for a companion. (*Lutheran Monthly News*, 8/92)

The church, because it comes in sheep's clothing, had largely been forgotten by the public. But it has had ample time to build up in Germany, where leader Sun Myung Moon has invested heavily in machine tool plants.

There was widespread interest in Germany, and indeed in other countries, in attending an organizing conference of the church's Women's Federation for World Peace, led by Moon's wife. (*The Bavarian Evangelical Sundaypaper*, 12/13/92)

### Austria

#### Cult Study

A study by a Viennese psychologist shows that one-third of youngsters surveyed are in real danger of joining cults. Of 1150 between 14-16 years of age, 30% were very susceptible;; 20% had already been approached by a cult; 3% had already visited a cult; 17% were skeptics; 9% were "anti-religious; and 80% were very interested in religious questions. The professor who conducted the study said that much too little is known about cults. (*Kurier*, 8/7/92)

### Russia

#### TM Active

ISKCON (The International Society for Krishna Consciousness, or Hare Krishnas) are very successful in Moscow, having filled a sports stadium with 30,000 people for a giant mass meditation featuring the singing of Boy George. The show included video wall screens and spiritual multi-media shows. ISKCON claims to be the third largest religion in the country after Islam and Christianity. (*Allgauer Zeitung*, 7/17/92)

NOVEMBER 1992 ?

(EDINBURGH)

The Scotsman

3

## Moonies use peace group front to book rally

By Audrey Gillan

THE MOONIES, the religious cult that acquired a reputation for brainwashing in the Seventies, are to hold a secret rally in Edinburgh this weekend.

Mrs Moon, wife of Rev San Myung Moon, the leader of the Moonies' Unification Church, will address a meeting in the Balmoral Hotel on Saturday evening.

The accommodation and conference room, which holds several hundred, has been booked under the name of the Women's Federation for World Peace. The Scotsman has learned that that organisation is affiliated to the Unification Church.

Last night there was concern that the Moonies would be gathering in the city. The Labour MP Nigel Griffiths warned young people to beware of attending the meeting.

"This is an organisation with a long history of brainwashing people. They have a highly dubious record. They are entitled to freedom of speech but not to misrepresent their meetings, which has been one of the main problems," he said.

"I would caution young people who are depressed in any way about going to these meetings. The Moonies do not have a savoury track record."

Urula Mackenzie, secretary of Family Action Information and Rescue (FAIR), the organisation which has monitored various cults on behalf of anxious parents, said that relatives of Moon's followers would be dismayed by Mrs Moon's arrival in Britain.

"Files are bulging with evidence of family distress. Friends, relatives, careers, and in many cases ten to 15 years of their lives, are sacrificed by promising young people to an authoritarian leader in exchange for a life of hardship and to boost the wealth of the movement," she said. "Innocuous names such as the Women's Federation for World Peace should not fool anybody."

Dr Michael Northcott, lecturer in sociology and religion at Edinburgh University, said that the Moonies, like other world religions, were subject to prejudice.

"Their religion is basically a Korean export which has had strange effects in the west but these effects have been exaggerated by relatives whose children have got involved in it," he said.



# The 'Sinful Messiah'

Connecticut's Brother Julius doesn't arm his followers, but there are other disquieting parallels to the man from Waco

There are eerie and disquieting parallels between the lives of the late cult leader David Koresh and "Brother Julius" Schacknow, who has headed a group called "The Work" in the Southwestern area since 1973 and retains about 75-100 followers today.

These two charismatic men used their knowledge of the Bible to attract impressionable seekers, many of them quite young. Both men, taking the rationale of "the sinful messiah," expertly twisted scripture to justify some decidedly un-Christian conduct. There have been persistent allegations that they sexually abused young female cult members. And both of them used mind control to draw people in, then to keep them in line.

Fortunately, there is one big difference between Brother Julius and Koresh, who fulfilled his apocalyptic vision by dying along with most of his followers April 19 near Waco, Texas. Koresh developed a fascination with weapons as a tool of power, but Brother Julius apparently has never armed his devotees nor himself. While this makes him less dangerous on one level, it also enables him to lay low, escaping police scrutiny as he carries out his "mission."

Part of Brother Julius' lay-low strategy includes refusing to speak with the media and ordering his followers to observe the same ban. But some of those who have left his clutches are willing to talk about what it's like being under his control. They want to alert the public and to warn others not to be seduced by this man.

When Bill Rocap heard about a gifted Bible teacher named "Brother Julius," he decided to go on for himself what all the excitement was about. Walking into a meeting hall in Danville, New Jersey, Rocap saw a bearded, intense preacher man, attired in a flowing white robe, earnestly discussing scripture in a booming voice. The man's eyes were probing, seemingly all-knowing.

"I was absolutely mesmerized," Rocap recalls 21 years later. "I'd never heard anyone with such a mastery of the Bible. I was infatuated by his approach."

Little did Rocap know that the path of this self-proclaimed "man of God" hardly led to a heavenly paradise—instead, it was a tortured route strewn with mind manipulation and sexual abuse that would ultimately break up Rocap's marriage and wrest his wife and young son away from him.

Even those who have managed to leave Brother Julius say he is a gifted, compelling figure who radiates charisma with his piercing eyes. "He seemed clairvoyant, with psychic powers to know what you were thinking," Rocap says. "During one of my first public meetings with him, in Wolcott, he fixed me with those eyes and said, 'You've been looking for God all your life.' That was then last line of my autobiography in high school! He was doing this with other people all day long: everybody turned red, nodded their heads and cried. I thought, 'Wow! This is amazing! Who is this guy? Could he really be who he says he is?'"



Brother Julius: a still-active bludge.

this is true, I want to be part of it."

Who is this Brother Julius? He was born in Brooklyn, New York, the son of a poor Jewish couple. After his first wife converted him to the Methodist faith, he began studying the Bible obsessively. At first, in the late 1960s, he was content to claim he was a prophet. But in 1970, he announced publicly that he had had a vision: God had come to him and revealed that Brother Julius was God's only son. He has maintained this boast ever since, withstanding assorted civil suits filed by women who say they were sexually assaulted by him when



Bill Rocap: out of the flock. Inset: in the flock, circa 1972.

they were as young as 11 years old.

Rocap says Brother Julius rationalized his sexual activities as a personal demonstration of God's love, substantiated by the Bible. According to Rocap, Julius claims to have been born as the "sinful messiah."

"That's one of the messages this guy in Waco [David Koresh] used," Rocap notes. "Julius says there was a need for Jesus to come back as a sinful man; that he was sent by God to experience worldly weakness. He was that as a touchstone for his ministry, to justify his sinful life."

By many accounts, Brother Julius' sexual appetite is enormous. Now 66, he has been married three times, but says he has had seven wives, whom he refers to as his "concubines."

Rocap says the relatively older women in Brother Julius' group, which is called "The Work" because they are supposedly doing "the work of God," generally feel honored to be chosen by him to do his "special work," to "receive God's seed."

According to interviews and affidavits obtained by the *Hartford Courant*, one of Brother Julius' own stepdaughters accused him of sexually assaulting her for seven years, beginning when she was 11 years old. She also charged that he forced her to watch him have intercourse with "bibbings" and other familial persons. Her civil suit was settled out of court in 1989.

Moreover, Beverly Sweetman, a daughter of Paul Sweetman, Brother Julius' chief apostle, also sued Brother Julius in a civil action in federal court in Newark, New Jersey, accusing him of sexually abusing her when she was a minor. This suit, too, was settled out of court in 1987 for an undisclosed sum.

In 1987, four women came forward to say they'd

had sex with Brother Julius when they were as young as 12. One woman said she was 13 when Brother Julius told her that going to bed with him would help her "get closer to God." This woman said her sister was 12 when she was "chosen." In addition, a woman named Laura, who did not want her last name used, told the *Record-Journal* that she was "emotionally coerced" into heading with Brother Julius at the age of 15. "He told me about his special work," Laura said. "He said you could receive God more closely [by sleeping with Brother Julius]."

When you call the hotline in Berlin where Brother Julius now lives with a companion named Nancy Erickson, a woman's serene voice comes on the answering machine with the beatific greeting, "Peace be with you." But although the *Advocate* left repeated requests for comment on that machine, neither Brother Julius nor anyone representing him ever called back to answer the allegations. Brother Julius and his flock have avoided the media for many years.

In 1987, he told the *Courant*, "You are ignorant of God and his ways. And you are interested in sexual sin that will satisfy the lustful eyes and ears of your readers...They called Jesus a bastard...They called him a drunkard, they called him a glutton."

According to Rocap and other former cult members, Brother Julius wasn't the only high authority demanding sex of the followers. Rocap says many of the men in the group were "born into having sex" with Brother Julius' wife at the time, Joanne Sweetman (Brother Julius bequeathed her to Paul Sweetman during one of his meetings and she adopted his name). "She was called 'The Holy Spirit,'" Rocap says.

Before he "gave" his third wife to Sweetman, Brother Julius and Joanne produced three children, including a son, who now uses the name Daniel Sweetman. It seems the son has carried on from his father's example: in 1992, Daniel was convicted of sexually abusing four children, including a seven-year-old girl and a nine-year-old boy. Sweetman spent six months in prison and was recently released.

Rocap, an "anointed apostle" who was in the group from 1973 to 1979 with his wife and son, said he decided to leave it when he was exposed to the sexual promiscuity. "In good conscience, I couldn't stay. But my wife and son were all entwined in it." Shortly after Rocap made known his desire to leave the group, he came home one day and found his home had been ransacked and his family had left him. "The people of the group had emptied the house. Julius had told my wife to leave me and to take my son with her." His wife subsequently remarried someone within the group, but within a year, she, her new husband and the son had also decided to leave Brother Julius.

Those who defy Brother Julius in this manner inevitably face threats and intimidation from him. Rocap says that after he told Brother Julius he was de-

parting, "Julius appeared on my doorstep with one of his driver/body guards and asked me, 'How can you walk away from God?' Then he said, 'If you leave me, your wife will become a whore. Your son will die in a car accident.' I threw him out of my house."

Rocap, 43, who now runs a computer consulting business in Rocky Hill and has remarried, teaches Sunday school at the United Methodist Church in nearby Cheshire. Despite all the trauma of his Brother Julius years, Rocap says, "It was the best religious experience I ever had. He taught me a very strong moral fiber. He just didn't live it." Brother Julius' flock is dwindling, Rocap says, adding that he saw a recent computer print-out of the remaining members and it numbers only about 75 to 100, down from 500 in the glory years. "After all, where can you go with a guy who says he keeps seven brides at all times, who doesn't talk about anything except sex and how he's God?"

Brother Julius actually has been merely a figurehead for many years, says Rocap, while the Sweetmans have run several lucrative businesses in central Connecticut. Rocap and other former employees of these firms say they exploit group members by paying them sub-minimum wage in such endeavors as selling real estate. And when they do get paid, usually they are asked to fork over 10 percent of that to Brother Julius as "a sinner's offering." Rocap says that during one year alone, he sold \$1.5 million in gross real estate property, but was paid only \$2,800. In 1984, four former employees sued one of the companies, County Wide Construction, in federal court in New Haven, alleging they had been made to work "for subminimum wages or no wages at all." All four of them settled out of court for an undisclosed sum.

In 1983, Paul and Joanne Sweetman were arrested and charged with cheating the Connecticut Department of Labor out of more than \$40,000 in unemployment compensation money. State prosecutors said that instead of paying full salaries to its employees, the Sweetmans coerced them to apply for unemployment compensation. The Sweetmans later agreed to pay the state \$30,000 and were granted accelerated rehabilitation. The couple continue to do business in Connecticut but refuse to answer media questions about their operations. When the *Advocate* called two of the companies to ask about connections between them and Brother Julius, the receptionists hung up.

When one member told Brother Julius she was leaving him, his response was: "You'll be dead within a year." Indeed, Brother Julius regularly tells his people that he can cause the death of those who cross him. When the space shuttle *Challenger* exploded in 1986, he reportedly told his group that he caused it to happen in order to prevent earth people from meddling with his followers on Jupiter.

One former follower wonders whether Koresh's fiery inferno will affect Brother Julius' flock. "You'd think his people would see the parallel to the situation in Texas, but it doesn't dawn on them."



This group is  
very active in Conn.

## News & Features

# Meditation group accused of cult recruiting

By Nina Brooks and Kevin J. Delaney

According to former followers and watchdog organizations, two meditation sessions offered by groups like the Hartford Meditation Society are the first step in recruiting young people for what they describe as a cult. The controversy centers around Frederick P. Lenz II, also known as Rama, and his link with students offered to students at Yale and other campuses.

Former followers of Lenz and members of the Cult Awareness Network and LenzWatch organizations claim that Lenz has practiced mind control over his students, has exploited his followers financially and emotionally, and has sexually abused followers. Note has pressed legal charges against Lenz, but they have privately petitioned their claims. Lenz's students and his lawyer have denied the allegations.

The Hartford Meditation Society has offered meditation workshops at nearby Arapog since February 1992. According to meditation instructor Michael Richards, more than 20 Yale students have attended multiple sessions. He said several other instructors with the Hartford Meditation Society also give lectures and meditation classes at Arapog. "Our response has been positive. That's why we do it," Richards said.

"There's nothing but meditation," said a Yale student who has attended the weekly sessions since March and expressed amazement. "It's not for everyone and it's not forced upon anyone," she said. "It's a private matter." She said meditation has helped her to reduce stress and get better grades.

At a meditative session conducted by a Harvard reporter, two Hartford Meditation Society instructors discussed the nature of meditation and the "enlightenment" it was meant to achieve. Their teacher, they said, was Rama, one of the few enlightened people in the world, on a par with Jesus or Buddha. He had lived many previous lives before achieving this state, and wanted to teach his students the "fast track" enlightenment so that they would not have to do the same.

According to the instructors, Rama encouraged his followers to enter careers in computer science in order to foster the concentration and "discipline" needed for perfect meditation. The two instructors led the four people in attendance in meditation activities and distributed four audio cassettes of the Rama's words.

Students present attending the sessions at Yale and other colleges have been invited to special events in the area, and some to Lenz's monthly seminars at the Ram University of New York at Purdum.

A Yale junior who has attended one of Lenz's seminars described his claims and said Lenz's group is "intentional and very." As the seminar, she said, Lenz gave his disciples of Arapog students up to his personality and then took questions from the audience. She said she had asked him about his past, and he said he was a "person of great power, and great power is a great responsibility." She said Lenz strongly encouraged his followers to "be very disciplined" and "concentrate on the following to make the best of the best of the best."

According to Barbara Richards, a former follower of Lenz, he suggested that his students should be "very disciplined" and "concentrate on the following to make the best of the best of the best." She said Lenz strongly encouraged his followers to "be very disciplined" and "concentrate on the following to make the best of the best of the best."

group's increased targeting of the 20-and-under age group. "The whole purpose of this is to get back blood for [Lenz's organization].... There's problems enough with the group as it is. But for them to target young [people] and mislead innocent college students is wrong," Sherman said.

Sherman was an 18-year-old student at Moorpark College in Los Angeles when she

was in a dramatic state from which she could not escape. "I felt like I was trapped in some cage. I could barely talk.... The walls were talking around me." She said that in addition to the sexual assault, Lenz threatened at and burned her for hours.

About a year later, in May 1990, Sherman left the group. "I found out through a high school friend [who was also in the group] that he had taken away with all the women in the group, and that he had said the same thing to all of them." She said she remembered having trouble leaving the group because Lenz had convinced his followers that if they left him, their lives would be in jeopardy and they would be in personal danger. Sherman was in therapy for two years.

Another former follower, Wan Walker, was also a student at Moorpark when he became involved in Lenz's organization in 1984. Walker described experiences similar to Sherman's: "I got under [Lenz's] spell, and I would have hallucinations while meditating. He was, you know, very convincing."

Walker said there was intense pressure among Lenz's followers to make a lot of money. "People would ask each other in the back as they could make money to pay Lenz," he said. Before he left the group in 1990, he was paying \$4,000 per month and sometimes having difficulty paying, Walker said.

According to Walker, when he called some former female followers to ask if he could borrow money, they told him of Lenz's sexual abuse. Like Sherman, he had been convinced that Rama was capable of raising their deaths, but talking with the former followers convinced him otherwise. In addition to Sherman and Walker, several other former followers of Lenz have published their experiences.

A 134-page "Information Kit for Print Media" produced by Lenz's students includes signed statements disputing the allegations against Lenz, including those made by Sherman, Walker, and other critics. In one, a former respondent states that Sherman claimed to have seduced Lenz and his

changed her story often.

According to Walter Jankin, father of one of Lenz's students and member of a group called LenzWatch, "The Hartford Meditation Society is one of probably a dozen fringe groups Lenz established this year. Each of them is characterized by heavy advertising and then conducting two meditation sessions. All of these sessions are in that recruiting and recruiting sessions for Lenz's organization."

Richards and the Hartford Meditation Society's other instructors of early meditation under Lenz, but say that he has no control over their sessions. Jonathan Leibel, a New York attorney who represents Lenz and some of his students, said the Hartford Meditation Society's sessions are not connected with those given by Lenz's students in other cities. Leibel said the allegations against the group are unwarranted. "The place of evidence indicating that they are unfounded is that [the sessions] did not go through legal channels."

"Tried by press is not a pretty thing," said Alton J. Goldstein, head of the Hartford Meditation Society. "It seems like we've become the victim of a major McCarthyism. It prevents us from doing what we like to do, which is teach meditation."

Goldstein called LenzWatch "the Ku Klux Klan of religious groups," made up largely of persons who refuse to allow their grown children free religious choice. He said that former followers who have accused Lenz of wrongdoing are the same few people who are encouraged by LenzWatch to go to the press.

"We're not teaching a doctrine, but basically a methodology," said Peter Turin, a Hartford Meditation Society member who leads meditation sessions at Arapog. According to Richards, Lenz is just a master of meditation. "I don't know anyone who's ever experienced mind control," he said. Richards said Lenz's students pay him only for the computer lessons they take, at rates "much less than the industry standard."

"They feel they have lost will, but their free will is restricted by the ones they receive from the hands of the cult," said William Oshinsky, a psychologist who runs a support group for former cultists which includes former Lenz followers. "For some people, attending the meditation sessions is the first step in joining the group," he said.



Posters around campus advertise a meditation group once called any to be part of a community cult.

She attended her first meditation workshop. She said becoming involved in Lenz's organization was a "slow, subtle, seductive process" and that it was arranged in days. The monthly seminars with Lenz cost only \$20 at first, but as she became more committed to the group and made more money as a computer programmer, the fees rose steadily. "By the time I left the group, I was paying [Lenz] \$2,500 a month."

Sherman said that Lenz used manipulative tactics on his followers. He said that not to associate with loved ones, because friends and family would be jealous and would try to steal followers' energy. He often threatened group members to show up late for hours while meditating, so that they would see the moon change colors and his change shape. "I found out after I left that it was just the effects of ritual fatigue," Sherman said.

Within six months, Sherman was "completely convinced that Lenz was a divine incarnation." He "claimed to be totally psychic and clairvoyant, and [to have] the power to control the universe." She said Lenz told her to create his body over the group. He said his followers have to live in isolation, what she described as "total isolation." She said Lenz told her that if she did not follow him, she would be "destroyed" and "killed." She said Lenz told her that if she did not follow him, she would be "destroyed" and "killed."

"He was not a man," she said. "He was a god." She said Lenz told her that if she did not follow him, she would be "destroyed" and "killed." She said Lenz told her that if she did not follow him, she would be "destroyed" and "killed."

## POLICE BLOTTER

For the week ending Nov. 11

On Nov. 8 at 1:00 p.m., officers responded to a call that a hand was being placed in the large building at 331 Cedar Street. After a complete search of the entire building, the officers found nothing.

At 11:00 p.m. on Nov. 7, an officer in station 2000 observed two suspicious individuals walking through the station. The officer followed the individuals, and they were seen to enter the station during the night.

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# SPECTRUM

The Bridgeport Post

Bridgeport, Ct.

Sunday, May 27, 1990

## CULTS

### Sharing stories painful

Sharing stories of personal cult involvement or loved ones who have joined such groups is often a painful experience.

Some former cult followers are ashamed of their past because they feel friends will think they were stupid or gullible to have become involved in groups widely perceived as destructive. Others feel guilty for abandoning their families or encouraging friends to join.

The following are recollections of state residents, members of the Cult Awareness Network, who are still working through their feelings. Their names have been changed to protect their privacy.

□□□

Margaret's daughter joined the Divine Light Mission after the breakup of a college romance in the early 1970s.

The group, now called Elan Vital, worships an Indian man called Guru Maharaj Ji, who came to the United States at age 13, promising to bring world peace. The group once sponsored a festival in the Houston Astrodome, the highlight of which came when believers were allowed to kiss the bare feet of the guru.

Margaret's daughter gave up her schooling and money to take a low-paying job far from her Fairfield County home to be close to the leader. She was also very anxious to convert her parents.

"She would talk on and on and on about the wonderful thing she had found," Margaret said. "At first we would argue with her, but that doesn't work."

"She rebelled against any reminder of friends and family," her father said.

The couple tried to "deprogram" their daughter, but she left a rehabilitation program after only a few days and her parents subsequently faced possible legal action for taking her away from the group.

Now the family's contact with her is "slender."

□□□

Debbie, 18, was involved in Brother Julius, a group based in upstate Connecticut led by a former New Yorker who claims to be the son of god. She joined with her mother, who learned about the group through a co-worker.

Soon, the 14-year-old girl had transferred a strong belief in Jesus to a devotion to Brother Julius.

"We were programmed to believe we should want to give our lives for him," she said. "I had to sit there and accept death."

Believers were allowed to live at home and go to school, but the group held meetings, sometimes seven-hour sessions, about four times a week.

"I thought he could hear and see you every moment of the day," Debbie said. "You had to be careful what you thought."

Members were often pitted against each other to test their strength. Once Debbie was forced to stand in front of the group as members screamed insults and obscenities at her.

She left in October and seeks support from about 19 others who left the group last year. She still believes in a Christian god, but has not joined an organized church.

"I feel I've been spiritually raped," she said.

□□□

Jan was a follower of Brother Julius for 14 years, joining with her mother after the death of her father. One of her daughters is still in the group.

Jan said she had a strong Catholic upbringing, but thought Brother Julius had a real command of Christian thought.

"He had an amazing mastery of the scriptures," she said. "But he also had a hidden agenda. I never thought a man who preached the word of Jesus with such authority would trick us."

She said followers believed that they were the chosen people, "the quiver in god's arrow," an awesome responsibility to bear.

Jan was told to change her name, reject her family, even divorce her husband. She said the long hours of indoctrination made her feel lost in a maze, "like a little mouse that couldn't find a way out."

She said she still feels intense guilt over her daughter's involvement.

"As much as you're free, so much scarring is involved."

□□□

Donna's parents were involved in different groups for as long as she could remember.

Though she had mentally blocked out much of her past, she remembers questioning her lifestyle. Once she accepted mind-altering drugs, which made her see rainbows around the leader.

"I thought he died and he came back for me," she said. "I would rather die than be torn away from him."

Donna said she was often held in a hypnotic gaze by the leader's extraordinary eyes.

"I remember he was a swarthy-looking man, but he had beautiful eyes," she said. "I would look for him everywhere I went. I wondered when he would show up on the next street corner."

After leaving for college at age 17, she said she didn't feel worthy to enter a church. Since then she has spent years discussing her thoughts with other victims and Catholic clergy.

"I have cable [television] and I found myself watching the Catholic channel. I'd even watch the kids programs — it was like I was re-learning things."

— MEREDITH GUINNESS

# Deception tilts vulnerable away from free will

By MEREDITH GUINNESS  
Staff writer

Karen Cyrus was looking forward to going to college in Boston, but she wasn't prepared for the big city coldness she encountered every day.

She went out of her way to talk to strangers and was excited to find a kindred spirit with a friendly face on Boston Commons one summer day.

It wasn't until a few months later — after she left school, moved to Florida and spent her days working up to 18 hours and sleeping on a floor — that she realized she had become a "Moonie," a member of the Unification Church headed by convicted felon Sun Myung Moon.

"I felt like I had to believe he was the messiah," said Cyrus, who lives in Middlebury with husband, John, a former Fairfield resident who was also a follower of Moon.

"Most of our time was spent selling things and recruiting and we were exhausted. When you get home way after dark and you're up at six, there isn't any time to think about things."

While Cyrus left the international group 10 years ago, Dr. Madeline Tobias, a state psychotherapist who counsels ex-cult members, said similar incidents occur every

day across the country.

"Deception is the hallmark of a cult," Tobias said. "No one would ever go into it willingly, giving up everything and emptying their pockets, if they knew what was really going on."

According to members of the Cult Awareness Network (CAN), between 30 and 60 major cults have branches in Connecticut. About 20 are based in the state.

Former members and family of members from Fairfield County said not enough is known about some of the destructive groups because they often work under educational, religious and social fronts.

"I didn't really know what we belonged to or who we were following," said one ex-member, whose parents belonged to several groups.

What may surprise some is that, along with ex-Moonies and Hare Krishnas, CAN members include former followers of Transcendental Meditation, Erhard Seminar Training (est) and Scientology — groups often viewed as harmless self-help clubs.

Tobias uses the term cult to describe any unbalance of power in a relationship. A battered wife is just as much in thrall as a member of a fanatical sect, she said.

"What they have in common is there is idolatry from the bottom



Karen Cyrus: "I felt like I had to believe he was the messiah."

and exploitation from the top," she said.

Cults focus on everything from ending world hunger to making a quick buck, but Tobias said many groups use similar tactics of mind control. Those experiencing great life changes, stress, loss of a loved one or loneliness are often prime targets, she said.

"These people aren't dummies or crazy people," said one former member. "Stupid people know one and one isn't three; smart people try to figure it how it could be."

Many have a charismatic leader who professes to be a god or know a divine truth. The leader can be available to the followers or never seen, Tobias said.

Once a person becomes interested in the group theories, mind control begins, ex-members said. Members often go through long "training" sessions, sometimes lasting four to 16 hours and involving physical or verbal abuse.

Believers are often deprived of

See DECEPTION on A11

Continued from A8

sleep, food and access to bathrooms during these sessions, they said.

A 26-year-old man died during a 1983 est seminar in New Haven. According to reports, seminar attendants delayed paramedics from reaching the dying man's body and the class continued while they tried to revive him.

An autopsy proved inconclusive.

Being secluded from the outside world, the follower gradually begins to rely on the leader and believe the teachings.

"Free will, in a sense, is gone," Tobias said.

One ex-member of the Brother Julius group, which is based in upstate Connecticut, said she was willing to die for the leader, a Brooklyn-born man in his 60s who said he was the son of God. She thought the man was able to read her mind and would punish her for unspiritual thoughts.

Cyrus remembered a woman in her group who had been a Moonie for about eight years.

"One night the leader asked her to set the table and she was so confused she couldn't think enough to find the silverware and figure out how to set a table," she said. "She was crying hysterically."

Cyrus, like other former cult members, said the groups often collect large amounts of money for the leaders by selling belongings, flowers and books and "borrowing" money from relatives.

Five members of the Unification Church were arrested in Ansonia in 1984 for soliciting donations for poster prints. They were deported when police found the foreign-born followers had no soliciting permit, visas or passports.

The money isn't always reinvested in the group's projects. Guru Maharaj Ji, leader of Elan Vital, which reportedly has a Fairfield County branch, was audited in the

1970s for possible misuse of tax-exempt status. The religious group allegedly bought everything from underwear to an ocean-going power boat with money collected.

"It was run like a business," Cyrus said of her group. "We had to file money reports every week and direct deposits were wired into the main bank."

About 30 percent of followers eventually walk away from the cult, Tobias said. Others are subjects of "interventions" by family members, who often hire professional exit counselors to ease a voluntary transition from the group.

Tobias said the image of deprogrammers beating the believer into submission is outdated. Exit counseling is a gentle, respectful presentation of facts to help the believer

make decisions, she said.

"The process has been refined quite a bit," she said.

Leaving a group can be almost as traumatic as joining, Tobias said. She likened the common feelings of shame and loneliness to those emotions felt at the end of a failed marriage.

"They were so vulnerable before hand," she said. "Many times people have to face the same issues they went in with. They never really healed."

Tobias and other CAN members speak frequently to school groups and police about cults, in hopes their tactics will become more widely known.

"About half my practice is made up of cult victims," Tobias said. "I marvel at how resilient the mind is and I am hopeful for healing."

# SPECTRUM

# CULTS

## CCLU: punish rescuers

If a parent forcibly abducted his child from a secluded Roman Catholic monastery where monks take a vow of poverty and spent much of their days praying, Catholics around the world would likely fight this violation of religious freedom.

The public should be just as willing to support such freedom for adult members of so-called cults that don't necessarily conform with widespread religious beliefs, according to William Olds, executive director of the Connecticut Civil Liberties Union.

"Adults may join a religious group whether it is a cult or otherwise," Olds said. "They have a right to religious freedom."

While tales of brutal abductions of so-called cult members aren't as common as they were in the 1970s, Olds said efforts to spirit such individuals from groups against their will are illegal and should not be condoned even if the kidnappers are loving parents.

In 1973, the CCLU supported

'Adults may join a religious group whether it is a cult or otherwise. They have a right to religious freedom.'

William Olds,  
CCLU executive director

efforts to arrest and try Theodore Patrick, a self-styled rescuer of young people caught up in religious cults and movements in several states.

Patrick, a former aide to then-California Gov. Ronald Reagan, allegedly planned an abduction in which a member of the New Testament Missionary Fellowship was dragged from a Manhattan street by five people and taken to Pennsylvania for deprogramming.

One of the kidnappers was a Hamden man whose daughters lived with the 31-year-old victim. The others were the woman's estranged husband, her sister and her brother.

At the time, Olds told reporters at a press conference, "Parents have no more legal right to kidnap their children than the children have to kidnap their parents."

Things have changed a lot since then, according to Dr. Madeleine Tobias, a state psychotherapist who counsels the former followers of cults. After several well-meaning parents lost all ties with their children and others faced kidnapping charges as a result of abduction efforts, families of cult members looked at less violent ways to convince loved ones to return home.

Tobias and others do not recommend involuntary approaches. Today's "exit counseling" requires the cult member to voluntarily sit down and discuss the group and its possible mind control methods.

"We tell parents to just say, 'Look, we love you. Can you give us just an hour or two of your time to talk about this?'" Tobias said.

While Olds said he doesn't oppose deprogramming efforts if the cult follower is willing, he said he would still defend cult members taken against their will.

If the law allowed abduction of cult members, it would have to extend to all religious groups, including mainstream churches and synagogues.

"The definition of brainwashing is so vague," Olds said.

The CCLU believes there are exceptions to the rule. If there is evidence the group is holding people against their will or the group members are children, intervention may be required, he said.

In most cases, however, parents and friends must accept an adult's decision to join a group they may consider to be a destructive cult.

"There motives may be benevolent," Olds said. "But you can't just kidnap people."

— MEREDITH GUINNESS



Child Abuse

# The Nation

## At the Whim of Leader: Childhood in a Cult

By MELINDA HENNERBERGER

**S**OME 40 children hid under their beds in an armed camp outside Waco, Texas, last Sunday while their parents followed a failed rock musician who believes he is the Messiah into a bloody gun battle with Federal agents.

As the standoff with authorities dragged on throughout the week, David Koresh, the leader, repeatedly broke promises to allow all the children to leave the compound. Instead, he used the youngest members of the Branch Davidians as human bargaining chips.

Their ordeal is an extreme example of the traumas suffered by children born into religious cults, who typically grow up in isolation, without proper education or adequate medical care. In almost all groups with an authoritarian leader, close family ties are discouraged because intimacy threatens the leader's control.

When children finally leave the group, they may have a hard time forming relationships, thinking critically, accepting responsibility or making even minor decisions. And if they experience culture shock, the fact that they have never seen a rock video or learned the must-have brand of sneakers is the least of their problems. Children raised in cults often develop a variety of psychiatric and physical ailments.

From time to time, the death of a child brings long-term abuse to light, as when six members and the leader of the House of Judah in western Michigan were convicted in the 1984 beating death of a 13-year-old boy. And sometimes children are listed among the victims of entire groups that are destroyed: The 911 members of the People's Temple of the disciples of Christ who died at Jonestown, Guyana, in 1978 included 260 children, many of whom had been adopted for the purpose of bringing in welfare revenue from the state of California. Five of the 11 people killed in the 1983 bombing of the MOVE home in Philadelphia were children.

But the treatment of children varies widely among groups and, like the fate of those still inside the compound in Texas, depends largely on the mental state of the leader.

Sometimes, leaders demand that parents abandon

their children in order to devote their energies to full-time missionary work. The followers of the Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh, who died in 1990, were encouraged to leave their children behind when they joined the group in Oregon during the 80's. The Sullivanians, a New York City-based psychotherapy group, believe that maternal involvement is toxic to children. In the River of Life Ministries in California, members have been told that if they pay too much attention to their children, the demon spirit of motherhood will possess them.

And in some small, low-profile fundamentalist groups in remote areas, child abuse is the almost inevitable result of a strict disciplinary code. Laughing, crying and play-acting are punishable offenses and Bible verses like "spare the rod and spoil the child" are used to justify physical discipline.

### Spanked Before Hundreds

Patricia Goshal of Fanwood, N.J., who left the Brother Julius Group in central Connecticut in 1980, said she saw three families spanked on their bare buttocks before several hundred people as punishment for the minor infractions of their children, one of whom whined at a group meeting.

Isolation only increases the incidence of physical and sexual abuse because the children are not monitored by outsiders. Their births are not recorded, their schooling is in-house and their ailments are attended by the laying-on of hands. Because illness is seen as the work of the devil, sick people often deny their symptoms to escape punishment.

Usually, accounts of abuse surface through child custody cases and the reports of disaffected former members. In recent years, grandparents have begun petitioning the courts for visitation rights with children they have never met or rarely seen.

"Sometimes the leader will kick them out because they don't want to deal with that, they don't want to have



A child released from the Branch Davidians compound near Waco, Tex., last week rides in the back of a Federal firehouse van.

to hire a lawyer and get the attention," said a Long Island grandmother whose daughter was recently ejected from a New York fundamentalist Islamic group.

Even when parents leave the cult, children's problems are far from over. They are unprepared for freedom and their parents, who have long deferred to their leader in all aspects of child-rearing, are unprepared to handle new responsibilities. Lasting effects on children commonly include depression, eating and sleep disorders, and severe digestive and bowel problems. Psychologists who treat people raised in cults say that younger children may actually flourish in the groups, which function like an extended family. But when children come into their own at around age 10 and begin to rebel, they are severely punished.

A Houston woman who left the evangelical Children of God with her three boys a decade ago said her sons, now ages 13, 18 and 20, still blame her for allowing them to be raised by other people. Her sons were not schooled or seen by doctors, though she said she did sneak them to a clinic and have them immunized against polio. They were subjected to staged midnight break-ins that were drills for an expected police siege.

All three live together now, united in their unwillingness to discuss their cult experience. And after a decade, they call their mother by the first name she was given in the cult. "I'd tell them to call me Mom," she said, "but it's like a pair of shoes that wouldn't fit. To tell the truth, it felt awkward for me, too."

# The power (and danger) of cults

The happiest of families have their sad stories. This one concerns cults. Because of the ugly and messy standoff in Waco, Texas, cults are prominent in the national mind. Some commentators have even joked on the subject. "The Waco wacko," for example, has been one attempt at humor on the airwaves. In my experience, there is nothing funny about cults in Waco or anywhere.

About 20 years ago, one of my favorite relatives became enmeshed in a cult. A woman renowned in her circle for her brilliance and intellectual authority became the docile follower of fanatical ideologues. Her teaching and leadership once approached august heights. In the cult, she sank to depressing depths of submissiveness.

## ROBERT C. MAYNARD

Worst of all, the cult's leaders forbade her to have any contact with any of her relatives or former friends outside the tight little circle of true believers. Some members of the cult divorced their former mates, and their leaders attempted to prevent the divorced "outsiders" from seeing their children. In more than one state, domestic-relations courts denounced the family policies and practices of the cult as nearly barbaric.

My female relative in the cult has a sister. Her sister and she were once as close as twins. They shared each other's clothing. They dated some of the same guys. They traveled together to many places for fun and relaxation. They supported each other through tough college exams and even tougher times in graduate school. They were "closer than close," as the old folks used to say.

After her cult transformation, the woman stopped speaking to any of her siblings or other relatives. When they tried to reach her on the telephone, she would hang up as soon as she recognized the caller. One day, the sister of the woman in the cult saw her once-cherished sibling in the supermarket. She approached her in the hope they might greet each other, hug and be friends as in old times. When the cult woman saw her sister, she turned on her heel and left the store without speaking a single word.

Such is the power of the cult over the soul and psyche of the follower. We have seen in Jonestown, Guyana, and in other places that this power extends to matters of life and death. I have neighbors in Oakland who lost relatives in the Rev. Jim Jones' mass suicide and murder pact 20 years ago. Some of them still cannot comprehend how their loved ones fell so deeply under the spell of a madman.

My suspicion is that we still have quite a bit to learn about cults. We are still capable of being surprised by what we find out. Certainly the federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms was sur-



prised by David Koresh on Feb. 28, when it tried to take the Mount Carmel redoubt by force. The question, given what we do know, is whether ATF should have been quite as surprised as it was.

As the story of what went wrong in Waco on Feb. 28 is being pieced together, one thing is clear: The original ATF plan relied on surprise. By the time the first shot was fired, the Branch Davidians were anything but surprised. On the contrary, they were fully prepared for what turned out to be one of the bloodiest encounters of its kind in the history of the United States.

I suspect one of the reasons it was so bloody is that the law-enforcement officials underestimated the capacity of an allegedly religious group to unleash such violence. My own reading of such groups leads me to think the government agents suffered from several serious shortcomings. Not the least of these was naiveté about the power of cults to cause members to behave in ways that are powerfully out of character. That much we should already know about the cults among us.

Robert C. Maynard is the former editor and publisher of the Oakland Tribune.

# CULT TECHNIQUES OF COERCIVE PERSUASION

*Learn to recognize them!*

**ISOLATION:** Recruits are isolated from society and from contact with opposing points of view to prevent critical judgment.

**PEER GROUP PRESSURE:** Recruits doubt their own convictions when everyone around them acts totally convinced of other beliefs.

**LOVE BOMBING:** A beguiling sense of belonging is contrived through flattery, touching, hugging.

**REMOVAL OF PRIVACY:** One is never left alone to think through and sort out these confusing new experiences.

**SLEEP DEPRIVATION AND FATIGUE:** Adequate sleep is prevented, work hours are excessive over long periods of time, making members vulnerable and disoriented.

**GAMES:** Playing strenuous games with confusing rules builds increasing dependence on group leaders for correct answers, thus undermining the member's decision-making skills.

**INDOCTRINATION:** Members are conditioned to stop thinking and to accept without question the 'revealed truths' from the 'master.' Fatigue prevents the members from seeing the contradictions.

**CONFESSION:** Recruits are maneuvered into sharing innermost secrets. This helps destroy personal egos, induces them to buy the new 'truths.' Later any escape possibilities are compromised by the knowledge that these exaggerated secrets may be revealed.

**CHANGE OF DIET:** Omission of nutrients increases susceptibility to manipulation of one's emotional 'highs' and 'lows.'

**GUILT:** Guilt is used endlessly to force members to work harder and without relief. Guilt about mankind's sorry state and the member's personal 'sins' is used as a lever to force acceptance of 'holier' beliefs.

**FEAR:** Physical and spiritual fear is constantly injected to maintain group loyalty. The slightest negative thought is held to be soul threatening. Tragic consequences for self and family are prophesied for anyone leaving the group.

**CHANTING AND SINGING:** Constant repetition of mind-narrowing chants block rational thought and induces a quasi-hypnotic state of high susceptibility.

**CHILDLIKE DEPENDENCE** is promoted by denying opportunities for normal decision making.

**NO QUESTIONS** are allowed. Blind acceptance is mandatory.

**DRESS:** Conformity in dress removes one's individuality and promotes disorientation.

**ELITISM:** Only the group is righteous; everyone else is satanic, or at best, misguided.

**REPLACEMENT OF RELATIONSHIPS** is promoted by sabotaging communication between members and families. Cult-arranged marriages further disrupt previous ties.

**REJECTION OF OLD VALUES:** Old life values are constantly denounced to make them seem worse than they were.

**FINANCIAL COMMITMENT:** Members burn their bridges to the real world by donating earnings, savings, cars to the cult, thereby limiting escape possibilities for lack of money to start over again.

**Do all cults use all of these techniques? No. Are these techniques all inherently evil? Not necessarily, but their power is being destructively used by cults to entrap, to coercively persuade, thus denying the very freedom of choice and of religion which the Constitution of the United States was meant to protect.**

*"He that will not reason is a bigot  
He that cannot reason is a fool  
He that dares not reason is a slave!"  
William Drummond*

*"All that is necessary for the forces of evil to take control, is for enough good people to do nothing."  
Anon.*



\*\*\*\*\*  
CONDITIONS FOR MIND CONTROL

DR. MARGARET SINGER  
\*\*\*\*\*

THOUGHT REFORM = LANGUAGE + SOCIAL & PSYCHOLOGICAL INFLUENCE

1. CONTROL OVER TIME

Especially thinking time  
Techniques to get a person to think about :  
  . group  
  . beliefs of group

2. CREATE A SENSE OF POWERLESSNESS

Get people away from normal support systems for a period  
  of time  
Provide models of behavior (cult members)  
Use in-group language  
Use of songs, games, stories the person is unfamiliar with or  
  they are modified so that they're unfamiliar  
New people tend to want to be like others (acceptance, feeling  
  part of a group)

3. MANIPULATE REWARDS, PUNISHMENTS, EXPERIENCES IN ORDER TO  
SUPPRESS OLD SOCIAL BEHAVIOR

Manipulate: social rewards  
          intellectual rewards  
Manipulate experience: altered states of consciousness  
                          hypnosis  
Hypnosis: speaking patterns  
          guided imagery  
          pacing of voice to breathing patterns  
          parables, stories  
          repetition  
          boredom  
          stop paying attention to distractions, focus  
          inwardly to what's going on inside you  
          the use of one's voice to get people's attention  
          focused  
Chanting, Meditation  
Teach thought-stopping techniques  
Work them up emotionally to a negative state:  
  re-experience past painful events  
  recall negative actions/sin in past life  
Then rescue them from negative emotion by giving them a new  
  way to live

4. MANIPULATE REWARDS, PUNISHMENTS, EXPERIENCES IN ORDER TO ELICIT NEW BEHAVIOR

Models will demonstrate new behavior  
Conformity: dress, language, behavior  
Using group language will eventually still the thinking mind

5. MUST BE A TIGHTLY CONTROLLED SYSTEM OF LOGIC

No complaints from the floor  
Pyramid shaped operation with leader at the top  
Top leaders must maintain absolute control/authority  
Persons in charge must have verbal ways of never losing  
Anyone who questions is made to think there is something inherently wrong with them to even question  
Phobia induction:  
something bad will happen if you leave the group  
if you leave this group, you're leaving God  
Guilt manipulation

6. PERSONS BEING THOUGHT REFORMED MUST BE UNAWARE THAT THEY ARE BEING MOVED THROUGH A PROGRAM TO MAKE THEM DEPLOYABLE AGENTS, TO BUY MORE COURSES, SIGN UP FOR THE DURATION, ETC.

You can't be thought reformed with full capacity, informed consent  
You don't know the agenda of the group at the beginning or the full content of the ideology

THOUGHT REFORM SYSTEM:

Coordinated programs of coercive influence and behavior control  
Use of pop psychology techniques found in sensitivity training and encounters groups

EXPERTS ON THOUGHT REFORM:

Dr. Margaret Singer addresses the CONDITIONS that need to be present  
Dr. Shein addresses the STAGES of thought reform  
Dr. Robert Jay Lifton addresses the PSYCHOLOGICAL THEMES

**CULTS AND CULTIC RELATIONSHIPS**

CULT - the political and power STRUCTURE of a group

CULTIC RELATIONSHIP - those relationships in which a person intentionally induces others to become totally or nearly totally dependent on him/her for almost all major life decisions and inculcates in these followers a belief that he has some special talent, gift or knowledge

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CULTS

(From Prison or Paradise? The New Religious Cults, Rudin and Rudin)

"All religions have at some point in their histories been guilty of excesses. Extremism, fanaticism and irrationality are found in all religions and, one can argue, are perhaps an essential component of all religious or mystical experiences. However, these new religious cults are NOT like the Roman Catholic Church, the Mormon Church or other past "new religious movements". The contemporary cults exhibit characteristics that set them apart from past religious cults and from established religions. These fundamental differences make them different in kind as well as degree, and make them a unique phenomenon.

What are these characteristics? (One must remember that the following characteristics are generalizations and do not apply equally to all of the groups.)

1. Members swear total allegiance to an all-powerful leader whom they may believe to be a Messiah. The leader determines the rules for daily life and proclaims doctrine or "Truths," but generally the leader and his or her "inner circle" are exempt from the rules or prohibitions. These rules, doctrines, or "Truths" cannot be questioned. The leader's word is the absolute and final authority.
2. Rational thought is discouraged or forbidden. The groups are anti-intellectual, placing all emphasis on intuition or emotional experience. "Knowledge" is redefined as those ideas or experiences dispensed by the group or its leader. One can only attain knowledge by joining the group and submitting to its doctrine. One cannot question this "knowledge".
3. The cult's recruitment techniques are often deceptive. The potential follower may not be told what he is getting into and what will be required of him. The Unification Church often does not mention its name or that of Reverend Moon for perhaps several weeks. By then the person is well indoctrinated into the movement.
4. The cult weakens the follower psychologically and makes him believe that his problems can only be solved by the group. The cult undermines all of the follower's past psychological support systems; all help from other therapy methods, psychologists or psychiatrists, religious beliefs, or parents and friends is discredited and may actually be forbidden.
5. The new cults expertly manipulate guilt. The devotee believes the group has the power to "dispense existence," to determine, according to psychologist Moshe Halevi Spero, "who has the right to live or die, physically or metaphorically". Members may be forced to "confess" their inadequacies and past "sins" before the group or certain individuals.
6. Cult members are isolated from the outside world, cut off from their pasts, from school, job, family, and friends as well as from information from newspapers, radio and television. They may be prohibited from coming and going freely into the outside world, or are so psychologically weakened that they cannot cope with it. They are told that the outside

world is evil, satanic, and doomed, and that salvation can come only by remaining in the group and giving up everything else.

7. The cult or its leader make every career or life decision for the follower. The Hare Krishna group regulates every hour of activity for those members who dwell in the temples. The cults determine every aspect of the adherent's personal life, including sexual activities, diet, use of liquor, drugs and tobacco, perhaps the choice of marriage partners, and whether, when and how to bear children.

8. Some cults promise to improve society, raise money, and work to help the poor, etc., in order to attract idealistic members. However, their energies are channeled into promoting the well-being of the group rather than towards improving society. All energy and financial resources are devoted to the cult, in some cases to the benefit only of the leaders.

9. Cult followers often work full time for the group. They work very long hours, for little or not pay, and in demeaning circumstances and conditions. They are made to feel guilty or unworthy if they protest. If they do work outside the group, salaries are usually turned over to the cult. The lower-echelon members may live in conditions of self-denial or extreme poverty while cult leaders live comfortably or even luxuriously.

10. The cults are antiwoman, antichild and antifamily. Women perform the most menial tasks of cooking, cleaning and street solicitations and are rarely elevated to high decision-making positions in the group. Birth control, abortion and the physical circumstances of childbirth are often regulated by the group's leaders, who are usually men.

11. Most cult members believe the world is coming to an end and they are elite members of an "elect" survival group. They believe in a Manichean dualistic conflict between Absolute Good and Absolute Evil. By joining the cult they believe they have affiliated themselves with the Good which will eventually triumph over Evil.

12. Many of these groups have the philosophy that "the ends justify the means." Since the "ends" are so important - salvation of souls, salvation of the world, triumph of Good over Evil - any means required to carry them out are permitted and even encouraged by the cult. There may be a double standard of truth, one for cult members and another for the outside world. The cult member may be encouraged to lie to outsiders.

13. The cults are often shrouded in an aura of secrecy and mystery. They keep new members in the dark, promising more knowledge about the group as they become more involved in it. Some leaders are rarely, if ever, seen by the average member. The cults may hide financial information from the public.

14. There is frequently an aura of violence or potential violence. Two Unification Church recruitment centers are guarded. The Divine Light Mission premises and the Krishnas at their farm in West Virginia have their own security forces which they insist are necessary to protect the cult leaders or to protect themselves from hostile neighbors.

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# Eight Marks of a Mind Control Cult

Brainwashing has become almost a household word in the last two decades or so. In 1961, Robert J. Lifton wrote the definitive book on the subject, *Thought Reform and the Psychology of Totalism*, after studying the effects of mind control on American prisoners of war under the Communist Chinese.

In chapter 22 of his book, Lifton outlines eight criteria of mind control, whether used by political, religious or psychological cults. This book is now available on our order form.

## Milieu Control

"Milieu" is a French word meaning "surroundings; environment." Cults are able to control the environment around their recruits in a number of ways, but almost always using a form of isolation. Recruits can be physically separated from society, or they can be warned under threat of punishment to stay away from the world's educational media, especially when it might provoke critical thinking. Any books, movies or testimonies of ex-members of the group, or even anyone critical of the group in any way are to be avoided.

Information is carefully kept on each recruit by the mother organization. All are watched, lest they fall behind or get too far ahead of the thinking of the organization. Because it appears that the organization knows so much about everything and everyone, they appear omniscient in the eyes of the recruits.

## Mystical Manipulation

In religious cults, God is ever-present in the workings of the organization. If a person leaves for any reason, accidents or ill-will that may befall them are always attributed to God's punishment on them. For the faithful, the angels are always said to be working, and stories circulate about how God is truly doing marvelous things among them, because they are "the truth." The organization is therefore given a certain "mystique" that is quite alluring to the new recruit.

## Demand for Purity

The world is depicted as black and white, with little room for making personal decisions based on a trained conscience. One's conduct is modeled after the ideology of the group, as

taught in its literature. People and organizations are pictured as either good or evil, depending on their relationship to the cult.

Universal tendencies of guilt and shame are used to control individuals, even after they leave. There is great difficulty in understanding the complexities of human morality, since everything is polarized and over-simplified. All things classified as evil are to be avoided, and purity is attainable through immersion into the cult's ideology.

## The Cult of Confession

Serious sins (as defined by the organization) are to be confessed immediately. The members are to be reported if found walking contrary to the rules.

There is often a tendency to derive pleasure from self-degradation through confession. This occurs when all must confess their sins before each other regularly, creating an intense kind of "oneness" within the group. It also allows leaders from within to exercise authority over the weaker ones, using their "sins" as a whip to lead them on.

## The "Sacred Science"

The cult's ideology becomes the ultimate moral vision for the ordering of human existence. The ideology is too "sacred" to call into question, and a reverence is demanded for the leadership. The cult's ideology makes an exaggerated claim for possessing airtight logic, making it appear as absolute truth with no contradictions. Such an attractive system offers security.

## Loading the Language

Lifton explains the prolific use of "thought-terminating clichés," expressions or words that are designed to end the conversation or controversy. We are all familiar with the use of the clichés "capitalist" and "imperialist," as used by antiwar demonstrators in the 60's. Such clichés are easily memorized and readily expressed.

## Lifton's Eight Criteria of Mind Control Cults

**Milieu Control**

**Mystical Manipulation**

**Demand for Purity**

**The Cult of Confession**

**The "Sacred Science"**

**Loading the Language**

**Doctrine Over Person**

**Dispensing of Existence**

They are called the "language of non-thought," since the discussion is terminated, not allowing further consideration.

In the Watchtower, for instance, expressions such as "the truth", the "mother organization", the "new system", "apostates" and "worldly" carry with them a judgment on outsiders, leaving them unworthy of further consideration.

## Doctrine Over Person

Human experience is subordinated to doctrine, no matter how profound or contradictory such experiences seem. The history of the cult is altered to fit their doctrinal logic. The person is only valuable inasmuch as they conform to the role models of the cult. Common-sense perceptions are disregarded if they are hostile to the cult's ideology.

## Dispensing of Existence

The cult decides who has the "right" to exist and who does not. They decide who will perish in the final battle of good over evil. The leaders decide which history books are accurate and which are biased. Families can be cut off and outsiders can be deceived, for they are not fit to exist. ###



# The Bridgeport Post

An Independent Newspaper

Established 1883

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December 11, 1978



## Carl Rowan

**WASHINGTON** — When you recover from your shock and revulsion over more than 900 murders and suicides in the Rev. Jim Jones' Peoples Temple community in Guyana, you have some serious thinking to do. How and when are we going to face up to the fact that "religion" is America's greatest sanctuary for people who engage in systematic theft, tax evasion, rape, torture and even murder?

**How do we legally  
rein in those who  
kill in God's name?**

The federal government can make a banker specify in detail what interest he is charging on a loan; it can jail a corporation executive for using "insider's knowledge" to make a profit on a stock; it can force an automobile company to spend millions of dollars to recall cars that just "might" have a defective part. But government has been, with rare exceptions, powerless to deal with so-called "religions," even though there was abundant evidence of kidnappings, brainwashings, physical abuse — and most of all of con games to strip new "converts" of their money.

This gruesome tragedy in Guyana is an appalling example of governmental failure to act, primarily because government officials are timid about breaching sanctuaries of "religion." The State Department not only failed to act early against Jim Jones' "temple," but it fought to prevent FBI involvement.

It is easy enough for the State Department, the FBI, the Army and a host of other agencies to spring to action after a congressman and a news team are murdered and more than 400 members of the Peoples Temple are found dead.

But why was government handcuffed months ago when it knew that Jones and his cronies were forcing converts to sign over all their belongings, present and future, to "the temple"? Can it possibly surprise U.S. officials that one cult member was seized, after the killings, carrying \$80,000 in cash and a \$1 million bank draft on a bank in Panama? Or that

more than \$1 million worth of gold jewelry and cash was found in Jones' commune in Guyana?

Our laws are written, or interpreted, in such a way that if a person enters a cult "willingly" and then is kept in, allegedly against his or her will, the FBI cannot act on grounds that this is kidnapping.

Thus our government had dealt gingerly with the Unification Church, headed by a Korean, the Rev. Sun Myung Moon. This cult has been accused again and again of brainwashing new members, holding them by force, wearing them down physically and mentally, and then "programming" them to a total commitment to the church.

Last August the federal government did move against one "unusual" religious group, the Church of Scientology. A federal grand jury returned a 28-count indictment accusing 11 high officials and agents of the church of stealing Justice Department documents, bugging an office of the Internal Revenue Service, encouraging perjury and hiding witnesses.

Documents acquired by the government in court-ordered FBI raids show that the Church of Scientology's policy has been to use "lies and derogatory data" to destroy the reputation of anyone investigating or criticizing the church, and to punish critics by filing lawsuits that force them to spend huge sums for legal fees.

There are dozens of "religious" groups in America which are just as venal and vicious as the Peoples Temple, but how bold or cautious must government be in investigating and/or prosecuting them? Other groups merely arouse suspicion. CBS' "Sixty Minutes" featured two evangelists who have many thousands of followers by using radio and television. One of these ministers boasted that the cash donated in one day's mail might total \$200,000.

The constitutional dilemma is very troublesome. But I say that, however much we cherish our separation of church and state, we have got to find a safe way for the state to rein in those who steal and kill in the name of God.



Saturday Review. Jan 6, 1979  
by Norman Cousins

## EDITORIAL

### The Reign of the Religious Fanatic

**G**OVERNMENT OFFICIALS have acknowledged that they knew members of the People's Temple had been fraudulently exploited and were even in some personal danger. But the officials said they were helpless to intervene in view of the religious nature of the organization and the protection afforded it under the First Amendment.

Thus is revealed once again the curious paralysis of American society when confronted with any knave or fanatic who wraps himself in the mantle of religion. Almost anyone can form a sect, prey on its members, collect money, use the cash for his own purposes, and apply for and receive tax-exempt status and benefits. Misrepresentation, deceit, chicanery, falsification of records, and even theft can be disguised as religious undertakings and carried out with immunity and impunity. All this becomes possible because of the mindless assumption in American society that anything calling itself a religion is deserving of special respect and privilege. We apply the term *religious tolerance* indiscriminately and promiscuously, laying ourselves wide open for any charlatan who uses the mumbo-jumbo of "religion" to accomplish his fraudulent and anti-social designs.

If a burglar broke into your home and made off with your valuables, police would spring into action and an alert would be sent out to track him down; but if a religious fanatic inveigles you into parting with your property or half your weekly salary, the law offers no protection and shrugs at your loss. If your child were kidnapped,

federal, state, and city officials would run over one another in the attempt to get at the kidnapper; but if a religious racketeer brainwashes your child and causes him or her to leave your home and turn against you, the authorities say they are without means to help you. If someone were to imprison you in a private jail or concentration camp, the government would come to your aid; but if your jailors call their prison a religious commune, there is no clear way the government can help you because your captors can invoke the religious clause of the First Amendment.

Where did the notion originate that religious movements should be beyond the law? Certainly not with the American Founding Fathers. When they spoke about freedom of religion they had something in mind quite different from the position attributed to them today. The founders of this nation came here to get out of the clutches of state-sponsored religions that perpetrated all sorts of injustices and outrages against which the citizenry had no recourse under the law. When the Founding Fathers spoke about freedom of religion, they were thinking of the need to separate religion from political authority. Freedom of religion was intended to protect the individual in his right to believe or not to believe, to affiliate or not to affiliate, to worship in a church or to worship in his own home, or not to worship at all. Freedom of choice was what the First Amendment was all about. The Founding Fathers never intended that religious organizations or their representatives should enjoy exemption from the laws. They saw fanaticism as a denial, not an

assertion, of spiritual belief. The notion that they would have tolerated the kind of venal exploitation and predatory assaults that, under the guise of religion, have disfigured this nation in recent years is poor history and even poorer policy.

In a way, the mass murder at Jonestown was inevitable. Sooner or later the freedom of half-crazed and evil men to mesmerize and manipulate people in the name of religion, brotherhood, togetherness, common sacrifice, and community was bound to lead to a collective and hideous tragedy. "Fanatics have their dreams," wrote Keats, "wherewith they weave a paradise for a sect." But fanaticism also converts paradises into private prisons. It is irresponsible to think that society's indifference to or toleration of corruption and violence by fanatics, however heavily robed, will not reach a hideous culmination. Our reaction of shock and outrage over the mass murder at Jonestown will be a terrible waste of human emotion if we do not accept our own share of the responsibility for that monstrous event. By providing special dispensations to religious despots and demons, we set a stage on which they can play out their macabre plots.

And all the sorrow over the 900 men, women, and children whose corpses were so entangled that they could hardly be counted will be meaningless unless we recognize that there is more than one Jonestown. The same dangerous nonsense is being peddled today by a dozen or more religious cults. The same opportunity offered by society and seized by Jim Jones is being effectively exploited right now by those who know how easy it is to get people to reach for a better life on earth and in heaven; who can readily turn to their own advantage the inherent desire of people to come together in the name of a common humanity; and who are quick to recognize the absence of spiritual fulfillment in the lives of so many Americans, especially the young.

It is not enough, therefore, to lament the mass tragedy in Guyana. So long as we are prepared to provide unlimited hospitality and give status and tax benefits to imposters and spurious organizations who call themselves religious, we must be prepared to deal with the horrors that are their natural progeny.

—N.C.



"Don't go underwater while I'm talking to you!"

## COUNTERING THE CULTS

From the Book by James Rudin and Marcia Rudin

### PRISON OR PARADISE? THE NEW RELIGIOUS CULTS

"How can the legal system be more effectively used to counter the cults?

- . New anti-solicitation legislation should be enacted. Cultists soliciting funds (a fancy euphemism for begging) should be required to clearly identify themselves, their group, and the true purpose of the fund raising.
- . The right of cults to claim tax-exempt status as religions needs to be re-examined. Tax laws should be enforced, particularly those regulations requiring all business income of religious groups that is unrelated to religious purposes to be taxed.
- . Health and sanitary codes must be strongly enforced especially against those groups whose members live together in crowded and diseased conditions.
- . Existing child-abuse and involuntary-servitude laws should be vigorously enforced. Legislators should investigate cults to determine if they are violating human and civil rights, including medical care, proper diet, protection from unlawful imprisonment and abduction of minors, and cruel and unusual punishment.
- . The Labor Department should scrutinize cults involved in interstate commerce to insure that minimum wages are paid to cult members who work for the group, and that all inter-state commerce regulations are being followed.
- . Government officials should closely study the cults' educational institutions to guarantee that all school-age children who live within religious cults are attending proper and fully accredited schools.
- . Cults must strictly comply with consumer-protection legislation and not misrepresent themselves to prospective members.
- . Laws regulating proselytizations should be tightened. Perhaps laws barring conversion of minors should be passed, and the legal age defining "minors" raised from 18 to 21 in cases of religious conversion.
- . There should be legislation forbidding proselytization of wards of the state and people in hospitals and prisons. Residents of homes for the aged must be spared from cult recruiting campaigns.
- . Cults should be investigated for possible charity-fraud violations. cults might be prosecuted under state laws prohibiting unjustifiable interference with familial relationships.

(From the New York Times,  
September 26, 1980)

# TERROR:

## SECTS AND CULTS

physical and emotional punishment. Often they were forced to sit in a "circle of fear," surrounded by the other children, who shouted at them and called them names.

A California cult taught that children born of marriages outside the group were of Satan's world, according to testimony by a former member at a 1979 hearing sponsored by the New York State Assembly on treatment of children in cults. Mothers were separated from their children, who were kept in inadequate living

quarters (six children to a small trailer). A parent who asked to visit his or her child too often or expressed much sorrow over the separation was chastised as too attached to a "fallen life." Although several children apparently were of school age, they were never taken off the farm for school, it was testified.

### Denial of Health Care

Generally, cults do not use physicians, midwives, prenatal care, or hospitals, nor

do the children get checkups, vaccinations, or medical care. In one Indiana sect, maternal death was nearly 100 times that of the rest of the state between 1975 and 1982, and perinatal deaths (of a fetus older than 20 weeks) almost three times as frequent, according to a study by the National Center for Disease Control and the Indiana Board of Health. The Indiana legislature approved a measure that would have required parents to tell authorities whether their children needed medical



# HIDDEN

## CHILD ABUSE IN "RELIGIOUS"

By Shirley Landa

There are some 5,000 cults in the United States. They vary in size from a few members to tens of thousands. All have an impact—some benign, others destructive—on the family unit. Groups whose leadership control is so strong that the family unit is broken up and children are removed from natural parents at the will of the leader or his/her lieutenants generally practice physical and/or psychological abuse. The physical abuse can include beatings, actual torture, incest, starvation, rape, denial of medical care, forced prostitution, and other deviant sexual practices. Psychological abuse can include social isolation (lack of socialization outside the group or even within the sect), emotional deprivation (children taught not to cry, feel, want, or show hunger), denial of normal parental nurturing and bonding, enforced absolute obedience to the leader, and being commanded not to think. Both types of abuse can prevent normal development of individual identity and intellectual processes.

Federal officials and child welfare agencies are increasingly confronted with cases of child abuse in cults. They are just beginning to realize the magnitude of the problem.

### First Amendment Protections

According to Webster's a cult is "a system of religious worship or ritual." The extremist cults are not properly described by that definition. They can be more accurately described as "totalitarian pseudo-religious groups with religious principles formulated to suit the plans of the leader." Some modern US cults, such as "hippie" communes, were originally nonreligious, but later assumed a religious character to take advantage of rights guaranteed by the First Amendment to the Constitution. This constitutional protection has often caused city and state

officials to look the other way instead of investigating allegations or evidence of child abuse in cults. The reluctance to interfere with religious belief has allowed child abuse to flourish in some cults and become particularly vicious.

The "religious immunity" provision is now a requirement for states seeking federal funding for child protection programs. This provision states that a parent or guardian who does not provide specified medical treatment for a child will not be considered negligent if denial of treatment results from religious beliefs. Given this federal requirement and with massive coordinated lobbying by faith healers, nearly all states have inserted a version of "religious immunity" in either their juvenile or criminal codes or both. As a result, there have been few prosecutions of child abuse in cults and, in those cases prosecuted, no convictions or light sentences.

In January 1983, the US Department of Health and Human Services informed states that they need no longer exempt religious groups from child abuse regulation. The same year, Oklahoma revised its religious exemption, deciding it would not apply in cases in which lack of medical care could result in permanent physical damage to a child.

But 47 states still exempt religious groups from child abuse recommendations and child welfare officials doubt that many states will follow Oklahoma's lead. Said James A. Harrell, director of the federal National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect: "Most states will probably leave well enough alone."

### Undermining the Family

In sects that do not "follow the leader" blindly, natural nurturing feelings of parents for children generally come into play and prevent the extensive child abuse seen in more destructive cults. But when the leader's control is absolute, children are viewed not as individuals but as possessions of the group. Their allegiance is thus to the group's leadership, not to their parents. Because the natural parent-child relation-

ship undermines such absolute, unquestioning devotion, cults may separate children from their parents.

Totalitarianism may be so complete that the cult even controls the conception of a child. According to one former cult member, the leaders not only told her and her husband when and how they could conceive, but also forbade them to have the baby during November or December, when the sect solicited money from shoppers. Another member of the same cult told of children between the ages of three and five taken from their parents and sent to India for indoctrination.

At the People's Temple in Jonestown, Guiana, children were cared for in nurseries and separated from parents (whom they saw only briefly and were encouraged to spy upon) and their siblings. Husbands and wives caught talking privately to their daughters were "forced to masturbate in public or have sex with someone they didn't like in front of the entire Jonestown population, children as well as adults," according to Kenneth Wooden, author of *The Children of Jonestown*.

This systematic destruction of the family unit is common in extremist, pseudo-religious groups. Members who permit abusive treatment of their children or even practice it seem under a type of mind control or psychological coercion. Although they may be aware of what is going on, they lack the critical judgment and will to stop it.

Some cults treat children differently according to whether they were born before or after the parents joined the group. One Canadian cult separated children into three categories: "Bastards" (those born outside the cult before their mothers became members or whose parents had "fallen from grace"), "Christ Children" (born within the cult and as such superior beings), and the "New Root Race," also superior offspring produced by the cult leader breeding with selected members of the sect. The "Bastards" were not permitted to call their parents mother or father and were subject to severe



care, but then modified it to require or that denial of medical attention to a child be reported to authorities. Tragically, denial of medical care may never be recognized by anyone outside a sect until it is too late to help the child.

Some other examples of health dangers faced by children in sects include:

- A Colorado cult that, like others, prays in lieu of seeking needed medical help for members. There, three- and four-year-old children have died of diphtheria, a disease all but eliminated in the U.S. through immunization.
- Training of young girls and women in one European-based cult to be "happy hookers for Jesus." The movement perpetuated adultery, fornication, sodomy, homosexuality, child sex, adult-child sexual relations, and incest, according to the daughter of the sect's founder. Venereal disease was reportedly rampant in the group, whose members included 5,000 small children.

### Brutality

According to one sect leader's interpretation of the Bible, child abuse and neglect are God's way of ensuring obedience. His followers were told that children were ruled by the devil. Thus, when a child cried or got out of hand, the rod should be used—and viewed as beating the devil. In other sects, children are beaten to teach them not to cry, pretend, or fantasize. Some examples:

- A 12-year-old boy was beaten to death for failing to do his chores by his mother and other members of a Michigan sect in 1983. The boy's neck, wrists, and legs were clamped in a stockade while he was beaten. After his death, officials removed 66 children from the sect. The children showed no emotion nor allowed anyone except sect members to touch them. They knew of the boy's death but were told God had killed him because he was bad. Of six sect members charged in the death, only

the mother was convicted. The children were all returned to the group.

- In Washington State, a three-year-old was beaten by sect members off and on for four months, ending in his death. They asked him, "Do you have love in your heart?" Regardless of how he answered, the beatings continued in the belief he was possessed of the devil. When after an extra-long session and fall, the boy ceased breathing, no one called a doctor. His body remained at home for two months until police came. The sect pastor, the boy's mother, and three other members were convicted of assault and manslaughter for his death.

- "Spare the rod and spoil the child" was taken literally by a West Virginia group, two of whose members were convicted in the fatal beating of their 23-month-old son. (The boy had struck another child and refused to apologize.) While the mother held him and other sect members gathered around, the father spanked him with a foot-long paddle for two hours. At an emergency room, the child was pronounced dead of hemorrhagic shock. The parents, who contended his death was the will of God, were sentenced to one year in jail and a \$1,000 fine.

### Isolation and Deception

As sects become more totalitarian, they isolate themselves more from society, conditioning members to know nothing beyond the life of the group and to obey without question any commands the leader issues.

Vermont authorities were frustrated in attempts to investigate reports of child abuse and neglect of children in one sect. When the state finally removed 112 children from sect premises in 1984, the judge had to dismiss the charge because parents refused to give the children's names and ages. The children had no birth records. Said a state trooper who participated in the case, "They have taken away all our normal ways to detect child abuse. There are no teachers to report scars, no doctors to report anything funny." The state commissioner of social and rehabilitation services, John Buchard, commented: "...the church community appears to be purposefully organized to shield the identity of the parents and children...and allow them to thwart the ordinary steps of due process..."

To avoid outside interference with the children and prevent their developing independent personalities, many cults do not allow the children to be educated outside the group. If the children are sent to public school, they often do not participate in social activities or sports, befriend children outside the group, or complain. They may be pulled out immediately by

### Criteria That May Assist in Identifying Cult Control and/or Possible Child Abuse

- ▶ Is there prenatal care of pregnant members?
- ▶ Are births or deaths legally recorded?
- ▶ Are children immunized and do they receive medical care?
- ▶ Do they wear glasses, or any special aids?
- ▶ Does the child attend school outside the group?
- ▶ If they go to their sect school, is it accredited?
- ▶ If children attend public school, do they socialize with other children?
- ▶ Do they participate in extracurricular activities?
- ▶ Will the group allow outsiders to talk to the children alone?
- ▶ Do children exhibit emotions characteristic of children their age?
- ▶ Do children associate with relatives outside the group?
- ▶ Do children allow outsiders to touch them?
- ▶ Do they answer freely and without reservations when asked about the sect?
- ▶ Can they carry on a conversation?
- ▶ Do they speak of their natural parents as mother and father?
- ▶ Do they live alone with their natural parents?
- ▶ Are they allowed to play with neighborhood children or children outside the group?
- ▶ Do they have their own toys?
- ▶ Will they speak about punishment and who sets the type and performs the punishment?
- ▶ Can these children make decisions on their own?
- ▶ Will they answer questions freely in front of their elders without looking to them for approval?
- ▶ Do they feel that illnesses should be medically treated?

If the answer is "no" to most of these questions, the case warrants further investigation.

### JUSTICE FOR CHILDREN

Janet L. Diamond, Editor

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sect members if school or public health officials notice abnormal behavior, health problems, or signs of abuse.

When reporters or officials visit a cult facility, they often find the children to be quiet and well behaved—"angelic." The children have been trained to control their emotions and not show fear, pain, hunger, happiness, or love. This was the situation, for example, when Senator Leo Ryan and his official party visited Jonestown, just before the mass deaths. Cult children learn to say little to outsiders or to lie because the larger world is "of the devil" or they are taught their beliefs will not be understood.

An observer recounted an attempt by a cult member to teach a ten-month-old baby in Seattle not to cry by means of a meal-time ritual that involved withholding spoonfuls of food, then spanking, and finally banishing the infant to an empty room. The child had been "raised improperly" (outside the group), it was said, and was a "difficult case."

Members of another sect were taught how to beat children without bruising, a father learned when he went to court to get temporary custody of his child from the group. Cults know that their physical abuse of children is considered antisocial and illegal. Thus, they may keep alert for possible inspections and may hide the children. A Seattle area cult tunneled under residences to provide hiding spaces.

The lack of records is not uncommon. Chances are that the birth or death of a cult child will not be recorded. If the parents or child later leave the group, they often cannot get a birth certificate or immunization record. There are not likely to have been attending physicians or nurses at birth, and the cult may be nomadic. (The European Economic Community has been struggling with cults' lack of compliance with laws concerning vital statistics and taxation.)

Because of cult secrecy and lack of respect for law, suspected cases of abuse of young cult members must be handled very carefully. Parents should not be contacted until all evidence, including affidavits, is gathered and witnesses located. If parents or other cult members hear about an investigation, the child may be severely beaten, sent to another part of the country or overseas, or even killed. Sect members have also come after individuals who have left the cult, kidnapped the children, and concealed their whereabouts for years, despite court orders or arrest warrants. Violations of "civilian" law are, in fact, routine in child custody cases involving cults.

#### The Effect: Hostility and Self-Contempt

How do cult children respond to such treatment? A normal child, if attacked or

hurt, usually reacts by screaming, crying, flailing, or trying to escape. In cults, children are permitted no display of emotion when undergoing physical abuse, or it becomes worse. Eventually they learn to control their feelings. As they grow, the experience translates into contempt for themselves (sometimes evidenced in self-mutilation or suicide) or in aggressive criminal behavior toward others. If the latter, they relive what they learned from the cult, except that they hurt others first. This apparently happened in the case of a 28-year-old former member of the People's Temple, who unexpectedly opened fire on

#### We Must Act

My particular concern with the abuse of the young in cults stems from their complete vulnerability in their formative years. They are at the mercy of the cult leader and his or her policies, no matter how twisted or deviate. A healthy society cannot tolerate the physical trauma, even death, inflicted on some cult children, no matter under what constitutional provision the cults seek protection.

We must act to protect the children in these groups. Laws that absolve parents from responsibility in cases where medical care could have prevented a child's death



a crowded school yard on February 25, 1984, killing a girl and wounding 13 others. Contrary to what some people believed, he was not under the influence of drugs, an autopsy showed.

A young woman who grew up in a small cult near Seattle said when the sexual and mental abuse became unbearable, she reached out for help from her school counselor. The counselor talked to her mother (a cult member), who went to the cult leader—the main abuser. The girl was beaten unmercifully. Although she was told she would go insane if she ever left the group, eventually she did leave. She has since been in and out of mental hospitals, and cuts and burns herself in self-mutilation. She feels she can trust no one.

The cult leader went to jail for sexual abuse. But at his trial, children from the cult testified alone and without counseling in front of him. Taught to believe this man was "godly," they revealed only part of their story.

must be stricken. Laws that require children to attend school and parents to register their births and deaths must be enforced.

All agencies dealing with the welfare of children, as well as police agencies, must recognize that children's right to life supercedes any claims of freedom of religion. Civil rights of children must take priority over religious beliefs of the parents. As US Supreme Court Justice Rutledge stated in 1944: "Parents may be free to become martyrs themselves. But it does not follow that they are free to make martyrs of their children before they have reached the age of full and legal discretion, when they can make that choice for themselves."

For more information and documentation, contact Shirley Landis, 19419 Bushnell Way NE, Burien, Washington 98148.



# **CULTS:** **Organized, Armed** **& Protected by the First Amendment**

By Kim Remesch-Allnutt

**C**apt. Dale Griffis of the Tiffin, Ohio Police Department, laughs when he recalls a strange case fellow officers recently faced. The officers came upon a satanic group who were busily engaged in the "ritual of being skyclad" in a public park.

According to Griffis, an expert on cults, being skyclad is nothing more than waiting for a high moon and disrobing at midnight to get the moon rays. Needless to say, the responding officers were dismayed at what they saw. But, as Griffis says, if they had known a bit about cults and rituals they would have reacted differently.

If all cases involving cults were as innocent as the ritual of being skyclad, there would be little problem, but this is more the exception than the rule. With the increase in cult groups and cult-related crime, police departments are starting to reach out for answers, not out of curiosity but for protection of their officers. Many of the newer cults have declared war on those who uphold the establishment's laws.

The Washington Post reported in 1982 that a sheriff and his deputy went to one cult's commune to arrest three members of the group who failed to appear in traffic court. The two were surrounded by a mob which seemed to appear out of nowhere. The sheriff recalled that everything moved in slow motion. There were men, women and children and they told the men they were going to kill them. Seconds later both men were hit by shotgun blasts. The group was willing to kill over a disputed traffic violation.

Griffis, who began studying cults nearly eight years ago, now gets 20 to 30 calls a week from police departments looking for answers. "They're finally starting to see, finally starting to wake up to the situation," he says.

Sandi Gallant, a police officer with the Intelligence Division of the San Francisco Police Department, gets numerous calls from police departments looking for answers to help them deal with this new criminal breed—those who commit crimes for Jesus, or Satan. But unlike Griffis, Gallant came into the world of cults in a very different manner. She was involved in the investigation into the People's Temple mass murder/suicide at Jonestown, Guyana. "When 900 people die in a group associated with your area, you have no choice but to get involved," she explains.

While Jonestown seems like a world away, a once in a lifetime

occurrence, many former cult members liken their leaders to Jim Jones, Charles Manson and Adolf Hitler, a comparison frightening to police officers and civilians alike. But, as Gallant learned, no one can know which group will follow the People's Temple example, so police officers must educate themselves to recognize the danger signs of a cult's progression.

There is much to be learned. For example, most people tend to think of cults as being purely religious in origin. Today's cult, however, can also be politically motivated. Posse Comitatus, one politically motivated organization, is infamous for its threats against the "establishment" brand of justice and those who enforce the laws—namely police officers. They have been involved in several armed confrontations with police in the past. This may not surprise those familiar with the philosophy and origins of the group, however. To illustrate: the original manual used by the group included a paragraph that was later removed because of squeamishness from the rank and file members, but clearly shows the intent of the leaders of the organization. According to the passage, any official who fails to do his duty as the Posse interprets those duties, "shall be removed by the Posse to the most populated intersection of streets in the township and, at high noon, be hung by the neck, the body remaining until sundown as an example to those who would subvert the law."

According to an investigation by the Kansas Bureau of Investigation, Posse Comitatus boasted 2.5 million members six years ago. It is impossible to determine the size of the membership today, which is how the group prefers it. Like many politically oriented cults, Posse Comitatus is linked to a church organization, The Church of Jesus Christ Christian, according to Griffis.

Molly Koch, director of Project Yehid in Baltimore, Md. and member of the Citizens Freedom Foundation, a cult awareness organization, contends that many covert cult philosophies are hidden behind outwardly religious speeches. She comments, "All this Jesus talk is a cover-up for some very nefarious activity."

And while the political cults fall into this category, by and large, the major cult problem facing law enforcement personnel involves cults which are religiously motivated, groups which hide their machinations under the cloak of the First Amendment. Their nefarious activities include: murder, extortion, espionage, drug smuggling, prostitution and child abuse, in addition to such subtle things as mind control and incite to riot.

In particular, Griffis says, "What we in law enforcement are seeing is a rapid rise of non-traditional occultism, similar to Mormonism." And that's frightening. The Church of the Final Judgment in Salt Lake City, Utah is a satanic cult based on the same ideas Manson tried to implement before he was apprehended by law enforcement officials.

And therein lies the good news. Cult members who go awry can be taken off the street. The bad news is that usually something terrible has to occur first. For example, in Oroville, Calif., a cult based on the teachings of both Manson and Hitler was allowed to thrive until the racial hatred and white supremacy line dictated by the leader, a former convict and mental patient, led to the murder of one young disciple for being a "traitor to his race."

The real problem in getting accurate information on these cults before they reach the killing stage is their use of the First Amendment as a shield. Today anyone can start a church and claim the First Amendment as its protector. Furthermore, the tax exempt status allows these organizations to fund arsenals to do battle with the Satanic world and those who would enforce Satan's laws. Capt. Griffis explains, "There's a thin line that law enforcement agencies have to tread. You have to remember that these are 'religions.'" He adds, "Although the right to believe is absolute, if illegal acts are committed during that time, they are not protected. That has already been proved in a couple of court cases."

While it may seem that because of our laws protecting freedom of religion an officer must sit back and wait for something to happen, Griffis maintains this is not the case. "If these people are involved in illegal activities like selling guns, drugs, and so on, we can act." And although officers can take action against a group when crimes are apparent, it may take a bit

longer to get evidence against them because law enforcement officials have to meet more stringent requirements for the surveillance of a religious organization.

To gain concrete evidence of illegal activities by a cult organization, more than one police department has sent officers to infiltrate a cult. But experts in the field advise against it. Koch explains, "We've lost a few good police officers that way." Some officers stay with the cults, victims of the organization they were trying to gain evidence against. "I don't recommend allowing police officers to infiltrate a cult because it takes special training to work around mind control techniques," Griffis adds.

Considering the growing number of new religious orders, the First Amendment is being strained to the limit. Currently there are 3,400 to 5,000 cults in the United States, according to control lists kept by anti-cult groups and law enforcement

agencies. A large portion of today's cults grew out of a traditional branch of Christianity or as an outgrowth of the Jesus movements of the early 1970s. The Hare Krishna commune, for example, was started by a Baptist minister's son who changed his name to Swami Bhaktipada and set himself up as chief guru of the organization. The disbanded "Love Israel" group was led by a former television salesman and 1960s love child who, during a ride on a cross country bus, realized he was Jesus.

The leaders are usually charismatic and demanding, and while the names and players will differ among cults, the structure is the same. Generally, the charismatic leader becomes wealthy because the converts donate or tithe their belongings and salaries to him. The leader breaks down family ties and keeps a bit of dissension within the group in order to play the father role and maintain total dominance. In general, Griffis explains, the

typical cult has a "charismatic leader holding the group together by the cult of confession, using the trappings of the occult, mind control and drugs."

Also typically, the organizations begin with mild enough intentions, to promote love and peace and serve God. However, as the cult membership grows and the leader attains more power, the goals of the organization change. Unfortunately the members, brainwashed with techniques developed during the wars, are blindly devoted to the leader and fail to perceive these changes.

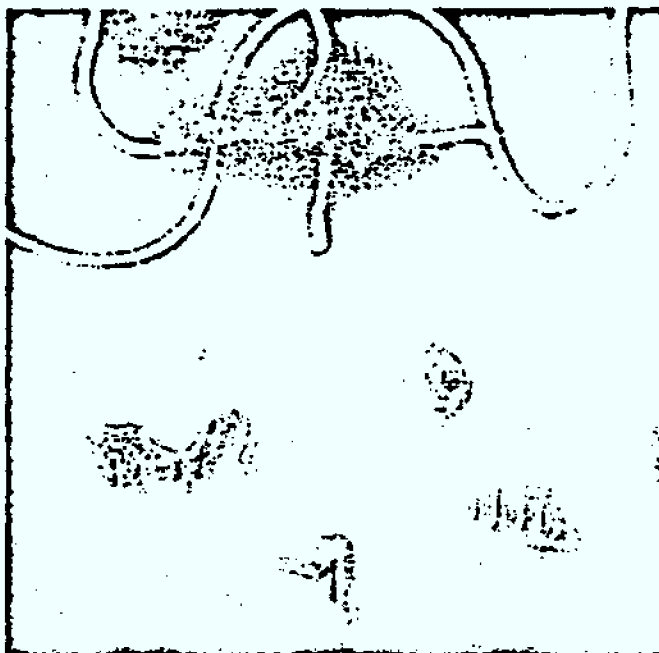
According to Priscilla Coates, director of the Citizens Freedom Foundation in New York, the one thing that makes cults extremely dangerous today is that so much more is known about psychology, and they know how to manipulate people."

Like the leaders, the followers can be categorized by one bizarre feature. Christopher Edwards, a former Sun Myung Moon follower, recalls his first meeting with the "brothers and

sisters." "They all had glassy eyes, like two eggs sunny-side-up, open so wide that the pupils seemed to bulge out of their faces. Anyone who has seen that look never forgets it." Griffis, Koch and other anti-cult colleagues urge police officers to learn to recognize that look.

The older, more established cults include: The Way International, The Unification Church, International Society of Krishna Consciousness, The Church Universal and Triumphant, Children of God, Church of Scientology, Tony and Susan Alamo Christian Foundation, Divine Light Mission and a host of others that fall under the Shepherding movement category. Many of these older organizations have sought to blend into society. Many Moonies and Krishnas now dress and look like any other Yuppie on the road trying to turn a buck.

These established cults have started a trend away from



**Considering the growing number of new religious orders, the First Amendment is being strained to the limit ... there are 3,500 to 5,000 cults in the United States.**

operating solely in big cities and have moved their base of operation to small towns, swallowing up whole towns in an effort to have a major impact on that area. Cults have taken over townships in Massachusetts, Oregon and Vermont to name a few. The Way International, whose township is in Ohio, maintains its own police. . . . known as the "Bless Patrol," to safeguard the group's headquarters.

The Way members have received weapons training from the Kansas National Guard under the guise of hunter safety. Ultimately more time was spent on marksmanship than hunter safety. This is another major concern of police officers with cults of today. The established cults as well as the newer organizations are preparing themselves for what they believe will be the Battle of Armageddon. They have an apocalyptic overview of what is going on; weapons and explosives are becoming prevalent. You have to remember the frame of mind these people are in.

Form or Moon's Edwards reveals that state of mind. During Edwards' deprogramming, Ted Patrick, the famed deprogrammer, asked Edwards: "Wouldn't you kill for Moon?" The man Patrick pointed at with that question was Edwards' father. All present knew by the look on the boy's face that he would indeed kill his biological father at the bidding of his spiritual father.

While these cult members have the will to kill for the leader, today many have the means to kill as well. The most prominent cult in the arms buildup race is the Hare Krishnas who seem gentle and almost Bambi-like to outsiders. In reality, over the last 10 years they have been stockpiling combat rifles, machine guns, grenade launchers and vast quantities of ammunition. Former member Ed Shapiro says, "Prabhupada (founder and guru) once said in the future they would go around and ask people to chant 'Hare Krishna' and if they didn't you would kill them."

In the United States alone, police have raided arsenals or stopped the transport of weapons in several California, New York, West Virginia and Florida cities. After investigations, law enforcement personnel discovered that these arsenals were being financed through heroin smuggling, worldwide charity fraud and theft. It takes a great deal of money to amass a big arsenal. And they are aiming at a big arsenal. Former members quote the Krishna leader as saying frequently, "Hitler was a bad man because he did not succeed. We will succeed."

In addition to weapons and drugs, police must contend with the Children of God's Happy Hookers for Jesus campaign. They claim they do not take money for their services but time and time again the female street preachers spend time in jail for prostitution. Another common trait of cult groups that will pose future problems for law enforcement personnel is the blatant

racist and anti-Semitic teachings of the majority of these groups. The Rev. Moon has proclaimed that whites are better than blacks. Posse Comitatus echoes this opinion. The Way questions the veracity of the holocaust, and has its members read books which are blatantly anti-Semitic in nature.

Although the aforementioned cult-related problems are serious, there are several other issues that strike society deep and hard. These are the issues of children in cults and the right of families to have cult members kidnapped and deprogrammed.

Of the 913 people who died at Jonestown, one-third were small children and teenagers. According to Marcia Rudin, a longtime author on cult-related topics and an expert on Jonestown: "Before these children suffered slow, agonizing deaths by poison; under the guns of Jones' security guards they were separated from their parents and siblings, forced to perform hard labor, subjected to cruel physical and psychological abuse and

forced to rehearse their 'suicides' 42 times."

In the cults, children seem to suffer the most as leaders try to sever the natural parent/child bond. Moon followers are taught: "Remember that Heavenly Father must come first, before your child or anyone from your fallen past." Crimes against children range from obvious child abuse to truancy to forms of mental abuse that follow these children into their adult lives, according to psychologists who specialize in helping former cult members.

Richard Honorof, a defector from the Rainbow Tribe, a Satanic cult, told of extensive mental cruelty to children during his testimony in a Los Angeles court in 1982. "One 3-year-old girl was denied food for a week in an effort to break her spirit. When that didn't work, she was given food laced with large amounts of pepper. When that didn't work, several others and I were instructed to put on frightening masks and scare the little girl at night in her room."

**The typical cult has a charismatic leader holding the group together by the cult of confession, using the trappings of the occult, mind control and drugs.**

Cults do not stop at mental abuse. In fact, many groups take the concept "spare the rod, spoil the child" a step beyond sanity. At the House of Judah, a mother and several accomplices beat a 12-year-old boy to death. Unfortunately, this scene is repeated over and over again within many cults. In this case, the mother and the accomplices received jail terms while the leader of the group, like Manson during the Sharon Tate murder trial, maintained that he never personally told his followers to kill the boy. So, technically, the leader was innocent.

Another recent case involved the Stonegate organization in West Virginia where the parents of a 2½-year-old subjected their child to a two-hour beating, sending the boy into fatal shock. Several church members wandered by during the beating but no one intervened; this sort of discipline was demanded by the leader, Doc McClellan. Why was the boy beaten so severely? He



refused to apologize to a playmate. The parents were charged with involuntary manslaughter. Ultimately each received a year in prison and a \$1,000 fine, the maximum a person can receive in this kind of case. In sentencing them, Judge Frank DePond said, "You took a commandment, Thou Shalt Honor Thy Mother and Father, and twisted it beyond recognition."

One case in which law enforcement personnel and welfare workers stepped in to help the children involves the Island Pond, Vt. commune. Townspeople complained to Vermont's Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services of suspected child abuse within the cult. The state made inquiries for two years trying to find out if the complaints were valid. But, as in most cults, birth certificates and death certificates were not kept and children were often hidden away. So the state decided to act and risk the judicial consequences. On June 22, 1984, 90 state troopers and 50 social workers armed with a search warrant gathered up 112 children of the commune. They held the children for three days to examine them for signs of physical abuse. After determining that a case against the commune's members existed, they took the evidence to court. According to newspaper accounts the judge promptly dismissed all the cases on the grounds that the warrant was unconstitutional because it was aimed at general, rather than specific instances of alleged abuse.

Next to child abuse, the most emotionally charged issue involving cults is the idea of kidnapping a loved one for the purposes of deprogramming. Koch explains that out of desperation, many parents spend more than \$10,000 to kidnap their own children. "Getting a child out of a cult legally is almost impossible. Even if they are dying of some malady, you can't get them out," she says.

Anti-cult groups and law enforcement personnel are hesitant to discuss kidnapping, let alone advocate it. Grifis says, "I don't like to comment on that because kidnapping is kidnapping." But sources say that police officers tend to look the other way if they know that a deprogramming is taking place. Grifis sympathizes with parents. "When it's your own kid you think differently. I know of one policeman who went in and kidnapped his own kid. Today the officer has his daughter back, a beautiful 24-year-old girl."

Those opposed to deprogramming maintain that parents will try to have their children deprogrammed simply because they do not like the religious beliefs their children adhere to. They point out cases of Jewish parents who have attempted to have their children deprogrammed for joining a Catholic church and vice versa. But most former cult members are adamant in saying they could never have broken free of cult life without being kidnapped and deprogrammed. Christopher Edwards

comments on his kidnapping/deprogramming. "The nightmare was over; thanks to the courage of a few, I had been jolted out of my deadly slumber and awakened to a world that was bright and beautiful again."

The fear of kidnapping creates a larger problem for parents, however. Because cult groups are afraid of the possibility of families kidnapping their members, they often refuse to let the members have contact with the outside "Satanic" world.

In an effort to give parents peace of mind, the San Francisco Police Department began a program in 1982 to help parents of children involved in the Unification church. Parent and child met on neutral territory with a police officer present to ensure that no kidnapping attempt would be made. The program originated after an unsuccessful kidnapping attempt in which both the parents and deprogrammer were sued by the church member.

According to Gallant, this program fizzled out on its own because the church failed to cooperate. In addition, she says, the San Francisco Police Department now receives only a couple of calls a year regarding the Unification church whereas several years ago they received at least two calls per day. It seems the church has moved its base of operations.

Even if a member is kidnapped and deprogrammed, the cult is reluctant to let go. "People soon started sitting in vans and cars at the bottom of our driveway, shaking their fists at my parents, following our cars on occasion. The harassment was so great that my frightened family was guarded by live-in detectives 24 hours a day for four months. During that time, people broke into our home twice, although nothing was stolen, the detective verified that our telephone wires had been tampered with ... all of these acts of harassment ceased when I began lecturing on American cults," Edwards said.

When he began lecturing Edwards found not only a lack

of knowledge involving cults, but that some people refused to believe that "fine, clean-cut kids" could use people and allow themselves to be used this way. This is the misunderstanding Grifis refers to in law enforcement over and over again.

A police department in Maryland occasionally refers troubled youths to a local "Christian" organization because of its reputation for keeping teenagers drug free, according to a member of the cult in a letter to her mother. The mother maintains that the reason these children give up the ways of the street are because, like her own daughter, they are too busy performing slave labor for the cult leader. A case like this is not that uncommon, according to Grifis. "A lot of things go by simply because police officers just don't know," he concludes.

*Kim Remesch-Ainult is a free lance writer specializing in law enforcement topics.*



**The most prominent cult in the arms build up race is the Hare Krishna who seem gentle and almost Bambi-like to outsiders.**

## Who Are The Cults?

**I**n terms of membership, the major cults rank as follows: The Church of Scientology, The Way International, The Unification Church and the International Society of Krishna Consciousness. The current Shepherding cult movement may have more members than the Church of Scientology; however, as a new movement, and because the groups are splintered and fall under this umbrella title, it is impossible to discern figures.

### The Church of Scientology

About six years ago, L. Ron Hubbard, a former science fiction writer and founder of the church, created an enforcement organization called "World-Wide Guardian Office" to protect the church from its enemies. In the enforcement organization's operatives, Hubbard says, "Find or manufacture enough threat against them to cause them to sue for peace. Originate a black public relations campaign to destroy the person's reputation and to discredit them so thoroughly they will be ostracized."

This enforcement organization has engaged in burglary, espionage, kidnapping and smear campaigns to further its goals. Former Assistant U.S. Attorney Raymond Banoun who directed an investigation that resulted in conspiracy and theft convictions of nine top Scientology officials (including Hubbard's wife) said: "The evidence presented to the court shows brazen criminal campaigns against private and public organizations and individuals. The Scientology officials hid behind claims of religious liberty while inflicting injuries upon every element of society."

### The Way International

Founder Victor Paul Wierwille retired a few years ago, naming Craig Martindale as president. This group maintains its headquarters in Ohio where it has its own police department, known, innocently enough, as the Bless Patrol. They publish a quarterly bulletin, "The Shield of Believing," geared toward law enforcement personnel "to assist them in the practical application of Biblical principals within their profession."

Like the other top cult groups, The Way is believed to be arming itself for the end of time.

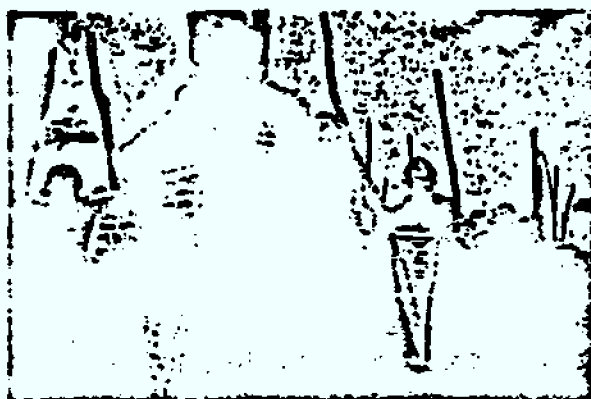
### The Unification Church

Despite the jailing of its leader, Sun Myung Moon, the church has not slowed down its activities. Recently, Moon sent out a packet of tapes to traditional religious leaders, including a videocassette of his "Message From Prison."

Like other cults, The Unification Church has invested heavily into real estate, although Moon seems to be better at picking properties than most. One expert comments, "Sun Myung Moon is to cults what Henry Ford was to cars."

Moon's soliciting soldiers take in at least \$25 million annually according to the book *Cults in America*; and they are not the top fund raising group. Moonies are firm believers in using "heavenly deception" to raise funds; that is, they use any front organization or claim they are part of any currently popular relief campaign to get a donation, former members say. They have all but killed the legitimate trade street-side flower vendors once enjoyed.

Unlike the others, there has been no evidence that the Moon organization is arming itself, although the main goal



of the church is to create a one-world society with Moon as its leader.

### International Society for Krishna Consciousness

The group started by the son of a Baptist minister is known for its arsenal of ammunition and the way they finance those purchases.

Describing the group, Berkeley Police Inspector Chuck Crane once commented, "They lie constantly. They have no respect for the truth, they're armed to the teeth and nobody knows why."

Although they do not promote drug use among members, they are not against selling drugs to finance their arms operation, as recent drug busts would suggest. According to church officials, however, those apprehended were not representative of the group and were merely acting on their own. Moral of the story: If you're caught, be prepared to be excommunicated from the Krishnas.

### Brother Julius

Brother Julius is most often likened to Jim Jones by former members. One related, "Julius' declaration is that he is here to personally destroy 97 percent of the world's population because of their evil ... I've spent eight years under his teachings and can truthfully say that although he is certainly not capable of committing such atrocities, he fully intends to try, if he's not locked up first."

According to former members, he speaks in blood curdling phrases, graphically detailing supposed future events. According to Julius, he will not end his divine mission until he "gets a bullet between his eyes."

In 1983 two key followers were arrested by Southington, Conn. police and charged with cheating the State Department of Labor out of more than \$40,000 in unemployment compensation payments.

### Children of God

This group has been embraced financially and spiritually by Col. Muammar Qaddafi, whom the leader refers to as "one of God's chosen."

This cult began as a quiet organization but has changed rapidly over the years. They are known for the Happy Hookers of Jesus brigade who often end up in jails for their unusual means of spreading the word.

The Children of God are also particularly known for their abuses against children. The group, which maintains a membership of 8,000 (1,000 children), blatantly encourages adult-child sex, particularly incestuous relationships.

# How Cults Affect Families

by

Henrietta and Kurt Crampton

*This report was originally prepared for "Cultism: A Conference for Scholars and Policy Makers," sponsored by the American Family Foundation, the Neuropsychiatric Institute of the University of California at Los Angeles, and the Johnson Foundation of Racine, Wisconsin. The conference was convened at the Johnson Foundation's Wingspread facility in Racine from September 9-11, 1985. The authors, who live in Redondo Beach, California, were among the founders of the Cult Awareness Network, a nationwide affiliation of local groups that conducts public education programs and offers information and referral to the cult-involved.*

Our efforts to alert others to the nature of destructive cults began in 1973 when our nineteen-year-old daughter joined a cult. Out of desperation we physically removed her, under the scrutiny of national television. Although the coverage was not sympathetic to us, we were deluged with phone calls and letters from parents who identified their problem with ours. Between 1973 and 1983 we probably interviewed more cult-affected families and former cult members and read more letters from them than all of the academicians who were doing research on cults. Our purpose during those years was to provide information, advice, and support to families who were affected by cults. We did not compile family data as such.

In our opinion, it is an understatement to say that families are adversely affected by destructive cults. Our own experience, combined with the experiences of other families in similar circumstances determined our early conclusion. The cults usurp the role of the family and the cult leader becomes the surrogate parent. Alienation of the cult member from the family is a direct result. The effect this alienation has on families depends on the family member or members involved. Of course, not all families are affected the same way.

With regard to the individuals and families who have consulted us, we will consider the effect on the family when one or more children are cult members and the effect when one parent is a cult member. In the latter case, our knowledge was gleaned, for the most part, from numerous letters and calls we received after our address and phone number

were given in an article about a cult.

Parents consider their offspring "children," and cannot sever that relationship on a child's eighteenth birthday. Many parents are providing financial aid for education to adult children. In most cases, the adult children are still living at home or have only recently left. When such young adults become involved with cults, families feel the alienation very directly.

Initially the family is shocked to discover one of its own members is actually involved with a cult. The first clue is an abrupt personality change, which the parents usually are the first to notice. When they then discover that their family member has renounced his parents, family, friends, and former values, stopped making his own decisions, and is totally devoted to the cult leader, they are appalled. They try to communicate with the new cult member and cannot do so, either because the cult forbids contact with families or because the cult's dogma defines familiar terms in alien ways so that language loses its common meaning. The family contacts their religious leaders and usually receives little help or understanding. After seeing psychologists, psychiatrists, or lawyers, the family learns that there is no ready-made solution to bring the cult member back to his former self. Grief and frustration set in.

Just as families with handicapped children will search everywhere, grasping at straws, in their help-seeking, so do families with members in cults. Disagreements arise within families regarding actions taken or proposed. Some try to place the blame on

The American Family Foundation



others. Bickering results. Guilt is felt. Parents see themselves as failures. Some siblings, feeling neglected because of the time and energy parents spend on cult-related problems, often develop behavior problems. Great turmoil results. At this point families are in desperate need of help and do not know where to go. They must understand that they are not alone, that others have faced the same frustration, grief, and guilt, and that there is hope. It is important to save the remaining family from destruction, avoid panic, and try to keep communication open with the cult member.

Many families have lost a second child to a cult. In almost all of these cases the second child visited the cult to inquire about a brother or sister and was also recruited. We advise parents to instruct their children never to visit the cult alone.

Parents of long-time cult members have much difficulty keeping a healthy perspective in their lives and maintaining their own physical and mental well-being. At the death of a loved one, grief is severe, but with time becomes easier to bear. When children are cult members, families feel as though their children are hostages, held by terrorists, and often do not know where their children are or if they are dead or alive.

When parents learn that their son or daughter has been married in the cult, they become more distressed and alienated. To them, the cult involvement has lost its temporary status. If there are grandchildren, the grief becomes even more severe. Adequate diet, medical care, and education are denied to children and adults alike in many cults. Reports of child abuse in cults often appear in the newspapers. Some cults abuse children sexually as well as physically. It is extremely difficult for non-member parents and grandparents to endure this knowledge.

In addition to concerns for health and safety, families feel a deep regret over the loss of family continuity. Consider the emotional trauma for parents when they must alter wills to prevent cult leaders from becoming beneficiaries of their child's inheritance. When heirlooms can't be passed on, and family traditions are lost, parents feel deprived. Cult members sometimes don't even return when there is a death in the family. One son wrote his mother upon his father's death: "Let the dead bury the dead."

We are seeing now a second generation of cultists.

Children who have lost birthrights and roots. Some do not have birth certificates. Many will never know their ancestry; in some cases they will not know their legal names. Grandparents have occasionally been given visitation rights by the courts and have been able, if they can locate their grandchildren, at least to have some communication with them. This, of course, places additional stress on families, particularly if parents/grandparents are not in good health. Greater frustration is heaped upon these families when they read reports by intellectuals who expound against organizations of cult-affected parents and claim cult membership is temporary and a benign or even a therapeutic experience.

We are hearing now from parents of long-term cult members who report that their children are in mental hospitals, suffering extreme depression or paranoia. There also seems to be a high incidence of cult-related suicides.

The fortunate families who see their members leave cults have the continuing burden of helping them reenter society. Parents who are older, and perhaps retired, find themselves financially burdened, needing to pay for medical attention or education which was terminated by the cults. Parents must exhibit great patience to help former cult members through moods of depression and loneliness. Families, whose endurance and resources have been stretched to the limit over the years, must be able to supply the tender loving care so necessary to a person recovering from the effects of cult membership. Sometimes there are grandchildren with special needs.

Since some cults do not allow children to live with their parents within the cult unit, sometimes members cannot bring their children out with them when they leave. Later they try to find them to gain custody, and families are called upon to help pay for private investigators and lawyers.

There are no public-supported facilities to assist these families. Those leaving cults usually have no personal belongings, money, or employment prospects, and, in many cases, not even identity papers. To receive public assistance for children, there must be birth records. Families must come up with necessary records and interim financing. Drug and alcohol abusers, children under 18, and battered wives, can usually find help in their communities. Former cult members have told us that many more cult members would leave their

cults if they had a place to go.

Members leaving cults after several years may be unable to locate their families. In one case the parents had separated and moved, the mother had remarried, and the new married name was unknown. In another instance a psychiatrist called us from Alaska to see if we could furnish a surname of one of his patients who had been a member of our daughter's cult. His patient could remember only his cult name. Our daughter could not help as members seldom know the real names of fellow cultists. Unless his memory returned, that young man's true identity was permanently lost.

From September to October, 1981, as a result of an article in *Reader's Digest*, we received approximately 300 calls from people requesting information and assistance concerning cults and related problems. About two-thirds of the calls were from women with cult-involved husbands. They said their husbands were attracted to the cult with expectations of personality improvement, better job opportunities, and other desired goals. As time passed the husbands spent more time and money on cult-related courses and their attitudes toward their families changed. When the families complained about neglect and money spent on the group, arguments ensued. When money saved for cars, down-payments on homes, or even placed in children's bank accounts, was gone, the wives realized too late that their family was in deep trouble; divorce was the only alternative. Other calls stimulated by the *Digest* article were from separated spouses seeking custody of children. The non-cult parents were concerned that their children would be placed in cult schools and indoctrinated. But having custody is no guarantee against child-stealing, as there is documentation on missing children hidden in cults. Parental concern about kidnapping by the spouse who is a cult member is often justified. To make matters worse, the non-cult parent who maintains custody of the children is faced by the myriad problems of single parenting with no financial assistance or shared responsibility.

We have read reports that cults are on the wane and observed that the larger groups do not seem to be recruiting as heavily as they did in the 70's. They still have followers, however, and new groups have emerged which also use sophisticated recruitment and indoctrination techniques. We do not expect the problems for families of cult members to disappear or diminish significantly.

American Family Foundation

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## Family Resource Organizations

(Partial list)

Cult education and information organizations exist in most Western countries. Major organizations include:

**American Family Foundation** (P.O. Box 336, Weston, MA 02193; 617-893-0930). Publisher of *How Cults Affect Families*, AFF is a nonprofit, tax-exempt research and educational organization founded in 1979. Staffed by professionals and guided by a distinguished advisory board, AFF collects information on cults and manipulative techniques of persuasion and control, analyzes the information in order to advance understanding of the problem and possible solutions to it, and shares this understanding with professionals, the general public, and those needing help with cult involvements. AFF maintains lists of cult-aware mental health professionals and lawyers. If you are interested in obtaining more information from AFF, please write or call to leave your name and address, and you will receive introductory information.

**Cult Awareness Network** (2421 W. Pratt Boulevard, Suite 1173, Chicago, IL 60645; 312-267-7777). The Cult Awareness Network (CAN) is a national, tax-exempt nonprofit educational organization, dedicated to promoting public awareness of the harmful effects of mind control. CAN confines its concerns to unethical or illegal practices and does not judge doctrine or belief. CAN consists of volunteers in more than 30 affiliates throughout the United States and Canada, and the organization FOCUS, a support group for former cult members.

**Task Force on Missionaries and Cults (and Cult Hotline/Crisis Clinic)**, Jewish Community Relations Council of New York, 711 Third Ave., 13th Fl., New York, NY 10017, (212) 983-4800 (Task Force), (212) 860-8533 (Hotline/Crisis Clinic).

**Commission on Missionaries and Cults (and Cult Clinic)**, Jewish Federation Council of Greater Los Angeles, 6505 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 802, Los Angeles, CA 90048, (213) 852-1234 (Task Force), (213) 852-1234, Ext. 2662 (Clinic)

**Spiritual Counterfeits Project**, Box 4308, Berkeley, CA 94704, (415) 524-9534

**Committee on Cults and Missionaries**, Greater Miami Jewish Federation, 4200 Biscayne Blvd., Miami, FL 33137, (305) 576-4000

**Council on Mind Abuse (COMA)**, Box 575, Station Z, Toronto, Canada M5N 2Z6, (416) 484-1112

**Cult Project/ Project Culte**, 3460 Stanley St., Montreal, Quebec H3A 1R8, (514) 845-9171

### Overseas\*

(Partial list)

**Family Action, Information, and Rescue (F.A.I.R.)**, BCM Box 3535, London, WC1N 3XX, U.K. Tel. (44) 1-1539-3940

**Irish Family Foundation**, Box 1628, Balls Bridge, Dublin 4, Ireland

**Association Pour La Defense de La Famille et L'individu (ADFI)**, 4 Rue Flechier, 75009 Paris, France. Tel. (33) 1-42-85-15-52

**Pastor Friedrich-W. Haack**, Bavarian Lutheran Church, Bunzlauer Str. 28, D-8000 Munchen 50, West Germany. Tel. (49) 89-141-2841

**Dialog Center International**, Katrinebjergve 46, DK-8200 Aarhus N, Denmark. Tel. (45) 6-10-54-11

**Concerned Parents, A.C.**, Box 1806, Haifa, Israel. Tel. (972) 4-71-85-22

**Association Exposing Pseudo-Religious Cults**, Box 900G, Melbourne, Australia 3001

**The Jewish Center**, Box 34, Balaclava, Victoria 3183, Australia. Tel. (61) 3-527-5069

**CCG Ministries**, Box 6, No. Perth, West Australia. Tel. (61) 63-444-6183

**Pro Juventud**, Aribau 226, 08006 Barcelona, Spain. Tel. (34) 3-42-85-15-52

\* Telephone country code in parentheses followed by city code and local number.

Because they don't have to file annual financial reports with the IRS, unscrupulous sects can—and do—ignore the law with impunity. Let's close this tax loophole

## HOW CULTS BILK ALL OF US

By Gannon Williams

**S**OME THREE MILLION AMERICANS have joined cult churches in the last decade, a phenomenon attributed to everything from the breakdown of the family to loss of faith in traditional institutions. One thing is certain: these cults could not have experienced their spectacular rise to wealth and power without a big tax loophole furnished by the U.S. government.

Under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, any group calling itself a religion may apply for tax-free status. If granted, the status excuses religious organizations from paying taxes and, if they are deemed churches, it also frees them from the obligation to file annual financial reports with the IRS. Unlike all other tax-exempt organizations (except

those that take in \$10,000 or less a year), churches may keep their finances secret.

Churches are given this unusual degree of privacy because the First Amendment of the Constitution guarantees that government will not interfere with religious affairs. This separation of church and state does not guarantee freedom from taxation, but traditionally Congress has shied away from taxing religious bodies out of the belief that the power to tax implies the power to control. The Supreme Court has consistently upheld the Congressional point of view.

This absence of regulation allows cults to operate in virtual secrecy, and they often use the privilege to pursue worldly rather than spiritual

ends. With no obligation to report their finances, they are able to violate the tax laws by funneling tax-exempt money into profit-making businesses, and into the pockets of their leaders, many of whom live like potentates at public expense. One simple reform can help to stop financial abuse, the cornerstone of cult power: a requirement that all churches file annual financial reports with the IRS.

Pressure Points. To understand how financial disclosure would begin to stop cult abuses, let's see where the money comes from and where it goes. Many cults raise money by two basic strategies: deception and exploitation. Deception involves the dishonest soliciting of funds from the public. In 1978 at Los Angeles International Airport, according to a witness, a young man in Navy uniform was approached by a person who asked for money to bring missing-in-action servicemen home from Vietnam. The sailor signed over his paycheck, unaware that he was giving his money to the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON), better known as the Hare Krishnas. Other witnesses say that ISKCON members have falsely claimed to represent a variety of causes ranging from muscular dystrophy to the Catholic Relief Mission.

An ex-member of Sun Myung Moon's Unification Church (UC) says she was instructed to "sell people anything" to get a contribution. "We Moonies even talked poor

people out of their food stamps." Exploitation of members is the second principal source of cult wealth. Parishioners regularly put in 12 to 18 hours a day for little or no pay. Well-organized and effectively deployed, parishioner teams pull in enormous sums; in 1976 (in a property-tax suit) ISKCON reported an income of \$762,208 from solicitations in Los Angeles alone.

Members who don't parishable often work in cult businesses. The Tony and Susan Alamo Christian Foundation, which operates in Arkansas, California and Tennessee, gives members food and shelter. In return, they work long hours in the foundation's lucrative enterprises, including a restaurant, a service station, a cement company, a ranch and a Nashville courier to country-and-western entertainers.

Virtual slave labor gives cult businesses an unfair advantage over secular companies, which pay taxes and are required by law to pay minimum wage and employ benefits. In northern California, Moonies operate a carpet-cleaning firm called International Exchange Maintenance. Ex-members who worked for the firm say they regularly signed over their paychecks to the UC's San Francisco leader. The money saved by this cheap labor allowed International Exchange to submit the winning low bid on a government contract to clean carpets in all federal offices in two California counties. Finally, many cults exploit mem-



## HOW CULTS BILK ALL OF US

bers by pressuring them to turn over all their money and possessions. According to a 1974 report, upon joining the Children of God (also known as the Family of Love), headed by David "Moses" Berg, converts had to assign their goods and income to the organization. Other cults have recruited wealthy widows.

Exploitations are also directed against public insurance and welfare funds. Keys in poverty, cult members often qualify for welfare and other assistance. Former Moonies and ex-members of other cults who paraded in California tell of obtaining free medical and dental care—courtesy of state and federal tax dollars.

**Ties That Bind.** Once inside a cult, the money gained by deception and exploitation often behaves in accordance with a basic economic principle: capital seeks investment. Under the Tax Reform Act of 1969, a religious organization may own and operate a business as long as it pays taxes on the business and does not channel its tax-exempt moneys into business operations. But because current tax laws do not require churches to disclose what they do with their money, they are in effect free to ignore the law.

Cults can easily transfer tax-exempt money into businesses by spinning a web of organizations with no visible connection to one another. The UC, for example, has dozens of components—some tax-exempt, others profit-making, tax-paying corporations. Many have denied or hidden

their ties to one another or to the UC. But, as the House Subcommittee on International Organizations discovered in its 1978 Congressional probe of Korean-American relations, the ties do exist, and money flows freely from tax-exempt to profit-making components. State Department information shows that the UC owns portions of several South Korean businesses.

Even when cult businesses are openly established as profit-making corporations, they can avoid paying taxes by donating all or part of their profits to the church as a tax-deductible, charitable contribution. A more sophisticated tactic is practiced by Spiritual Sky Seeded Products, a for-profit affiliate of the Flare Krishna. A maker of incense and related products, Spiritual Sky has borrowed money from ISKCON at annual interest rates as high as 25 percent. Since interest is deductible from gross income, this high rate substantially cuts Spiritual Sky's taxable net income. Again, such practices allow cults to compete unfairly with businesses that borrow at normal interest rates and then must pay income tax at the standard corporate rate.

Because churches can keep their finances secret, it is easy for cults to take care of their leaders royally. Tony and Susan Alamo apparently take no salary from their foundation, but they enjoy gracious living in a foundation-owned mansion in one of Nashville's most exclusive neighborhoods. Other cult leaders live equally well, with church-owned

November 1979

# Reader's Digest

It's Time to Stop America's Retreat

New York Times Magazine

The Dolphin and the Shark

Unrecognized New VD Epidemic

The Boy Who Went to Sea

What's a "Healthy Profit?"

James Dickey—"Poet of Survival and Hope"

A Quiz to Help You Lose Weight

How I Designed an A-Bomb in College

The Hound of the Baskin-Belmonts

Interference

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## HOW CULTS BILK ALL OF US

By CAROL WILLIAMS

Singapore: Jewel of the East  
How Cults Bilk All of Us  
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Why Our Public Schools Don't Work

Hair Today: Gone Tomorrow

Supersleeping: How to Save 50% at the Checkout

Language on the Slide

House Full of Heart

Word Power

81—Life in These United States

Personal Glimpse

An Encouraging Word

16th year: Over 36 million copies brought monthly to 15 languages

planes, yachts and luxury automobiles at their disposal.

**Behavior vs. Relief.** Recognizing that financial disclosure can stop cult abuses, Minnesota enacted a law requiring churches that solicit substantial sums from the public to file with state authorities the same annual reports filed by secular tax-exempt organizations. The UC has challenged the statute in court, claiming that it abridges religious freedoms. Minnesota has defended its law by arguing that the UC's activities are more economic than religious, and that any group soliciting from the public should be obliged to tell the public where the money goes.

Many cult foes have suggested that the way to deal with the abuses is to abolish the tax-free status of all churches. Without tax privileges, they reason, cults would wither instantly. Although some legal experts say such a move would be constitutionally permissible, the social and historical support for religious tax exemptions, in effect for 200 years, is overwhelming. But in its most recent decision on the matter, *Hale v. Tax Commission of the City of New York* (1970), two of the reasons the Supreme Court gave for continuing privileged tax treatment raise serious questions about the "religious" nature of cults. First, the Court said, religions deserve the same tax break given to other not-for-profit groups because churches perform "certain social services in the community that might otherwise have to be assumed by government." Second, religions

"uniquely contribute to the pluralism of American society."

Experience has shown that far from doing good works that serve tax revenues, cults have exploited public funds. And pluralism, the notion that tolerance gives American life a richness it would otherwise lack, is a value scorned by the cults. As their deceptive fund-raising demonstrates, they have little but contempt for anyone who does not see the world through their eyes. The UC's chief goal is to establish a worldwide theocracy, in which the First Amendment would not exist because church and state are one. But whenever critics voice skepticism about the cults' integrity, these groups proclaim that religious freedom is under siege. What they are really struggling to protect is the tax exemption that lets them operate in secret.

In urging financial disclosure, the aim is not to interfere with any group's beliefs but to stop behavior that the First Amendment was never intended to shield. As Richard Delgado, professor of law at the University of California, Los Angeles, and leading legal authority on cults, explains, the distinction is a crucial one. "Under the U.S. Constitution, freedom of belief is absolute. But religiously motivated behavior is not protected absolutely. To be protected by the First Amendment, the behavior must stem from theological or moral motives rather than from avarice, convenience or a desire for power. Furthermore, the behavior must be central to the group's theo-

logy. Since business activities are not central to religious beliefs, they do not qualify for absolute protection."

**Opening the Books.** Until 1969, churches were allowed to operate businesses without paying a cent of income tax. Alarmed at the economic destructiveness of this tax advantage, responsible church leaders urged Congress to remove the exemption for business income unrelated to religious activity. Their suggestions were written into the Tax Reform of 1969. But by leaving churches free from the obligation to file annual financial reports on non-business activities, Congress gave unscrupulous sects the secrecy they need to shuffle money like peas in a shell game.

America's religious leaders dislike the idea of government-mandated financial disclosure because they fear it would mark the beginning of state regulation of church affairs. They consider voluntary disclosure an effective way to prevent financial abuse. Accordingly, three major religious associations—the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, the Interdenominational Foreign Mission Association and the Evangelical

Council for Financial Accountability—have begun programs to make their financial information available to the public. In addition, more and more religious charities are willing to meet the financial reporting standards set by the Philanthropic Advisory Service, which monitors tax-exempt groups supported by tax-deductible contributions.

With the move toward voluntary financial reporting, many religious organizations have assumed responsibility for showing how they spend their tax-exempt money. A financial-disclosure requirement would be a simple matter of giving government the same information they now give the public. Far from harming these churches, financial disclosure would help them by exposing the spiritual con artists who cast shadows on all religious fund-raising. Disclosure would show dishonest cults for what they really are—swindlers in thin cloaks of theology—and would deprive them of the secrecy they need to survive.

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SPECIAL  
REPORT

# The new victims of **Journal** CULTS

**LADIES HOME**

If you're worried that your teenage children could be lured into joining a cult, your fear may be misplaced. Today, the most vulnerable member of the family may be your aging mother—or yourself

## Cults and the Aged: A New Family Issue

**S**eventy-four-year-old Catherine R., recently widowed, joined a religious group at a neighbor's urging, in the hope of learning how to prepare her soul for death. Over time, Catherine's daughter, Susan, noticed that her usually healthy mother was losing weight and was tired and withdrawn.

After nine months, Catherine abruptly decided to move to the group's headquarters in a neighboring state. She liquidated all her assets, removed her daughter's name from their joint bank account and withdrew thousands of dollars of her life savings. But the day before Catherine was scheduled to leave to join the group, Susan had to rush her mother, hysterical and incoherent, to the hospital. Doctors confirmed that she had suffered a severe nervous breakdown.

• Pamela McNeeley, thirty-three, an accountant in Sausalito, California, became a devotee of J.Z. Knight, a Washington State housewife who says that Ramtha, a 35,000-year-old spirit, speaks through her, offering the wisdom of the ages.

Over two years, McNeeley spent \$5,000 on Ramtha tapes, videocassettes and seminars. She withdrew from friends and family and quit her job. She even (continued)

## New Age CULTS

**Donor to 'Bible Speaks'  
wants her millions back**

**By Diane Salvatore**

## VICTIMS OF CULTS

continued

considered moving to Washington State, where, Ramtha said, she would be spared the natural disasters that would strike the rest of the country.

Finally, nearly bankrupt and emotionally drained by what she called the "doom and gloom" of Ramtha's message, McNesley began to question Ramtha's tactics. "I felt," she says, "like I was going crazy."

Pat Manchester was the mother of five children and had been married eight years when she became a member of the Bible Speaks, an evangelical Christian church headed by Pastor Carl Stevens. She eventually persuaded her husband to sell their Rhode Island home and move the family business to church headquarters, in Lenox, Massachusetts. After six years, having given some \$35,000 to the church, she was disturbed when Stevens made what she describes as sexual advances. Such behavior from a man she considered so spiritual was a crushing blow to her. "I felt betrayed and totally devastated," she says.

For most people, the word "cult" conjures up images of college students wearing flowing robes, chanting rhythmically and spouting Eastern philosophy. But today's realistic young people may be more concerned with career planning and money than mysticism. "As a result, cults have had to turn to new, more susceptible groups," says Herbert Rosedale, a New York lawyer who works for no fee to help those who feel a cult has victimized them.

In fact, recent developments have changed cults—some three thousand groups nationwide with between three million and eight million followers—in important ways. Cults today are expanding their membership through a new pool of recruits: the elderly, the middle-aged, and churchgoing Christians. And while in the past cults attracted equal numbers of males and females, today more women than men are being drawn in.

### Preying on the old

Those ripest for cult recruitment, according to Marcia Rudin, a leading authority on cults, are people "in a period of transition that makes them vulnerable." As a result, says Reginald Alev, information officer and former executive of Cult Awareness Network (CAN), in Chicago, "it's common for the elderly to get recruited after the death of a spouse." Not only does this loss make the elderly emotionally vulnerable, it also stirs up a profound fear of their own death. That fear, critics say, is exploited by cults. "Literally

millions of dollars," says Philip Abramowitz, Ph.D., director of the Task Force on Missionaries and Cults of the Jewish Community Relations Council of New York, "are given to cults by people who are told they will be taught to communicate with those they leave behind when they die."

Loneliness is also a problem for the old, one that cults take advantage of, critics say. "The elderly are neglected in our society," says Abramowitz. "They want someone to listen to their problems and be sympathetic." Cult members know this and thus do much of their recruiting in hospitals and nursing homes or, says Abramowitz, "pose as cleaning- or cooking-service workers, or offer to do shopping or gardening or provide transportation to doctors' appointments."

Experts say the elderly are being targeted today for two other important reasons: There are more of them, and they have more money. Currently, those over age sixty-five—women in particular—represent the fastest-

*Lonely senior citizens with a lifetime of savings are recruited by cult members posing as nursing-home volunteers.*

growing segment of our population. And senior citizens have had a lifetime to accumulate assets. "Cults go where the money is," Alev says.

This was the case with Edith S., a well-to-do sixty-five-year-old Pennsylvania woman who started attending Bible study classes after the death of her husband of forty years. Over time, Edith came to believe claims by the group's magnetic leader, Pastor Lovejoy, that he was God. She sold her home and turned over the profits to the group, along with tens of thousands of dollars of her savings. She was so devoted to him, in fact, that she remained at the group's headquarters in upstate New York for fifteen years—until she was deprogrammed.

According to Rudin, groups that have aimed intense recruitment efforts directly at the elderly include the Church Universal and Triumphant (CUT); Reverend Sun Myung Moon's

Unification Church, which has an Orange Blossom Corps specifically for outreach to seniors; The Divine Light Mission; The Way International, whose older members belong to its Sunset Corps; the Tony and Susan Alamo Foundation; and The Walk. Visits to some of these groups' meditation programs are offered as recreational outings by some unsuspecting senior-citizen centers.

### New Age and the middle-aged

The middle-aged, especially middle-aged women, are primarily responsible for the popularity of the New Age movement—components of which, some say, represent a new kind of cult. Made chic in large part because of Shirley MacLaine's best-seller and mini-series *Out on a Limb*, New Age blends Eastern and Western thought and encompasses self-help groups, healing crystals, reincarnation and channeling (communicating with spirits through a medium).

CAN says the New Age phenomenon, particularly channeling, shares characteristics with destructive cults. "New Age has become a belief system," says Alev. "Many followers are addicted to a hypnotic subculture." Channelers such as Knight "are often charismatic types who inspire absolute devotion and claim they are the sole source of revelations from God."

According to Craig Hawkins, a research consultant with Christian Research Institute (CRI), a California-based nonprofit group that monitors cults, "New Age is going to grow and grow. It's the wave of the future." Part of the reason for this growth may again be demographics. New Age has attracted the majority of its adherents from aging baby boomers—a group second only to the elderly in population growth. Some New Agers, says Alev, are children of the sixties who still haven't found the answers they've been looking for. Others, adds Rudin, "are now realizing that although they have become prosperous, material happiness is not enough."

The appeal to middle-aged women may be the strongest of all. In fact, 65 percent of Ramtha adherents are women in their late thirties and early forties. "A lot of women made it to adulthood and became wives, but the issue of having a social and personal identity was put on the back burner," says Susan Rothbaum, a Berkeley, California, social worker who directs Sorting It Out, a group for former members of alternative religions. Channeling, she says, may provide these women with "divine permission" to finally do something just for themselves.

It's not only (continued on page 146)

## VICTIMS OF CULTS

continued

with her, ostensibly to help out. The woman, herself a mental hostage of the group, kept Catherine on a diet heavy in starches, which made her sluggish and weak. She deprived Catherine of sleep and forced her to copy by hand reams of incoherent prose, which made Catherine highly suggestible. What's more, Catherine, like members of many cults, was told that worldly harm and eternal damnation would befall her and her family if she tried to break free.

One of the few legal options for someone trying to separate a family member from a cult is to secure a court-ordered temporary conservatorship by proving that the cult member is mentally incompetent and cannot handle his or her own affairs or estate. But proving such conditions in a courtroom has always been difficult.

As a result, many families have looked outside the law for solutions—namely, to deprogramming—even though such a procedure, when it involves kidnapping and restraining a person, is a felony in most states. In the case of Edith S., her daughter hired two deprogrammers for close to \$20,000. They seized her mother and counseled her for a week before her mother denounced the group.

Still, there are other ways for victims and their families to combat

cults. "The best way is to make cults obey the existing law, or to catch them breaking it," says Peter Georgiades, chairman of the American Bar Association's Subcommittee on Cult-Related Litigation. Many cults give law-enforcement agencies plenty of material to work with. Groups have been prosecuted in the past for myriad offenses: tax evasion (Reverend Sun Myung Moon, head of the Unification Church, was jailed for more than a year), breaking zoning laws, mail fraud, keeping children out of school, stockpiling weapons (purportedly in preparation for Armageddon), drug trafficking, kidnapping, rape, child abuse, medical neglect, prostitution, extortion and immigration abuses. In some cases, the crime is even as serious as murder: Ongoing investigations into the Hare Krishna sect have led to convictions of two West Virginia commune members for the 1983 murder of a drug dealer linked to the group.

Some cult victims have chosen to seek retribution through civil suits. Earlier this year, a \$1 billion class-action suit was filed by more than five hundred people against the Church of Scientology, the group founded by science-fiction writer L. Ron Hubbard, charging that confessions they made in private are being used to coerce them and extort money from them.

Yet for every illegal activity that has been discovered, some observers

feel that countless others go unreported. Part of the problem may be that law-enforcement personnel on the front lines—the police—admit they have been slow to recognize cults as the source of such criminality. Ron Cameron, chief of police in Rushville, Indiana, who has coordinated seminars to educate Indiana police about cults, says, "Law enforcement as a whole has been pretty much in the dark about cults and the danger that exists. We have underestimated the magnitude of the problem. That has only recently begun to change."

Perhaps the best solution is prevention. Counselors in a New York City cult clinic run by the Jewish Board of Family and Children's Services stress the importance of keeping all vulnerable family members knowledgeable about cults. If a loved one has already joined a cult, Langone recommends talking with him or her often and at length if possible, reminding and repeating how much the cult member is misused, and avoiding criticism.

And there is life after cults. Today Catherine R. lives in a senior-citizen community where she is active and happy, after getting counseling with a group that specialized in the problems of those leaving cults. "My mother is still not as healthy as she was before," says her daughter, Susan. "But we're not wasting time looking back. We have a lot of life to catch up on." And

order, and she is now voluntarily bailing out investors.

McNeeley's experiences with Ramtha have shaken her, but she, like other former disciples, says the deception is not symptomatic of the whole movement. The lure of New Age is evidently so strong that today McNeeley still consults other channelers.

## Cults and Christianity

Cults no longer spring only from Eastern religions, however. "There are just as many groups today coming out of mainstream and evangelical Christianity," says Hawkins of CRI.

In a case that has drawn national attention, Betsy Dayton Dovydenas, thirty-four, the Dayton department store millionairess, sued the Bible Speaks for the return of nearly \$7 million she donated while a member—money she says she gave after church leaders exerted undue influence.

Last May a judge ordered the church to return the money to Dovydenas, saying Carl Stevens was guilty of "deceit, avarice and subjugation." The church plans to appeal but, according to its lawyer, it will be bankrupted and forced to close if the ruling stands.

Some three hundred former Bible Speaks members who belong to a support group called 12 Inc. feel membership in the evangelical group is ultimately destructive. After six years, Pat Manchester says, she left the group and Massachusetts, largely because other women in the group told similar stories of sexual advances by Stevens. Today, she attends a local Christian church in Vermont.

## What can be done?

Young or old, victims of cults looking for compensation often find themselves unwittingly challenging First Amendment protections of freedom of religion. To avoid such a legal quagmire, anticult activists have sought to distinguish legitimate freedom of speech from destructive cult behavior, which they argue ought not to be protected. According to Michael Langone, Ph.D., director of research for the American Family Foundation (AFF), a research and educational organization in Massachusetts, a destructive cult is defined as "a group that manipulates and exploits its members; dictates how they should think and act; claims an exalted status that sets it in opposition to mainline society; and utilizes mind-control techniques to recruit prospects and make its members subservient."

Such mind control was used in the case of Catherine R. Catherine's daughter found out later that her mother was targeted for recruitment by a "friendly" neighbor who moved in (continued)

## VICTIMS OF CULTS

continued from page 48

individuals who have taken an interest in the New Age movement. Some corporations—including Pacific Bell in California, Procter & Gamble, Ford Motor Company and Polaroid—have instituted employee-training programs to increase workers' productivity—programs that, critics charge, have ties to New Age. Some alarmed employees have protested required participation in programs that they say use mind-control techniques and alter not only work attitudes but also personal behavior and values. Others charge that

the programs run counter to their religious beliefs. To date, at least two employees have filed suit.

Critics assert that many channelers take an unspiritual interest in their followers' money—a factor, they say, that is this movement's most important parallel with traditional cults. Several years ago, Knight, as Ramtha, advised many adherents to invest in Knight's million-dollar Messiah Arabian horses. People later complained about their investments, and the state of Washington investigated. Knight (who lives in a multimillion-dollar mansion with a Rolls-Royce in the driveway) agreed to a cease and desist



Steven Hassan M.Ed.

# MIND CONTROL AND THE CULT PHENOMENON

Steven Hassan has been involved in educating the public about mind control and destructive cults for over fifteen years. He is a Licensed Mental Health Counselor and holds a Master's Degree in Counseling Psychology from Cambridge College. In 1985, he authored the critically acclaimed book *Combating Cult Mind Control: The #1 Best-Selling Guide to Protection, Rescue and Recovery from Destructive Cults* that *New York Times* favorably reviewed in *The Lancet* and *The American Journal of Psychiatry*. It is also distributed throughout the UK and has been translated into Spanish, with German and Japanese texts being prepared.

Mr. Hassan has pioneered a new approach to deprogramming called "Strategic Intervention Therapy," a new form of exit-counseling. Unlike the physical and media sensationalized "brain deprogramming," this non-coercive approach is an effective and legal alternative for families to help out victims. This approach utilizes family members and friends and teaches them how to strategically influence the individual trapped in the group. During his years of work he has helped hundreds of persons victimized by cult-related mind control. He has provided numerous training workshops and seminars for mental health professionals, educators and law enforcement officers, as well as for families of cult members.



Deceptively recruited into the Moon organization at the age of nineteen while a student at Queens College, Hassan spent twenty-seven months recruiting, indoctrinating, and fundraising, conducting political campaigns and personally meeting with Sun Myung Moon during numerous leadership sessions. Mr. Hassan ultimately rose to the rank of Assistant Director of the Unification Church at National Headquarters. Following a serious automobile accident, he was deprogrammed by several former members at his parents' request. Once he realized the insidious nature of the organization, he authorized police officials to take possession of his personal belongings, which included a massive set of private speeches documenting Moon's secret plan to "take over the world."

During the 1977-78 Congressional Subcommittee investigation into South Korean C.I.A. activities in the United States, he consulted as an expert witness. In 1979, following the Jonestown tragedy, Mr. Hassan founded EX-MOON Inc., a non-profit educational organization composed of over four hundred former members of the Moon group. Although now defunct, it was the first and largest ex-member organization in the world. Mr. Hassan later served as the National Coordinator of FOCUS, a support and information network of former members of all destructive cult groups. FOCUS is affiliated with the Cult Awareness Network, a non-profit educational organization dedicated to exposing abuses of destructive cult groups.

Some of the groups that Mr. Hassan feels should be of concern are: The Unification Church (The Moonies); The Church of Scientology (Dianetics); The Way International; The Hare Krishnas (ISKCON); Transcendental Meditation (TM); Rajneesh; Church Universal and Triumphant (C.U.T.); Jehovah's Witnesses; Shepherd's Disipleship Churches (hundreds in the U.S.); Foundation for Human Understanding (Radio Hypnotist Roy Masters); U.S. Labor Party (Larouche); Nichiren Shoshu (M.S.A.); Children of God (Family of Love); AIO (Vogel Shlager); as well as *et al.* Forum, Insight (John-Roger and M.S.I.A.) and Lifestream. There are an estimated three thousand destructive cult groups operating within the United States today. Millions of people have been attracted by the cult phenomenon.

Mr. Hassan has appeared on innumerable television and radio shows including Oprah Winfrey, Sally Jessy Raphael, Good Morning America, Today and Larry King. Quoted extensively in newspaper and magazine articles, Mr. Hassan has had a great impact on the American public through the media. In his commitment to fight against destructive cults, Mr. Hassan devotes a major portion of his time and energy to preventive education. He has addressed hundreds of campus, religious, and professional organizations throughout the world. *Combating Cult Mind Control* is available at B. Dalton's, your favorite local bookstore, or by calling 1-800-486-2865.

For information contact Steven Hassan, PO Box 896, Boston MA 02258 Tel (617) 628-0918 Fax (617) 628-0183

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by  
**Steven Hassan**

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● COVER STORY

# The Thriving Cult of Greed and Power

*Ruined lives. Lost fortunes. Federal crimes. Scientology poses as a religion but is really a ruthless global scam—and aiming for the mainstream.*

BY RICHARD BEJAN

**B**y all appearances, Noah Lottick of Kingston, Pa., had been a normal, happy 24-year-old who was looking for his place in the world. On the day last June when his parents drove to New York City to visit his body, they were nearly catatonic with grief. The young Russian-studies scholar had jumped from a 10th-floor window of the Bedford Plaza Hotel and boomed off the hood of a stretch limousine. When the police arrived, his fingers were still clutching \$7,000 in cash—virtually the only money he hadn't yet turned over to the Church of Scientology, the self-help "philosophy" group he had discovered just seven months earlier.

His death inspired his father Edward, a physician, to start his own investigation of the church. "We thought Scientology was something like Dale Carnegie," Lottick says. "I now believe it's a school for psychopaths. Their so-called therapies are manipulations. They take the best and brightest people and destroy them." The Lotticks want to sue the church for contributing to their son's death, but the prospect has them frightened. For nearly 40 years, the big-business of Scientology has shielded itself exquisitely behind the First Amendment as well as a battery of high-priced criminal lawyers and shady private detectives.

The Church of Scientology, started by science-fiction writer L. Ron Hubbard to "clear" people of unhappiness, portrays itself as a religion. In reality the church is a hugely profitable global racket that survives by intimidating members and critics in a Mafia-like manner. At times during the past decade, prosecutions against Scientology seemed to be curbing its men-

ace. Eleven top Scientologists, including Hubbard's wife, were sent to prison in the early 1980s for infiltrating, burglarizing and wiretapping more than 100 private and government agencies in attempts to block their investigations. In recent years, hundreds of longtime Scientology adherents—many charging that they were mentally or physically abused—have quit the church and criticized it at their own risk. Some have sued the church and won; others have settled for amounts in excess of \$500,000. In various cases judges have labeled the church "schizophrenic and paranoid" and "corrupt, sinister and dangerous."

Yet the outrage and litigation have failed to quench Scientology. The group, which boasts 700 centers in 65 countries, threatens to become more insidious and pervasive than ever. Scientology is trying to go mainstream, a strategy that has sparked a renewed law-enforcement campaign against the church. Many of the group's followers have been accused of committing financial scams, while the church is busy attracting the unwary through a wide array of front groups in such businesses as publishing, consulting, health care and even remedial education.

In Hollywood, Scientology has assembled a star-studded roster of followers by aggressively recruiting and regally pampering them at the church's "Celebrity Centers," a chain of clubhouses that offer expensive counseling and career guidance. Adherents include screen idols Tom Cruise and John Travolta, actresses Kirstie Alley, Mimi Rogers and Anne Archer, Palm Springs mayor and performer Sonny Bono, jazzman Chick Corea and even Nancy Cartwright, the voice of cartoon star Bart Simpson. Rank-and-file members, however, are dealt a less glamorous Scientology.

According to the Cult Awareness Network, whose 25 chapters monitor more than 200 "mad-as-hell" cults, no group



L. Ron Hubbard, 1911-88: the cult's founder and continuing inspiration



prompts more telephone pleas for help than does Scientology. Says Cynthia Kiser, the network's Chicago-based executive director: "Scientology is quite likely the most ruthless, the most classically terroristic, the most litigious and the most lucrative cult the country has ever seen. No cult extracts more money from its members." Agrees Vicki Aznaran, who was one of Scientology's six key leaders until she bolted from the church in 1987: "This is a criminal organization, day in and day out. It makes Jim and Tammy [Bakker] look like kindergarten."

To explore Scientology's reach, TIME conducted more than 150 interviews and reviewed hundreds of court records and internal Scientology documents. Church officials refused to be interviewed. The investigation paints a picture of a depraved yet thriving enterprise. Most cults fail to outlast their founder, but Scientology has prospered since Hubbard's death in 1986.

In a court filing, one of the cult's many entities—the Church of Spiritual Technology—listed \$503 million in income just for 1987. High-level defectors say the parent organization has squirreled away an estimated \$400 million in bank accounts in Liechtenstein, Switzerland and Cyprus. Scientology probably has about 50,000 active members, far fewer than the 8 million the group claims. But in one sense, that inflated figure rings true: millions of people have been affected in one way or another by Hubbard's bizarre creation.

Scientology is now run by David Miscavige, 31, a high school dropout and second-generation church member. Defectors describe him as cunning, ruthless and so paranoid about perceived enemies that he kept plastic wrap over his glass of water. His obsession is to attain credibility for Scientology in the 1990s. Among other tactics, the group:

- Retains public relations powerhouse Hill and Knowlton to help shed the church's fringe-group image.
- Joined such household names as Sony and Pepsi as a main sponsor of Ted Turner's Goodwill Games.
- Buys massive quantities of its own books from retail stores to propel the titles onto best-seller lists.
- Runs full-page ads in such publications as *Newsweek* and *Business Week* that call Scientology a "philosophy," along with a plethora of TV ads touting the group's books.

► Recruits wealthy and respectable professionals through a web of consulting groups that typically hide their ties to Scientology.

The founder of this enterprise was part storyteller, part firestorm man. Born in Nebraska in 1911, Hubbard served in the Navy during World War II and soon afterward complained to the Veterans Administration about his "suicidal inclinations" and his "seriously affected" mind. Nevertheless, Hubbard was a moderately successful writer of pulp science fiction. Years later, church brochures described him falsely as an "extensively decorated" World War II hero who was crippled and blinded in action, twice pronounced dead and miraculously cured through Scientology. Hubbard's "doctorate" from "Sequoia University" was a fake mail-order degree. In a 1984 case in which the church sued a Hubbard biographical researcher, a California judge concluded that its founder was "a pathological liar."

Hubbard wrote one of Scientology's sacred texts, *Dianetics: The Modern Science of Mental Health*, in 1950. In it he introduced a crude psychotherapeutic technique he called "auditing." He also created a simplified lie detector (called an "E-meter") that was designed to measure electrical changes in the skin while subjects discussed intimate details of their past. Hubbard argued that unhappiness sprang from mental aberrations (or "engrams") caused by early traumas. Counseling sessions with the E-meter, he claimed, could knock out the engrams, cure blindness and even improve a person's intelligence and appearance.

Hubbard kept adding steps, each more costly, for his followers to climb. In the 1960s the guru decreed that humans are made of clusters of spirits (or "thetans") who were banished to earth some 75 million years ago by a cruel galactic ruler named Xenu. Naturally, those thetans had to be audited.

An Internal Revenue Service ruling in 1967 stripped Scientology's mother church of its tax-exempt status. A federal court ruled in 1971 that Hubbard's medical claims were bogus and that E-meter auditing could no longer be called a scientific treatment. Hubbard responded by going fully religious, seeking First Amendment protection for Scientology's strange rites. His counselors started sporting clerical collars. Chapels were built, franchises became "missions," fees became "fixed donations," and Hubbard's comic-book cosmology became "sacred scriptures."

During the early 1970s, the IRS conducted its own auditing sessions and proved that Hubbard was skimming millions of dollars from the church, laundering the money through dummy corporations in Panama and stashing it in Swiss bank accounts. Moreover, church members stole IRS documents, filed false tax returns and harassed the agency's employees. By late 1985, with high-level defectors accusing Hubbard of having stolen as much as \$200 million from the church, the IRS was seeking an indictment of Hubbard for tax fraud. Scientology members "worked day and night" shredding documents the IRS sought, according to defector Aznaran, who took part in the scheme. Hubbard, who had been in hiding for five years, died before the criminal case could be prosecuted.

Today the church invents



**THE LOTTICKS LOST THEIR SON**, Noah, who jumped from a Manhattan hotel clutching \$171, virtually the only money he had not yet turned over to Scientology. His parents blame the church and would like to sue but are frightened by the organization's reputation for ruthlessness.

## THE BRIDGE TO ENLIGHTENMENT

"Flowing up the Bridge" from Personality Test to O.T. 8 will cost the average person an estimated \$200,000 to \$400,000. The steps shown are only a sample of the many courses and treatments available. Also offered: expensive books, tapes, E-meters (for auditing members), alarm clocks, polo shirts, tote bags, stained-glass windows and ceramic mugs, among many other items.

### Personality Test

Cost: Free

Time required: an hour

A true-false-maybe test to determine whether you need Scientology. Everyone does.

### Communications Courses

Cost: \$250 each

Time required: a few weeks

Several ceteris entail repetitive exercises (sitting on a chair for hours without twitching, speaking to people without displaying emotion) that help pacify and indoctrinate the customer.

### Regular Auditing, Grades 1-4

Cost: \$500 an hour

Time required: indefinite

At graduation, you should be able to communicate effectively, make problems vanish and attain freedom from the guilt of past misdeeds and many psychosomatic ills.

### New Era Dianetics

Cost: \$500 an hour

Time required: indefinite

Auditing your life (and prior lives) to locate evil intentions and traumatic experiences that left you with psychosomatic ills. At graduation, you have attained the state of "clear."

## THE CURRENT LEADER

Obsessed with security, church boss David Miscavige reportedly likes to shoot photos of perceived enemies with a .45 automatic.



costly new services with all the zeal of its founder. Scientology doctrine warns that even adherents who are "cleared" of engrams face grave spiritual dangers unless they are pushed to higher and more expensive levels. According to the church's latest price list, recruits—"raw meat," as Hubbard called them—take auditing sessions that cost as much as \$1,000 an hour, or \$12,500 for a 12½-hour "intensive."

Psychiatrists say these sessions can produce a drugged-like, mind-controlled euphoria that keeps customers coming back for more. To pay their fees, newcomers can earn commissions by recruiting new members, become auditors themselves (Miscavige did so at age 12), or join the church staff and receive free counseling in exchange for what their written contracts describe as a "billion years" of labor. "Make sure that lots of bodies move through the shop," implored Hubbard in one of his bulletins to officials. "Make money. Make more money. Make others produce so as to make money... However you get them in or why, just do it."

Harriet Baker learned the hard way about Scientology's business of selling religion. When Baker, 73, lost her husband to cancer, a Scientologist turned up at her Los Angeles home peddling a \$1,300 auditing package to cure her grief. Some \$15,000 later, the Scientologists discovered that her house was debt free. They arranged a \$45,000 mortgage, which they pressured her to tap for more auditing until Baker's children helped their mother snap out of her daze. Last June, Baker demanded a \$27,000 refund for unused

services, prompting two cult members to show up at her door unannounced with an E-meter to interrogate her. Baker never got the money and, financially strapped, was forced to sell her house in September.

Before Noah Lottick killed himself, he had paid more than \$5,000 for church counseling. His behavior had also become strange. He once remarked to his parents that his Scientology mentors could actually read minds. When his father suffered a major heart attack, Noah insisted that it was purely psychosomatic. Five days before he jumped, Noah burst into his parents' home and demanded to know why they were spreading "false rumors" about him—a delusion that finally prompted his father to call a psychiatrist.

It was too late. "From Noah's friends at Dianetics" read the card that accompanied a bouquet of flowers at Lottick's funeral. Yet no Scientology staff members bothered to show up. A week earlier, local church officials had given Lottick's parents a red-carpet tour of their center. A cult leader told Noah's parents that their son had been at the church just hours before he disappeared—but the church denied this story as soon as the body was identified. True to form, the cult even haggled with the Lotticks over \$3,000 their son had paid for services he never used, insisting that Noah had intended it as a "donation."

The church has invented hundreds of goods and services for which members are urged to give "donations." Are you having trouble "moving swiftly up the Bridge"—

that is, advancing up the stepladder of enlightenment? Then you can have your case reviewed for a mere \$1,250 "donation." Want to know "why a thetan hangs on to the physical universe?" Try 52 of Hubbard's tape-recorded speeches from 1952, titled "Ron's Philadelphia Doctorate Course Lectures," for \$2,525. Next: nine other series of the same sort. For the collector, gold-and-leather-bound editions of 22 of Hubbard's books (and bookends) on subjects ranging from Scientology ethics to radiation can be had for just \$1,900.

To gain influence and lure richer, more sophisticated followers, Scientology has lately resorted to a wide array of front groups and financial scams. Among them:

**CONSULTING.** Sterling Management Systems, formed in 1983, has been ranked in recent years by *Inc.* magazine as one of America's fastest-growing private companies (estimated 1988 revenues: \$20 million). Sterling regularly mails a free newsletter to more than 300,000 health-care professionals, mostly dentists, promising to increase their incomes dramatically. The firm offers seminars and courses that typically cost \$10,000. But Sterling's true aim is to book customers for Scientology. "The church has a rotten product, so they package it as something else," says Peter Georgiades, a Pittsburgh attorney who represents Sterling victims. "It's a kind of bait and switch." Sterling's founder, dentist Gregory Hughes, is now under investigation by California's Board of Dental Examiners for incompetence. Nine lawsuits are pending against him for malpractice (seven

### Clear Certainty Randomness

Cost: **\$2,800**

Time required: 5 hours

This course ascertains whether you are truly clear. If you are, you get the Sunshine Randomness, in which you are walked around town to reacquire yourself with the world.

### O.T. 1-2

Cost: **\$7,978**

Time required: up to 100 hours

After learning how your perceptions of the world and of people have changed since going clear, you are taught about the ideas that were implanted in man more than 75 million years ago.

\*O.T. means Operating Theater, a being at the advanced stage of clear

### O.T. 2-4

Cost: **\$17,010**

Time required: several months

Scientology's "sacred scriptures," the story about the galactic ruler Xenu, the volcanic explosions on earth and the implantations of the spirits (body thetans). This level also helps free you from the effects of drugs taken in past lives.

### O.T. 3-7

Cost: **\$25,600**

Time required: several months

Finds and releases body thetans (B.T.s), or negative spiritual beings, that have been asleep or unconscious inside you for millions of years. In his later days, Hubbard could be heard screaming at his B.T.s.

## L. RON HUBBARD SPEAKS

VERY  
THEY  
THINK

"[Scientology] just contains the secrets of the universe. That may be hard for people to handle sometimes, hearing that."

—John Travolta

"In all the broad universe, there is no other hope for man than ourselves. This is a tremendous responsibility. I have borne it too long alone. You share it with me now."

"The law can be used very easily to harass, and enough harassment on somebody who is simply on the thin edge anyway ... will generally be sufficient to cause his professional decrease. If possible, of course, ruin him utterly."

"It's not hocus-focus ... If you can erase engrams, then you can get better."

—Kirstie Alley

"All men are your slaves."

"Don't ever tamely submit to an investigation of us. Make it rough, rough on attackers all the way."

others have been settled), mostly for orthodontic work on children.

Many dentists who have unwittingly been drawn into the cult are filing or threatening lawsuits as well. Dentist Robert Geary of Medina, Ohio, who entered a Sterling seminar in 1988, endured "the most extreme high-pressure sales tactics I have ever faced." Sterling officials told Geary, 45, that their firm was not linked to Scientology, he says. But Geary claims they eventually convinced him that he and his wife Dorothy had personal problems that required auditing. Over five months, the Gearys say, they spent \$130,000 for services, plus \$50,000 for "gold-embossed, investment-grade" books signed by Hubbard. Geary contends that Scientologists not only called his bank to increase his credit-card limit but also forged his signature on a \$20,000 loan application. "It was insane," he recalls. "I couldn't even get an accounting from them of what I was paying for." At one point, the Gearys claim, Scientologists held Dorothy hostage for two weeks in a mountain cabin, after which she was hospitalized for a nervous breakdown.

Last October, Sterling broke some bad news to another dentist, Glover Rowe of Gadsden, Ala., and his wife Dee. Tests showed that unless they signed up for auditing,

Glover's practice would fail, and Dee would someday abuse their child. The next month the Rowes flew to Glendale, Calif., where they shuttled daily from a local hotel to a Dianetics center. "We thought they were brilliant people because they seemed to know so much about us," recalls Dee. "Then we realized our hotel room must have been bugged." After bolting from the center, \$23,000 poorer, the Rowes say, they were chased repeatedly by Scientologists on foot and in cars. Dentists aren't the only ones at risk. Scientology also makes pitches to chiropractors, podiatrists and veterinarians.



**HARRIET BAKER, 73, LOST HER HOUSE** after Scientologists learned it was debt free and arranged a \$45,000 mortgage, which they pressured her to tap to pay for auditing. They had approached her after her husband died to help "cure" her grief. When she couldn't repay the mortgage, she had to sell.

**PUBLIC INFLUENCE.** One front, the Way to Happiness Foundation, has distributed to children in thousands of the nation's public schools more than 3.5 million copies of a booklet Hubbard wrote on morality. The church calls the scheme "the largest dissemination project in Scientology history." Applied Scholastics is the name of still another front, which is attempting to install a Hubbard tutorial program in public schools, primarily those populated by minorities. The group also plans a 1,000-acre campus, where it will train educators to teach various Hubbard methods. The disingenuously named Citizens Commission on Human Rights is a Scientology group at war with psychiatry, its primary competitor. The commission typically issues reports aimed at discrediting particular psychiatrists and the field in general. The CCHR is also behind an all-out war against Eli Lilly, the maker of Prozac, the nation's top-selling anti-depression drug. Despite scant evidence, the group's members—who call themselves "psychbusters"—claim that Prozac drives people to murder or suicide. Through mass mailings, appearances on talk shows and heavy lobbying, CCHR has hurt drug sales and helped spark dozens of lawsuits against Lilly.

Another Scientology-linked group, the Concerned



Businessmen's Association of America holds antidrug contests and awards \$5,000 grants to schools as a way to recruit students and curry favor with education officials. West Virginia Senator John D. Rockefeller IV unwittingly commended the CBAA in 1987 on the Senate floor. Last August author Alex Haley was the keynote speaker at its annual awards banquet in Los Angeles. Says Haley: "I didn't know much about that group going in. I'm a

Methodist." Ignorance about Scientology can be embarrassing: two months ago, Illinois Governor Jim Edgar, noting that Scientology's founder "has solved the aberrations of the human mind," proclaimed March 13 "L. Ron Hubbard Day." He rescinded the proclamation in late March, once he learned who Hubbard really was.

**HEALTH CARE.** HealthMed, a chain of clinics run by Scientologists, promotes a gruel-

and excessive system of saunas, exercise and vitamins designed by Hubbard to purify the body. Experts denounce the regime as quackery and potentially harmful, yet HealthMed solicits unions and public agencies for contracts. The chain is plugged heavily in a new book, *Diet for a Poisoned Planet*, by journalist David Steinman, who concludes that scores of common foods (among them: peanuts, bluefish, peaches and cottage cheese) are dangerous.

## Mining Money in Vancouver

One source of funds for the Los Angeles-based church is the notorious, self-regulated stock exchange in Vancouver, British Columbia, often called the scam capital of the world. The exchange's 2,300 penny-stock listings account for \$4 billion in annual trading. Local journalists and insiders claim the vast majority range from total washouts to outright frauds.

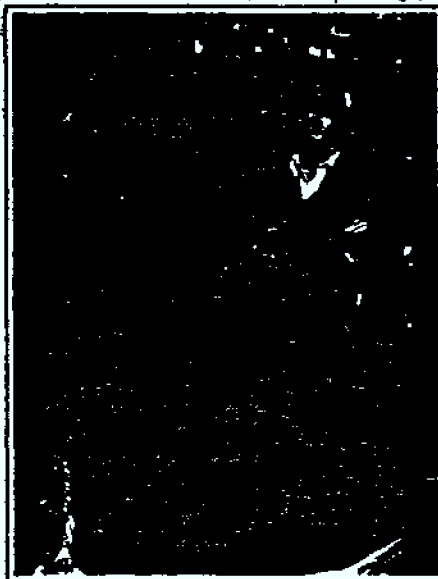
Two Scientologists who operate there are Kenneth Gerbino and Michael Baybak, 20-year church veterans from Beverly Hills who are major donors to the cult. Gerbino, 45, is a money manager, marketmaker and publisher of a national financial newsletter. He has boasted in Scientology journals that he owes all his stock-picking success to L. Ron Hubbard. That's not saying much: Gerbino's newsletter picks since 1985 have cumulatively returned 24%, while the Dow Jones industrial average has more than doubled. Nevertheless Gerbino's short-term gains can be stupendous. A survey last October found Gerbino to be the only manager who made money in the third quarter of 1990, thanks to gold and other resource stocks. For the first quarter of 1991, Gerbino was dead last. Baybak, 49, who runs a public relations company staffed with Scientologists, apparently has no ethics problem with engineering a hostile takeover of a firm he is hired to promote.

Neither man agreed to be interviewed for this story, yet both threatened legal action through attorneys. "What these guys do is take over companies, hype the stock, sell their shares, and then there's nothing left," says John Campbell, a former securities lawyer who was a director of mining company Athena Gold until Baybak and Gerbino took it over.

The pattern has become familiar. The pair promoted a mining venture called Skylark Resources, whose stock traded at nearly \$4 a share in 1987. The outfit soon crashed, and the stock is around 2¢. NET Technologies, a software company, was trumpeted in the press as "the next Xerox" and in 1984 rose to a market value of \$120 million with Baybak's help. The company, which later collapsed, was delisted two months ago by the Vancouver exchange.

Baybak appeared in 1989 at the helm of Wall Street Ventures, a start-up that announced it owned 35 tons of rare Middle Eastern postage stamps—worth \$100 million—and was buying the world's largest collection of southern Arabian

stamps (worth \$350 million). Steven C. Rockefeller Jr. of the oil family and former hockey star Denis Potvin joined the company in top posts, but both say they quit when they realized the stamps were virtually worthless. "The stamps were created by sand-dune nations to exploit collectors," says Michael Laurence, editor of *Linn's Stamp News*, America's largest stamp journal. After the stock topped \$6, it began a steady descent, with Baybak unloading his shares along the way. Today it trades at 18¢.



**ATHENA GOLD'S WILLIAM JORDAN**  
Cult members got cheap stock, then ran him out of the company

Athena Gold, the current object of Baybak's and Gerbino's attentions, was founded by entrepreneur William Jordan. He turned to an established Vancouver broker in 1987 to help finance the company, a 4,500-acre mining property near Reno. The broker promised to raise more than \$3 million and soon brought Baybak and Gerbino into the deal. Jordan never got most of the money, but the cult members ended up with a good deal of cheap stock and options. Next they elected directors who were friendly to them and set in motion a series of complex maneuvers to block Jordan from voting stock he controlled and to run him out of the company. "I've been an honest policeman all my life and I've seen the worst kinds of crimes, and this ranks high," says former Athena shareholder Thomas Clark, a 20-year veteran of Reno's police force who has teamed up with Jordan to try to get the gold mine back. "They stole this man's property."

With Baybak as chairman, the two Scientologists and their staffs are promoting Athena, not always accurately. A letter to shareholders with the 1990 annual report claims Placer Dome, one of America's largest gold-mining firms, has committed at least \$25.5 million to develop the mine. That's news to Placer Dome. "There is no pre-commitment," says Placer executive Gole McFarland. "We're not going to spend that money unless survey results justify the expenditure."

Baybak's firm represented Western Resource Technologies, a Houston oil-and-gas company, but got the boot in October. Laughs Steven McGuire, president of Western Resource: "His is a p.r. firm in need of a p.r. firm." But McGuire cannot laugh too freely. Baybak and other Scientologists, including the estate of L. Ron Hubbard, still control huge blocks of his company's stock.

—By Richard Baker

Former Surgeon General C. Everett Koop labeled the book "trash," and the Food and Drug Administration issued a paper in October that claims Steinman distorts his facts. "HealthMed is a gateway to Scientology, and Steinman's book is a sorting mechanism," says physician William Jarvis, who is head of the National Council Against Health Fraud. Steinman, who describes Hubbard favorably as a "researcher," denies any ties to the church and contends, "HealthMed has no affiliation that I know of with Scientology."

**DRUG TREATMENT.** Hubbard's purification treatments are the mainstay of Narconon, a Scientology-run chain of 33 alcohol and drug rehabilitation centers—some in prisons under the name "Criminon"—in 12 countries. Narconon, a classic vehicle for drawing addicts into the cult, now plans to open what it calls the world's largest treatment center, a 1,400-bed facility on an Indian reservation near Newkirk, Okla. (pop. 2,400). At a 1989 ceremony in Newkirk, the Association for Better Living and Education presented Narconon a check for \$200,000 and a study praising its work. The association turned out to be part of Scientology itself. Today the town is battling to keep out the cult, which has fought back through such tactics as sending private detectives to snoop on the mayor and the local newspaper publisher.

**FINANCIAL SCAMS.** Three Florida Scientologists, including Ronald Bernstein, a big contributor to the church's international "war chest," pleaded guilty in March to using their rare-coin dealership as a money laundry. Other notorious activities by Scientologists include making the shady Vancouver stock exchange even shadier (see box) and plotting to plant operatives in the World Bank, International Monetary Fund and Export-Import Bank of the U.S. The alleged purpose of this scheme: to gain inside information on which countries are going to be denied credit so that Scientology-linked traders can make illicit profits by taking "short" positions in those countries' currencies.

In the stock market the practice of "shorting" involves borrowing shares of publicly traded companies in the hope that the price will go down before the stocks must be bought on the market and returned to the lender. The Feshbach brothers of Palo Alto, Calif.—Kurt, Joseph and

Matthew—have become the leading short sellers in the U.S., with more than \$500 million under management. The Feshbachs command a staff of about 60 employees and claim to have earned better returns than the Dow Jones industrial average for most of the 1980s. And, they say, they owe it all to the teachings of Scientology, whose "war chest" has received more than \$1 million from the family.

The Feshbachs also embrace the church's tactics; the brothers are the terrorists of the stock exchanges. In congressional hearings in 1989, the heads of several

ing whether the Feshbachs received confidential information from FDA employees. The brothers seem aligned with Scientology's war on psychiatry and medicine: many of their targets are health and biotechnology firms. "Legitimate short selling performs a public service by deflating hyped stocks," says Robert Flaherty, the editor of *Equities* magazine and a harsh critic of the brothers. "But the Feshbachs have damaged scores of good start-ups."

Occasionally a Scientologist's business antics land him in jail. Last August a former devotee named Steven Fishman began serving a five-year prison term in Florida.

His crime: stealing blank stock-confirmation slips from his employer, a major brokerage house, to use as proof that he owned stock entitling him to join dozens of successful class-action lawsuits. Fishman made roughly \$1 million this way from 1983 to 1988 and spent as much as 30% of the loot on Scientology books and tapes.

Scientology denies any tie to the Fishman scam, a claim strongly disputed by both Fishman and his longtime psychiatrist, Uwe Geertz, a prominent Florida hypnotist. Both men claim that when arrested, Fishman was ordered by the church to kill Geertz and then do an "eoc," or end of cycle, which is church jargon for suicide.

**BOOK PUBLISHING.** Scientology mischiefmaking has even moved to the book industry. Since 1985 at least a dozen Hubbard books, printed by a church company, have made best-seller lists. They range from a 5,000-page sci-fi decology (*Black Genesis*, *The Enemy Within*, *An Alien Affair*) to the 40-year-old *Dianetics*. In 1988 the trade publication *Publishers Weekly*

awarded the dead author a plaque commemorating the appearance of *Dianetics* on its best-seller list for 100 consecutive weeks.

Critics pan most of Hubbard's books as unreadable, while defectors claim that church insiders are sometimes the real authors. Even so, Scientology has sent out armies of its followers to buy the group's books at such major chains as B. Dalton's and Waldenbooks to sustain the illusion of a best-selling author. A former Dalton's manager says that some books arrived in his store with the chain's price stickers already on them, suggesting that copies are being recycled. Scientology claims that sales of Hubbard books now top 90 million worldwide. The scheme, set up to gain con-



**THE ROWE FAMILY SPENT \$23,000 on Dianetics treatment.** Like many dentists, Glover Rowe was drawn in by Sterling Management, which does not publicize its ties to Scientology.

companies claimed that Feshbach operatives have spread false information to government agencies and posed in various guises—such as a Securities and Exchange Commission official—in an effort to discredit their companies and drive the stocks down. Michael Russell, who ran a chain of business journals, testified that a Feshbach employee called his bankers and interfered with his loans. Sometimes the Feshbachs send private detectives to dig up dirt on firms, which is then shared with business reporters, brokers and fund managers.

The Feshbachs, who wear jackets bearing the slogan "stock busters," insist they run a clean shop. But as part of a current probe into possible insider stock trading, federal officials are reportedly investigat-





Church of Scientology International headquarters, Los Angeles



E-meter: \$4,375

Can you revive your goals?

One of the heaviest TV advertising campaigns in the publishing industry pushes the 40-year-old Dianetics, the cult's basic sacred text



Celebrity Center International in Hollywood is one of several church clubhouses that cater to stars



The Freewinds: high-level enlightenment



Scientology's college in Sussex, England

verts and credibility, is coupled with a radio and TV advertising campaign virtually unparalleled in the book industry.

Scientology devotes vast resources to squelching its critics. Since 1986 Hubbard and his church have been the subject of four unfriendly books, all released by small yet courageous publishers. In each case, the writers have been badgered and heavily sued. One of Hubbard's policies was that all perceived enemies are "fair game" and subject to being "tricked, sued or lied to or destroyed." Those who criticize the church—journalists, doctors, lawyers and even judges—often find themselves engulfed in litigation, stalked by private eyes, framed for fictional crimes, beaten up or threatened with death. Psychologist Margaret Singer, 69, an outspoken Scientology critic and professor at the University of California, Berkeley, now travels regularly under an assumed name to avoid harassment.

After the Los Angeles Times published a negative series on the church last summer, Scientologists spent an estimated \$1 million to plaster the reporters' names on hundreds of billboards and bus placards across the city. Above their names were quotations taken out of context to portray the church in a positive light.

The church's most fearsome advocates are its lawyers. Hubbard warned his followers in writing to "beware of attorneys who tell you not to sue . . . the purpose of the suit is to harass and discourage rather than to win." Result: Scientology has brought hundreds of suits against its perceived enemies and today pays an estimated \$20 million annually to more than 100 lawyers.

One legal goal of Scientology is to bankrupt the opposition or bury it under

paper. The church has 71 active lawsuits against the IRS alone. One of them, *Miscavige vs. IRS*, has required the U.S. to produce an index of 52,000 pages of documents. Boston attorney Michael Flynn, who helped Scientology victims from 1979 to 1987, personally endured 14 frivolous lawsuits, all of them dismissed. Another lawyer, Joseph Yanny, believes the church "has so subverted justice and the judicial system that it should be barred from seeking equity in any court." He should know: Yanny represented the cult until 1987, when, he says, he was asked to help church officials steal medical records to blackmail an opposing attorney (who was allegedly beaten up instead). Since Yanny quit representing the church, he has been the target of death threats, burglaries, lawsuits and other harassment.

**S**cientology's critics contend that the U.S. needs to crack down on the church in a major, organized way. "I want to know, Where is our government?" demands Toby Plevin, a Los Angeles attorney who handles victims. "It shouldn't be left to private litigators, because God knows most of us are afraid to get involved." But law-enforcement agents are also wary. "Every investigator is very cautious, walking on eggshells when it comes to the church," says a Florida police detective who has tracked the cult since 1988. "It will take a federal effort with lots of money and manpower."

So far the agency giving Scientology the most grief is the IRS, whose officials have implied that Hubbard's successors may be looting the church's coffers. Since 1988, when the U.S. Supreme Court upheld the

revocation of the cult's tax-exempt status, a massive IRS probe of church centers across the country has been under way. An IRS agent, Marcus Owens, has estimated that thousands of IRS employees have been involved. Another agent, in an internal IRS memorandum, spoke hopefully of the "ultimate disintegration" of the church. A small but helpful beacon shone last June when a federal appeals court ruled that two cassette tapes featuring conversations between church officials and their lawyers are evidence of a plan to commit "future frauds" against the IRS.

The IRS and FBI have been debriefing Scientology defectors for the past three years, in part to gain evidence for a major racketeering case that appears to have stalled last summer. Federal agents complain that the Justice Department is unwilling to spend the money needed to endure a drawn-out war with Scientology or to fend off the cult's notorious jihads against individual agents. "In my opinion the church has one of the most effective intelligence operations in the U.S., rivaling even that of the FBI," says Ted Gunderson, a former head of the FBI's Los Angeles office.

Foreign governments have been moving even more vigorously against the organization. In Canada the church and nine of its members will be tried in June on charges of stealing government documents (many of them retrieved in an enormous police raid of the church's Toronto headquarters). Scientology proposed to give \$1 million to the needy if the case was dropped, but Canada spurned the offer. Since 1986 authorities in France, Spain and Italy have raided more than 50 Scientology centers. Pending charges against

more than 100 of its overseas church members include fraud, extortion, capital flight, coercion, illegally practicing medicine and taking advantage of mentally incapacitated people. In Germany last month, leading politicians accused the cult of trying to infiltrate a major party as well as launching an immense recruitment drive in the east.

Sometimes even the church's biggest zealots can use a little protection. Screen star Travolta, 37, has long served as an unofficial Scientology spokesman, even though he told a magazine in 1983 that he was opposed to the church's management. High-level defectors claim that Travolta has long feared that if he defected, details of his sexual life would be made public. "He felt pretty intimidated about this getting out and told me so," recalls William Franks, the church's former chairman of the board. "There were no outright threats made, but it was implicit. If you leave, they immediately start digging up everything." Franks was driven out in 1981 after attempting to reform the church.

**T**he church's former head of security, Richard Aznaran, recalls Scientology ringleader Miscavige repeatedly joking to staffers about Travolta's allegedly promiscuous homosexual behavior. At this point any threat to expose Travolta seems superfluous: last May a male porn star collected \$100,000 from a tabloid for an account of his alleged two-year liaison with the celebrity. Travolta refuses to comment, and in December his lawyer dismissed questions about the subject as "bizarre." Two weeks later, Travolta announced that he was getting married to actress Kelly Preston, a fellow Scientologist.

Shortly after Hubbard's death the church retained Trout & Ries, a respected, Connecticut-based firm of marketing consultants, to help boost its public image. "We were brutally honest," says Jack Trout. "We advised them to clean up their act, stop with the controversy and even to stop being a church. They didn't want to hear that." Instead, Scientology hired one of the country's largest P.R. outfits, Hill and Knowlton, whose executives refuse to discuss the lucrative relationship. "Hill and Knowlton must feel that these guys are not totally off the wall," says Trout. "Unless it's just for the money."

One of Scientology's main strategies is to keep advancing the tired argument that the church is being "persecuted" by anti-religionists. It is supported in that position by the American Civil Liberties Union and the National Council of Churches. But in the end, money is what Scientology is all about. As long as the organization's opponents and victims are successfully squelched, Scientology's managers and lawyers will keep pocketing millions of dollars by helping it achieve its ends.

## The Scientologists and Me

**S**trange things seem to happen to people who write about Scientology. Journalist Paulette Cooper wrote a critical book on the cult in 1971. This led to a Scientology plot (called Operation Freak-Out) whose goal, according to church documents, was "to get P.C. incarcerated in a mental institution or jail." It almost worked: by impersonating Cooper, Scientologists got her indicted in 1973 for threatening to bomb the church. Cooper, who also endured 19 lawsuits by the church, was finally exonerated in 1977 after FBI raids on the church offices in Los Angeles and Washington uncovered documents from the bomb scheme. No Scientologists were ever tried in the matter.

For the *TIME* story, at least 10 attorneys and six private detectives were unleashed by Scientology and its followers in an effort to threaten, harass and discredit me. Last Oct. 12, not long after I began this assignment, I planned to lunch with Eugene Ingram, the church's leading private eye and a former cop. Ingram, who was tossed off the Los Angeles police force in 1981 for alleged ties to prostitutes and drug dealers, had told me that he might be able to arrange a meeting with church boss David Miscavige. Just hours before the lunch, the church's "national trial counsel," Earle Cooley, called to inform me that I would be eating alone.



Church attorney Cooley

Alone, perhaps, but not forgotten. By day's end, I later learned, a copy of my personal credit report—with detailed information about my bank accounts, home mortgage, credit-card payments, home address and Social Security number—had been illegally retrieved from a national credit bureau called Trans Union. The sham company that received it, "Educational Funding Services" of Los Angeles, gave as its address a mail drop a few blocks from Scientology's headquarters.

The owner of the mail drop is a private eye named Fred Wolfson, who admits that an Ingram associate retained him to retrieve credit reports on several individuals. Wolfson says he was told that Scientology's attor-

neys "had judgments against these people and were trying to collect on them." He says now, "These are vicious people. These are vipers." Ingram, through a lawyer, denies any involvement in the scam.

During the past five months, private investigators have been contacting acquaintances of mine, ranging from neighbors to a former colleague, to inquire about subjects such as my health (like my credit rating, it's excellent) and whether I've ever had trouble with the IRS (unlike Scientology, I haven't). One neighbor was greeted at dawn outside my Manhattan apartment building by two men who wanted to know whether I lived there. I finally called Cooley to demand that Scientology stop the nonsense. He promised to look into it.

After that, however, an attorney subpoenaed me, while another falsely suggested that I might own shares in a company I was reporting about that had been taken over by Scientologists (he also threatened to contact the Securities and Exchange Commission). A close friend in Los Angeles received a disturbing telephone call from a Scientology staff member seeking data about me—an indication that the cult may have illegally obtained my personal phone records. Two detectives contacted me, posing as a friend and a relative of a so-called cult victim, to elicit negative statements from me about Scientology. Some of my conversations with them were taped, transcribed and presented by the church in affidavits to *TIME*'s lawyers as "proof" of my bias against Scientology.

Among the comments I made to one of the detectives, who represented himself as "Harry Baxter," a friend of the victim's family, was that "the church trains people to lie." Baxter and his colleagues are hardly in a position to dispute that observation. His real name is Barry Silvers, and he is a former investigator for the Justice Department's Organized Crime Strike Force.

—By Richard Baker

The arguments against a temporary guardianship bill which are based on violation of First Amendment rights regarding religious freedom proceed from a misunderstanding of the cult experience. It is assumed that cult members have entered and remain in cults by free choice, knowing in advance the nature of the commitment they are making. There is now a mass of evidence which demonstrates that this is not the case.

Present day cults are different from new religions of the past and from established religions. Today's cults might better be known as "mind-control organizations" since the use of sophisticated techniques of mind control is a characteristic they share. Prospective members are deliberately deceived about the nature of the group and, once ensnared, are kept in bondage by self-hypnotic devices such as chanting, speaking in tongues, and meditation. Rational thought becomes more and more difficult and eventually, for many, the ability to think is lost.

Without freedom of thought, there is no freedom to choose nor to act. Such freedom is a precondition for those freedoms guaranteed by the Bill of Rights. The temporary guardianship bill would provide the opportunity for a return to rational thought and to reality and give cult members an opportunity to make a free choice.

Another crucial point to be made in discussing this issue has to do with the assumption that because a group calls itself a religion, it is in fact a religion. In truth, most cult leaders are motivated by a hunger for power and money. They call their groups religions in order to claim tax exempt status and to benefit from the marvelous protection afforded by the First Amendment.

With the chilling memory of the Jonestown massacre never far from their thoughts, it is easy to understand why otherwise law-abiding people are willing to kidnap their own children. The risks are great and the costs are tremendous, but there seems no alternative except to abandon one's own son or daughter. This bill would give relatives and guardians of cult members a legal means to grant such people the opportunity to make a free and independent decision about their lives.

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b7c



See for ch

In 1980, after our son had been in  
the DLM for nearly 8 years and had  
stopped seeing or communicating with us,  
we arranged a deprogramming. It was a very  
involved and expensive affair. There were  
our security people & three deprogrammers  
brought in from various parts of the country.  
We all met in Santa Cruz, CA where they  
had rented a secure house. After a few days  
of talking our son, I was able to arrange a  
meeting with him at a restaurant - it was  
there he was put into a car & taken to the  
house where the deprogrammers talked to him &  
gave him information. He seemed eager to get back to  
all the pursuits he had formerly enjoyed - painting,  
photography - but most of all to complete his  
education (he had two years of college). We took him to a  
chapel center in Minnesota. He was there 5 weeks.  
After 3 days, while out shopping with two counselors,  
he left. He was "floater" a phenomenon commonly  
experienced by former cultists & had to return to the  
center. We did not find him for five years.



[REDACTED]  
February 6, 1984

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Dear

To State Legislature

It has been over two years since I was last in touch with you regarding a Guardianship Bill to assist cult victims. The 1981 bill passed in the Senate by a more than two to one majority and came within six votes of passage by the House. I am hopeful that a similar bill will be brought before this session of the Legislature and I am writing to tell you why I think you should vote for it.

According to experts, destructive cults continue to grow in numbers, power and wealth. They are less in the news than they were for a few years after Jonestown, but that appears to be because they are keeping a low profile to avoid close scrutiny and unpleasant publicity. They continue to be very active on college campuses in Connecticut and elsewhere.

Much more is known about destructive cults and how they operate than was known two years ago. Most of those who have made a serious study of contemporary cults agree that we are dealing with something new and different as compared with cults of the past. Conway & Siegelman, authors of Snapping, report in their new award-winning study (copy enclosed) that many cults are "using a new form of mind control--a sweeping manipulation unlike anything ever witnessed before in our society". They point out that it is misleading to compare this procedure with the brain-washing used in the Korean and Chinese prisons since physical coercion was primary there, whereas in America's cults control is achieved through manipulation of the mind.

Anthropologist Willa Appel, author of Cults in America: Programmed for Paradise, comments that the inducement of a temporary dissociative (trance-like) state is common to many religions and cults. What is new and different in contemporary cults is that they have learned how to prolong the dissociative state. Thinking is discouraged and hypnotic devices such as prayer, meditation, repetitive chanting, and speaking in tongues are used to maintain the trance-like state.

Psychiatrist Dr. John G. Clark, Jr. of Harvard University Medical School, a student of cults since 1974, has this to say - "in some respects, the destructive effect of cult conversions amount to a new disease in an era of psychological manipulation".

Margaret Singer, a Professor of Psychology at the University of California at Berkeley has studied 700 former cult members from 75 totalistic groups and has interviewed more than 1000 relatives. She has investigated mind control techniques since she did research on repatriated American prisoners of war for the Army during the Korean War. She comments that "cults have taken techniques from the human potential movement, from the encounter, sensitivity-training, and humanistic psychology movements, and combined them with cult ideology and persuasive sales methods-and packaged them in various combinations". This adds up to a very sophisticated method of behavioral modification and certainly it is new and different.

Free choice requires informed consent. However, deception is universally used by today's destructive cults in the recruitment process. In some cases, the prospective member is not even told the real name of the group he is getting into. There is usually a dishonest appeal to the individual's idealism. For example, the Guru Maharaj ji of the Divine Light Mission claims his goal is to



bring peace to the world. This, along with the attraction of belonging to a very friendly close-knit community, is very appealing to a young person. However, he is not told in advance what his life in the cult will be like. He does not know that he must give up his personal goals, that his environment will be controlled (no books or newspapers, no TV, a sparse vegetarian diet, no drinking, smoking, or sex), that he will be encouraged to give up his former friends and family (unless there is a chance of getting money from them), that most of his waking hours will be, in one way or another, devoted to the Guru, and that he will be required to meditate continuously and to attend a worship service every night. He will eventually discover that the Guru uses the money he and the other devotees earn to buy more and more playthings for himself - expensive cars, planes, houses, etc. - but by then it won't make any difference. He is under such control that he can justify anything the Guru does. He can no longer make an independent critical judgement.

Without freedom of thought, there is no freedom to choose nor to act. Such freedom is a precondition for those freedoms guaranteed by the Bill of Rights. The temporary guardianship bill would provide the opportunity for a return to rational thought and to reality and give cult members an opportunity to make a free choice.

The Guardianship Bill is a mental health bill and does not interfere with anyone's right to practice the religion of his choice. I cannot believe that the First Amendment was ever intended to be used as a shield to permit such terrible abuses against human beings. As someone said (unfortunately I don't know who), "The First Amendment exists in a real world to be used for real problems". The current brand of mind control is a new and different problem, one which the law has not yet addressed.

The government has a duty to protect the individual. Jonestown is a particularly horrifying example of the government's failure to perform this duty. But every day there are small tragedies occurring in the cults, minds being destroyed, families torn apart. Connecticut was cited in J. Naisbitt's book Megatrends as one of the five states in the nation where most social invention occurs. I hope Connecticut will be the first state in the nation to recognize and deal with the problem of mind manipulation as used by today's destructive cults.

Sincerely yours,

[REDACTED]

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b7c

# CQ Researcher

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## Cults in America

*Is the alarm about new religious movements justified?*

THE FATAL STANDOFF NEAR WACO, TEXAS, PUT the cult phenomenon on front pages in a way not seen since the 1978 tragedy at Jonestown. But experts on cults — or “new religious movements,” as some prefer — note that cults have been growing steadily in the past two decades, largely outside the media spotlight. Groups such as the Unification Church and the Church of Scientology have become big businesses with complex international networks. Critics of cults and families of many members say the groups use mind control to isolate adherents from society, setting them up to be preyed upon financially, psychologically or sexually. Defenders cite First Amendment rights to freedom of religion and denounce the harsh tactics used by deprogrammers who seek to “rescue” cult members.



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## THE ISSUES

Cults, for many Americans, are a memory from the 1970s. They recall an array of troubling images — the mass suicide at Jonestown, kidnappings by deprogrammers and squadrons of saffron-robed Hare Krishnas accosting travelers at airports. But in the spring of 1993, this notion of a bygone phenomenon went up in flames as David Koresh led his group of armed Branch Davidians to their doom outside Waco, Texas.

"News editors thought cults had gone away with Jonestown, but they've been growing in size and numbers," says Margaret Singer, a psychology professor at the University of California-Berkeley who has counseled more than 3,000 former cult members.

From 10 million to 20 million Americans have been involved with cults in recent years, Singer wrote in a letter to the White House Health Care Task Force prompted by the 51-day standoff in Texas.<sup>1</sup> She estimates there are 2,000 to 5,000 cults in the United States. The Chicago-based Cult Awareness Network (CAN) says there are 2,500 cults in this country. J. Gordon Melton, director of the Institute for the Study of American Religion in Santa Barbara, Calif., believes there are only about 700.<sup>2</sup>

Whatever the number, interest in the cult phenomenon is growing. "Not a week goes by without a local paper or radio station calling us to do a cult story," says Cynthia S. Kisser, executive director of CAN, a nonprofit group with 2,000 members that says it receives about 18,000 inquiries a year. (See chart, p. 390.) "It's clearly an ongoing problem, but it doesn't gain national attention until something explodes into violence, gets extremely costly or has a sensational side," as when a prominent family is involved.



If flower-vending cult members have been less visible in recent years, it's because the groups have "spiffed up their image to rely less on street recruiting and more on commerce," says Marcia R. Rudin, director of the New York City-based International Cult Education Program. The subtle approach is more profitable and draws less attention, she says. The smaller, less formal cults "more blatantly violate basic human rights, particularly those of children, but the sophisticated cults are more a threat to America in general because they manipulate the democratic process through their influence on the media and politics."

Though seldom given front-page coverage, the major cults that grew up in the 1970s have remained active and controversial. The Church of Scientology has a \$416 million lawsuit pending against *Time* for a scathing 1991 cover story that called the group "a hugely profitable global racket that survives by intimidating members and critics in a Mafia-like manner."<sup>3</sup>

Two Russian students are suing the Rev. Sun Myung Moon's Unification Church for allegedly luring them

to the United States for a conference on human rights that turned out to be an indoctrination session.<sup>4</sup> The Children of God (now known as The Family) recently returned stateside after more than a decade in Europe, promising a "second harvest" of souls before the end of the world.<sup>5</sup> And in Alexandria, Va., this December, a federal jury acquitted E. Newbold Smith, a member of the wealthy du Pont family in Philadelphia, of conspiracy-to-kill charges after he and a deprogrammer allegedly tried to "rescue" his son from organizations headed by jailed political extremist Lyndon H. LaRouche Jr.

Friends and families of people who join cults have watched many of them abandon their jobs and turn over their savings to a newfound "family." Many cut off all communication with their relatives while pursuing an exhausting lifestyle fueled by little sleep or food and imposing constant duties or monotonous chanting. "They all had glassy eyes, like two eggs sunny-side up, open so wide that the pupils seemed to bulge out of their faces," said a former follower of the Unification Church.<sup>6</sup>

In recent years, religious cults have been joined by groups embracing such themes as therapy, business, politics and New Age philosophy. "It's no longer the counterculture or youth objecting to their parents' values of success," says Rudin of the Cult Education Program. "It's older people, middle-aged people, entire families."

Of particular concern to detractors are the recruiting tactics of cults that often misrepresent their true purposes. (See story, p. 402.) "The Unification Church speaks of 'Heavenly Deception,' Hare Krishna members speak of 'Transcendental Trickery,'"

<sup>1</sup>The Children of God was one of the largest of the so-called "Jesus Freak" groups of the 1970s.

## Defining the Word 'Cult'

The term "cult" is more apt to be used by the news media or by families of people who've joined a new group than by the so-called cults themselves. "We resent being included with cults," says Jennine Fellmer, the media coordinator at the Maharishi International University in Fairfield, Iowa, which is operated by the Transcendental Meditation movement. "A cult has a set of beliefs based on authority and is separate from society. The difference is we have a set of ideas that, though not yet accepted, is deliberately being put out for scientific evaluation in an open society."

Many scholars of the subject prefer the terms "sects" or "new religious movements" to the word "cult." Webster's *New Collegiate Dictionary* offers a broad range of definitions for cult, ranging from the innocuous — "a system of religious beliefs and ritual" — to the mildly pejorative — "a minority religious group holding beliefs regarded as unorthodox or spurious."

To activists working against cults perceived as harmful, a clear distinction should be made between a group's theology or appearance and its behavior. "Cults differ from 'new religions,' 'new political movements,' 'innovative psychotherapies' and other 'new' groups," writes Michael D. Langone, executive director of the American Family Foundation in Bonita Springs, Fla., "in that [cults] tend to use manipulative techniques of influence to subordinate the

well-being and psychological identities of followers to the leader's benefit. . . . Cults also differ from most authoritarian groups, for example, boot camp or certain monastic orders, in that the latter are not deceptive about their aims, tend to be contractual rather than seductive, and are usually accountable to higher authorities."†

"Totalist cults," as the more threatening variety are termed, were defined at a 1985 conference of academics, summarized here by University of California-Los Angeles psychiatry Professor Louis J. West: "A group or movement exhibiting a great or excessive devotion or dedication to some person, idea, or thing, and employing unethical, or manipulative or coercive techniques of persuasion and control (e.g. isolation from former friends and family, debilitation, use of special methods to heighten suggestibility and subservience, powerful group pressures, information management, promotion of total dependency on the group and fear of leaving it, suspension of individuality and critical judgment, and so on) designed to advance the goals of the group's leaders, to the possible or actual detriment of members, their families, or the community."††

†P.A. Keller and S.R. Heyman, eds., *Innovations in Clinical Practice: A Source Book* (Vol. 10), 1991, p. 263.

††Marc Galanter, ed., *Cults and New Religious Movements: A Report of the American Psychiatric Association* (1989), p. 169.

Rudin writes in an article co-authored by her husband, Rabbi A. James Rudin. "Believing they possess the truth, they are intolerant of other religions and ideas, and see the world in black-white, us-them terms, perhaps speaking of outsiders as satanists."\*

"Some cults have expanded into an international growth industry with hundreds of millions of dollars," notes Dr. Louis Jolyon West, a psychiatry professor at the University of California-Los Angeles (UCLA) and a longtime observer of cults. "What concerns me increasingly is the harm to members and their families. Parents essentially lose a child to a cult."

In the more-secretive cults, children are often schooled within a cordoned-off compound, there is no outside medical care and births and deaths go unrecorded. The state of Oregon spent

hundreds of thousands of dollars caring for 51 children removed from a cult called Ecclesia in 1988. Corporal punishment within cults has been reported regularly by former members, in one case causing the beating death of a 13-year-old boy.

Cults can also play havoc with traditional religious beliefs, overwhelming priests, rabbis and ministers with complaints from families of cult members. "A cult has to have original revelations, a new twist on reality that no one else has, its patented Coca-Cola formula," says Tal Brooke, a former follower of Indian guru Sai Baba who heads the Christian fundamentalist Spiritual Counterfeits Project in Berkeley, Calif. "The revelator is usually a charismatic leader, the group is exclusive and the world is seen as a dangerous place. The side effect is to blunt the critical

functioning and critical thinking of the followers."

Were cults and cultlike groups as purely evil as their critics maintain, however, it would be hard to imagine why anyone would join. Clearly, the groups have their attractions. "The whole room dissolved into a golden light," an 18-year-old enthusiast recalls of attending her first lecture by the Long Island-based spiritual and business guru Frederick Lenz. "I saw his face change into an Indian warrior, a Buddhist monk. . . . I was totally high. I couldn't wait to see him again."\*

What's more, questions about what constitutes a cult group are a source of continuing disagreement. (See story, p. 396.) And some mainstream religious bodies and scholars of religion have long warned that efforts to monitor or investigate so-called cults by what they



call the "anti-cult cult" risk violating constitutional rights. Particularly offensive, they say, is the technique of deprogramming. "People ought to be free to follow whatever religion they want without being forcibly rescued," says Dean Kelley, who has advised the National Council of Churches on religious liberties for 32 years.

"Movements are like persons — you can pick their bad habits and portray them in the worst possible light," says James Lewis, a professor of religious studies at the University of California-Santa Barbara. He recently organized the Association of World Academics for Religious Freedom (AWARE), a group of scholars seeking to form a "neutral information center" for new religious movements.

What is clear is that the tragedy surrounding David Koresh and his Waco disciples has prompted many Americans — particularly government officials — to examine a poorly understood, and apparently pervasive, phenomenon. "Hello, mama, it's your boy," the self-proclaimed prophet said in a message on his mother's answering machine after he was apparently wounded by federal agents. "They shot me and I'm dying, all right? But I'll be back real soon, OK? I'm sorry you didn't learn the [seven seals from the Bible's Book of Revelations], but I'll be merciful, OK? Tell [younger brother] Roger I love him. Tell grandma I tried. I'll see y'all in the skies. Bye."

The newly rejuvenated debate over cults centers on the following issues:

#### **Does mind control really work?**

"Under certain kinds of stress, individuals can be made to comply

with the demands of those in power," writes UCLA psychiatrist Louis West, who in the early 1950s evaluated American pilots who were believed to have been brainwashed while prisoners during the Korean War. "They can also be induced to adopt beliefs and behaviors far different from those that were characteristic of them before."<sup>10</sup>

The notion that many people who join dangerous cults are victims of brainwashing, also called mind control or thought reform, is at the center of much of the alarm about cults. The common

and peer pressure.

"Guilt and fear are probably the most important emotional levers for producing conformity and compliance," writes Steven Hassan, a former high-level official in the Unification Church who renounced the faith and now counsels ex-cult members. "Historical guilt (e.g. the fact that the United States dropped the atomic bomb on Hiroshima), identity guilt (e.g. a thought such as 'I'm not living up to my potential'), guilt over past actions (e.g. 'I cheated on a test') and social guilt (e.g. 'People are dying of starvation') can be exploited by destructive cult leaders."<sup>11</sup>

Resistance from prospects is countered with such comments as, "Stop fighting it," "Do not express negativity," "Bliss out!" and "Stop using your critical mind." Recruiters in the Unification Church often segregate the more skeptical targets, dividing "sheep" from "goats," Hassan says.

Major theological or scientific objections are met with a response such as, "'That is a very good question. Hold onto it and it will

be answered in the next lecture,'" Hassan writes. Unification Church recruiters would occasionally learn by chance of a troubling episode in a prospect's past, such as a brother's suicide, and then pass it to a counselor in another state who later would raise the issue to convince the prospect that the group read his mind.<sup>12</sup>

As described by Michael D. Langone, a cult expert who is executive director of the American Family Foundation in Bonita Springs, Fla., recruitment relies on "extensive control of information to limit alternatives from which members may make 'choices'; deception; group pressure; intense indoctrination into a



*Devotees of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness perform for donations at Harbor Place, in Baltimore, Md.*

recruiting technique actually involves a "posthypnotic suggestion," according to Ted Patrick, who developed deprogramming in the early 1970s. (See story, p. 399.) "A stranger stops you on the street. You feel like you're supposed to know him. Then he finds something to hook you, saying, for example, 'That's a beautiful tiepin.' You then snap to a single frame of mind, and boom! You're in. Any fool can do it."

Once prospects have been engaged by recruiters, say those who've experienced the process, they typically are invited to a dinner or a lecture where they are subjected to an orchestrated campaign of preaching

## Phone Calls of Concern

More than 2,500 persons called the Cult Awareness Network in the last six months of 1992 to inquire about specific cults or cultlike groups. The largest number of specific calls involved Scientology, the Boston Church of Christ and groups using or thought to be using satanism. The "other group" category reflects calls about more than 100 other groups.

July - December 1992

	Number of Calls	Percent of Total
Satanism	359	14
Scientology	186	7.2
Boston Church of Christ (The Forum)	154	5.9
Unification Church	73	2.8
Lifespring	44	1.7
Rama	36	1.4
Other Groups	36	1.4
Total	1,686	66
	2,574	

Source: Cult Awareness Network, April 1993

belief system that denigrates independent critical thinking and considers the world outside the group to be threatening, evil or gravely in error; an insistence that members' distress — much of which may consist of anxiety and guilt subtly induced by the group — can be relieved only by conforming to the group; physical and/or psychological debilitation through inadequate diet or fatigue; the induction of dissociate (trance-like) states via the misuse of meditation, chanting, speaking in tongues; alternation of harshness/threats and leniency/love; isolation from social support; pressured public confessions."<sup>13</sup>

The effectiveness of such techniques, not surprisingly, is hotly disputed. The American Psychological Association, after years of debate, has declined to take a stand on the issue.

The group known as The Family (formerly Children of God) recently issued a statement "categorically denying" all accusations, allegations and insinuations which suggest that our membership are not free-willed and mentally responsible individuals. We reject, as

does much of the scientific community, the attempt by anti-cult advocates to foist fanciful and mythical 'robot' brainwashing theories."<sup>14</sup>

Kelley of the National Council of Churches also dismisses the brainwashing accusations. "Sorcerers and tyrants for centuries have tried to find a way to control others from a distance without force or threat of force," he says. "If they had found a way to do it, they wouldn't be running a rickety religious group but would be running the world."

Other scholars argue that the concept of mind control and brainwashing is a crude distortion of a normal process that unfolds every day between persuasive and credulous people. "I've lived with these groups, and they have normal socialization," says AWARE's Lewis. "They're always interacting with their own group and ideology. When conversation partners all share the same point of view, there's no need to posit that there's mind control just because to us they seem eccentric."

Lewis also points to studies, such

as one conducted of the Unification Church in England by British sociologist Eileen Barker, showing that less than 10 percent of the people who visited centers run by "the Moonies" ended up joining the church, a percentage one might expect to be higher if there were such a thing as mind control. Langone notes, however, that the 10 percent who did join made "major and rapid changes in their lives."

"In a typical Billy Graham crusade, only 1-3 percent of attending unbelievers come forward during the altar call, let alone modify their lives radically," he writes. "Persuading 10 percent of a group of people, who are largely recruited from the street, to become full-time missionaries within a matter of weeks reflects an astounding level of psychological influence!"<sup>15</sup>

Arguments against the existence of mind control are primarily "sophistries developed to enhance the legal positions of cults," says West. "If a person in a cult is induced to commit a crime, and is arrested, the cult can say, 'We didn't do anything of the sort, he's a free agent. No one's holding a pistol to his head.' To say there is no system of brainwashing that is well established scientifically leaves out a whole set of published work."

Such arguments, West adds, are often advanced by "armchair philosophers" who don't see the people who've been harmed by cults. "They like to think of it as an upsurge of religious feeling. For them, it's all theoretical."

By contrast, sociologists David G. Bromley and Anson D. Shupe Jr., authors of *Strange Gods: The Great American Cult Scare*, assert that "the brainwashing explanation provided families with a superficially plausible model of seemingly 'bizarre' behavior that did not place any stigma on either themselves or their errant ('cult') family members.... Even more important, it created the basis for placing a diverse array of new religious groups under the rubric 'cults.'"<sup>16</sup>

### *Are there benefits to cult membership?*

Since modern cults exploded on the American scene in the early 1970s, groups ranging from Christian fundamentalists to Eastern-looking meditators have given impressive testimony to their ability to help adherents kick problems with alcohol and drugs. Recently, The Family has won numerous plaudits from law enforcement officials for ministering to youth gangs in riot-scarred Los Angeles and victims of 1992's Hurricane Andrew in Florida. In Fairfield, Iowa, Maharishi International University recently claimed that since its Transcendental Meditation enthusiasts came to town in 1974, violent crime has fallen 75 percent and property crime has dropped 17 percent in the area.

On the personal level, the spiritual and health benefits of meditation have been extensively discussed in scientific literature. A spokeswoman for Transcendental Meditation argues that the group is not a cult and says the benefits of the technique have been demonstrated in more than 500 studies in 30 countries.

In an extensive study of the followers of the Divine Light Mission's teenage guru, Maharaj Ji, scholar J.V. Downton reported: "There is little doubt in my mind that these *premies* [as the followers are called] have changed in a positive way. Today, they seem less alienated, aimless, worried, afraid, and more peaceful, loving, confident and appreciative of life. We could attribute those changes to surrender, devotion and their involvement in the premie community. Each of these undoubtedly had a positive impact, but, if we accept what premies say, none were as critical as the experience of [meditation]."<sup>17</sup>

Critics of cults do not dismiss such arguments. "No experience is totally bad in the mainstream cults," said

the Cult Awareness Network's Kissler. "No one would join if it was so oppressive on the surface. It's oppressive below the surface. Something has to be offered — a better relationship with God or a spouse or a better job. One former cult member said, 'I'm no longer afraid of speaking in front of large crowds.'" But, she adds, "The sense of companionship, of being in a special elite and



*Smoke rises from the Branch Davidian compound near Waco, Texas, on April 19, marking the end of the 51-day standoff between armed sect members and federal agents.*

the affection ... are conditional and can be withdrawn. It's a trade-off. Some cult members learn carpenter's skills, but there was another career given up, and then there's the severed family ties."

In a much-noted survey of 66 former "Moonies" in the early 1980s, New York University Medical Center psychiatrist Marc Galanter found that 89 percent "got some positive things" out of the membership, though 61

percent said, "Reverend Moon had a negative impact on members." Only 53 percent felt that the current members should leave the Unification Church. Some 36 percent said they had "serious emotional problems" at some point after leaving the church and 24 percent had sought professional help.<sup>18</sup>

To critics of cults, any positive benefits are clearly outweighed by the harms. In a 1984 survey of 70 former cult members, 27 percent said that children were not immunized against common childhood diseases; 60 percent said groups permitted physical punishment of children; and 13 percent said children were sometimes hurt or physically disabled to teach them a lesson.<sup>19</sup>

A study of a Swedish fundamentalist Christian group released last year concluded: "Severe and long-term psychiatric problems have been recognized in former students of the Word of Life Bible School. Almost half of the 43 individuals interviewed experienced psychosis-like symptoms, and one out of four had attempted suicide."<sup>20</sup>

A study of 2,000 practitioners of Transcendental Meditation released in 1985 showed a consistent pattern of adverse effects, including anxiety, confusion, frustration and depression. The author stated that "the number and severity of complaints were positively related to the duration of the meditation."<sup>21</sup>

Most recently, a 1991 survey of 308 former cult members by the American Family Foundation found that the vast majority saw their abandoned group as harmful to themselves and others in the group. (See box, p. 392.)

"A former Hare Krishna I once treated," Langone writes, "abandoned a promising musical career in his freshman year of college, spent the next 10

## How Former Cult Members Feel About Their Groups

Most of the 308 former cult members who responded to a 1991 survey conducted by the American Family Foundation said the cult experience had been personally harmful and harmful to others in the group.

### Profile of Respondents:

- 64% were female; 36% were male
- Average age when subjects joined the group: 24.9
- Average number of years subjects belonged to the group: 6.7
- Average age of subjects when they completed the questionnaire: 36.8
- Pre-group religious affiliations: None 13%; Protestant 47%; Catholic 24%; Jewish 8; Other 8%
- Average time between the subject's first contact with the group and becoming a member: 2 months

### Why members left their groups?

On their own, without formal outside assistance	60%
Involuntary deprogramming	13%
Exit counseling/voluntary deprogramming	17%
The group asked them to leave	9%
As a result of a legal conservatorship	2%
Assistance from a mental health professional	9%
Assistance from another professional	9%
Other	28%

### Was group experience personally harmful/beneficial?

Very beneficial	3%
Beneficial	11%
Neutral reply	8%
Harmful	33%
Very harmful	44%

### Did group pressure make leaving difficult?

Very difficult	47%
Difficult	25%
Not sure	4%
Mildly difficult	11%
No difficulty	14%

### How did original contact with the group occur?

Recruiter on a college campus	11%
Meeting on the street	13%
Friend in the group	34%
Boyfriend or girlfriend in the group	25%
Brother or sister in the group	7%
Through reading materials	20%
Other	33%

### How beneficial/harmful was the group for most members?

Very beneficial	1%
Beneficial	4%
Neutral reply	7%
Harmful	37%
Very harmful	51%

Note: Percentages do not add up to 100 because of multiple answers.

Source: Preliminary report published by the American Family Foundation July 20, 1992. Final results will be published in a future issue of Cultic Studies Journal.

years selling books for the organization and listening to repetitive lectures, and finally stumbled out of the group at 28. He had never formally held a job, never dated, lost all contact with his friends, never advanced his education, never played his instrument (and, therefore, lost all hope of a musical career), and never developed the self-confidence of a normal young adult. He was 28 going on 18."<sup>22</sup>

It is when cult members come out of the cults, says psychologist Singer, that "they tell of suffering and regretting the lost years. And they display mental inefficiencies, especially if they've been subjected to prolonged emptying of the mind. One man meditated for 21 hours a day for 21 days. He was so unable to concentrate or attend that cult members called his parents to come pick him up."

To some scholars of new religions, however, the tendency to interview former cult members is precisely what distorts the data. "Rather than forming generalizations based on a broad range of data," writes Lewis, "the anti-cult movement generates its own data set by imposing a prior ideology on a select number of individual cases (through deprogramming) and then 'discovers' evidence for its ideology in the testimony of these same individuals."<sup>23</sup>

Langone finds this argument unconvincing. "The majority eventually leave," he writes. "Why? If they were unhappy before they joined, were pressured to remain, left anyway, and were more distressed than ever after leaving, what could have impelled them to leave and to remain apart from the group? The inescapable conclusion seems to be that the cult experience is not what it appears to be.... A painful truth is better than a pleasant lie."<sup>24</sup>

### Should the government do more to monitor cults?

"The Waco [episode] will become the Gulf of Tonkin resolution of a horde of regrettable laws and regula-



tory initiatives," predicts Steven T. McFarland, director of the Center for Law and Religious Freedom in Annandale, Va., referring to the 1964 naval encounter that escalated American military involvement in Vietnam. "The loss to our societal freedoms would be far too high to justify it. You don't solve sociological problems by junking our fundamental freedoms."

Though calls for government action are common among people who are alarmed about cults, most appear mindful of the risks to First Amendment protections for religion. "We're not saying we're for laws banning cults," says Kisser of the Cult Awareness Network. "Our approach is education. Instead of spending millions of dollars [on the raid] on Waco, for example, they could have spent \$1 million for a pilot project in Texas that would [pinpoint] the warning signs and make local agencies accountable before a [crisis] occurs."

Over the past two decades, several thousand communities have cracked down on the public solicitation of funds by cults and others, but federal courts have limited the restrictions to guidelines on time, place and manner.<sup>22</sup>

Much more could be done, according to Marcia Rudin, simply through better enforcement of current laws. "State education officials can make sure that the [cult members'] children go outside to a public school if the group's educational facilities fail to meet state standards," she writes. "Inspectors can check for violations of sanitary and health codes, can make sure that births are recorded, and can check to see that infants and children receive immunization and medical care."<sup>23</sup>

Social problems and violations of law attributed to cults compiled at a 1985 academic conference included tax evasion; welfare fraud; violations of immigration laws; abuse of the legal system through spurious lawsuits and Freedom of Information Act requests; "pursuit of political goals while operat-

ing under the rubric of a non-political, charitable, or religious organization"; use of underpaid labor and deceptive fund-raising."

Anti-cult activists have lobbied in several states for legislation that would extend conservatorship provisions of current law to include people rendered incapable of making their own decisions by cults. University of Colorado law Professor Richard Delgado has proposed establishing a form of "living will" that could be executed at a time when a person is free to indicate his or her true feelings about cults and that calls for rescue if the person comes under cult influence.

"Another group of devices would aim at incorporating opportunities for reflection, or communication with the outside world, at some specified point in the indoctrination process," Delgado continues. "These devices could be compared to the currently existing 'cooling off' legislation in the consumer-protection area, measures that enable a purchaser to return a product and rescind a sale undertaken in the heat of the moment (purchase of an expensive set of books by a welfare family, for example). Examples of such devices in the cult context might include a legal requirement that cults — and perhaps all religious groups — permit reasonable, non-disruptive communication with persons outside the group."<sup>24</sup>

Attorney Herbert Rosedale, president of the American Family Foundation, calls for more legal recognition of the rights of victims of cults. "Religiously motivated, unconsented-to injury is inflicted on people of diminished capacity at a certain time using coercion and fear, just like ~~is~~ abuse of the elderly, children or battered wives," he says. "People [who emerge from cults] who are unable to resume working lives have no recourse."

Rosedale envisions legislation that would pin responsibility on cults for compensating such victims, citing at least four cases of individuals who

have won damage awards from the Church of Scientology, the Hare Krishnas and the Church Universal and Triumphant. (The Scientologists, UCLA's West points out, have frequently intimidated people by filing expensive countersuits of their own.)

West would prefer new laws to ease the process of legal discovery. "I'd like to stay out of the argument over what is a religion," he says, but the government could require charities and religiously oriented groups to submit information the way businesses or doctors do to allow the public "informed consent." The cults would be available for inspection, and complaints would be followed up by appropriate agencies as if the groups were a school or hospital, he says. "The purely spiritual beliefs and benefits of religions would be untouched, but we could extend the modern consumer *Zetgeist* to protect against con men and bunco artists whether they claim to be religionists or not."

Kisser argues that there are ways, without embarking on a religious witch hunt, in which law enforcement agencies could improve their investigations of potentially dangerous cults. The FBI, she notes, keeps track of homicides, but a child who is beaten to death by a cult leader seeking to drive out demons is recorded as a straight murder, with no cult aspects. "If we can report teen pregnancies or cases of venereal disease," she says, "we can record cults." As it stands, "government agencies simply don't get training in this."

Stephen Markardt, an FBI spokesman, says the bureau gets involved with cults only when they break the law. "If it's merely a trend or belief or philosophy, we don't monitor them," he says. "In a free society with First Amendment rights, you can espouse the weirdest of ideas if you don't cross the line."

Psychologist Singer believes "We have all the laws we probably need. They just need to be enforced, whether you're a ladies' club or a cult. In other countries, governments are not as



frightened about checking up on conduct as we are. The cults here get lawyers and the media to say, 'First Amendment, First Amendment,' and

they do it as a knee-jerk reaction. But the First Amendment is about freedom of belief, not conduct."

and Jim Siegelman, whose 1978 book *Snapping* became a prime source on cults and cultlike groups. Anguished parents, typically heard complaining, "That's not my kid, he talks like a robot," began paying deprogrammers to win back the new converts.

## BACKGROUND

### A Sixties Legacy

Groups that today would be called cults have existed as far back as the pre-Christian Jewish sects (one of which went on to become Christianity). They appeared steadily through the Middle Ages in the form of "heretical" groups that diverged from papal teachings. In the 19th century, founding members of the American Mormon Church were persecuted.

During the recent standoff in Waco, evidence emerged that Branch Davidian leader David Koresh (real name: Vernon Howell) may have modeled himself on 19th-century American religious leader Cyrus Teed, who also adopted the name Koresh (from the Hebrew for Cyrus, the Persian King whom the Bible says crushed the Babylonians during the Jewish exile). The earlier Koresh ran a commune in Florida that clashed with the town marshal."

In the 1950s, a flying-saucer cult in Wisconsin gained notoriety when it was examined by psychologist Leon Festinger in a book called *When Prophecy Fails*. The group's leader, having predicted the end of the world, persuaded followers to sell their homes and give up their savings to join him on a mountaintop to communicate with aliens. After reams of ridicule in the news media, the deadline passed with no sign of the world's end. Instead of filing sheepishly down, however, many of the adherents took the outcome as a sign that their leader had succeeded in sparing their lives. Festinger used this to elaborate his "theory of cognitive dissonance," which ex-

plained the human need to cling to contradictory ideas.

The seeds of today's cult phenomenon, however, were planted during the turbulent 1960s. The arrival of the American hippie counterculture gave visibility to street people, "mind-expanding drugs" and a fascination with things Eastern. The allure was spotlighted in 1967, when the Beatles, the world's top musical group, journeyed to India to meet Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, who would soon make Transcendental Meditation familiar on the American cultural landscape.

With the hippies came the Children of God, accompanied in the early 1970s by a movement of resurgent Christian fundamentalists, among them the Korean evangelist Sun Myung Moon. "The emergence of cults depends on social factors," says psychiatrist Marc Galanter. "Rev. Moon was a harbinger of the growing interest in Christian beliefs coming on the heels of the counterculture."

The period also brought the arrival of imported gurus such as the Divine Light Mission's 13-year-old "Perfect Master," Maharaj Ji. "Because of the use of drugs, I predicted the demise of the counterculture back in 1969," recalls psychiatrist West, "but the rise of cultic activity was much greater than anticipated."

As the Hare Krishnas began building an opulent temple as part of their sprawling community in Moundsville, W. Va., which they renamed New Vrindaban, Americans of all walks embarked on spiritual quests and began dabbling in mysterious therapy techniques: such as est, Lifespring and Esalen. The country underwent "an epidemic of sudden personality change," in the words of Flo Conway

### Congress Investigates Cults

Of all the new religious movements, the one that caused the most concern in government circles was the Rev. Moon's Unification Church. Brought to congressional attention by an investigation of the South Korean government's secret influence in the United States, the group was investigated by a House subcommittee in 1976.

Some 14,000 parents signed a petition protesting the group's recruiting tactics, prompting Sen. Bob Dole, R-Kan., to convene informal hearings. "When we take power in America," Moon reportedly had told intimates in 1974, "we will have to amend the Constitution and make it a capital offense for anyone to have sexual relations with anyone other than the person assigned to him."

In November 1978, the world witnessed an apocalypse of sorts in a remote jungle in the South American country of Guyana. There, near an American-built compound known as Jonestown, U.S. Rep. Leo J. Ryan, D-Calif., was assassinated on an airstrip after investigating the once-California-based cult called the People's Temple. Hours later, more than 900 members of the temple committed — or were forced to commit — suicide at the instigation of the Rev. Jim Jones.

On Feb. 5, 1979, Dole and a panel of House members convened special hearings on "The Cult Phenomenon in the United States." The proceedings were dominated by orchestrated outbursts by Unification Church members in the audience, among them Moon's top aide, Bo Hi Pak. "We have heard of unfamiliar and new religions," Dole said, "all purporting to supply their fol-

*Continued on p. 398*

# Chronology

**1960s** *The assassination of John F. Kennedy, the Vietnam War and other events spawn the counterculture and explorations of "alternative consciousness."*

**Aug. 9, 1969**

Actress Sharon Tate and four friends are murdered by members of a cult headed by Charles Manson.

**1970s** *Eastern religious movements arrive in the United States. "Jesus Freak" and fundamentalist religious movements gain strength. Congress investigates cults.*

**1971**

Church of Scientology sues Paulette Cooper, author of *The Scandal of Scientology*; group is later charged with harassing her. Court rules that Scientology's "E-Meter auditing" can't be called scientific treatment.

**1973**

Divine Light Mission holds rally in Houston Astrodome.

**1974**

National Council of Churches condemns deprogramming.

**March 20, 1976**

Heiress Patty Hearst is found guilty of bank robbery after jury rejects arguments that she was brainwashed by Symbionese Liberation Army.

**March 3, 1977**

Hanafi Muslims seize three buildings and 134 hostages in Washington for 38 hours before surrendering.

**July 8, 1977**

FBI raids on Scientology offices in

Washington and Los Angeles show Scientologists had infiltrated government agencies and harassed citizens.

**1976-78**

House subcommittee probe uncovers Unification Church ties to South Korean government.

**1977**

FBI raids Scientology offices in Washington, D.C., and removes lock picks, guns and ammunition.

**1978**

New Jersey court rules that Transcendental Meditation is a religion and therefore may not proselytize in public high schools.

**Nov. 18, 1978**

More than 900 members of Jim Jones' People's Temple cult commit suicide in Jonestown, Guyana.

**Feb. 3, 1979**

Sen. Bob Dole, R-Kan., opens special inquiry on cults.

**1980s** *Courts rule on legal status of minority religions; cult visibility fades.*

**1980**

In *Peterson v. Sorlien*, Minnesota Supreme Court finds that cult indoctrination undermines a person's capacity for informed consent.

**1982**

The National PTA convention calls for education campaigns against cult recruiting techniques.

**July 1, 1982**

The Rev. Sun Myung Moon of the Unification Church is convicted of income-tax fraud and sentenced to 15 years in prison.

**May 22, 1984**

European Parliament expresses concern about "new organizations operating under the protection afforded to religious bodies."

**1984**

Tax court denies tax-exempt status to California affiliate of Church of Scientology.

**1985**

Eleven people die after Philadelphia police raid house occupied by MOVE movement. Former Scientologists say founder L. Ron Hubbard stole \$200 million from the church.

**1986**

Vatican releases report on cults and new religious movements. IRS raids Leesburg, Va., headquarters of Lyndon LaRouche and finds documents showing 3,000 individuals had given his groups more than \$30 million.

**1988**

Bill to establish national Cult Awareness Week dies in House committee.

**1990s** *Cults explode again on front pages.*

**August 1992**

Unification Church sponsors largest mass wedding in history — 20,000 couples from 81 nations are married in Seoul, South Korea.

**Feb. 28, 1993**

Four federal agents die in a raid on the Branch Davidian compound in Waco, Texas.

**April 19, 1993**

After FBI pumps tear gas into the Branch Davidian compound, a fire kills 77 cult members inside.

## A Sampling of Groups Commonly Labeled as 'Cults'...

**Editor's note:** Because consensus is lacking on the appropriate use of the word "cult," and some groups object to being described as cults, compiling a roster of familiar cults and cultlike groups is problematic. The sampling below represents the range of groups typically labeled as cults and those that appear most frequently in news accounts and academic literature.

**Boston Church of Christ:** Founded in Lexington, Mass., in the 1970s by Kip McKean, a fundamentalist minister, this group practices "discipling," in which members are required to share thoughts with an assigned fellow member. The group actively recruits on campuses, where it is often confused with the mainstream United Church of Christ. There are thought to be millions of members worldwide, many of whom devote themselves to recruiting.

**Branch Davidians:** The branch of this Christian sect near Waco, Texas, led by David Koresh exploded into the news in February when four agents of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms were killed in a raid on the group's armed compound. Koresh, a former rock musician, used his encyclopedic knowledge of the Bible to deliver hours-long sermons to his disciples about the coming apocalypse. He claimed the divine right to take any woman in the sect as his wife. When the FBI tear-gassed their compound April 19, Koresh and some 77 followers, including many children, died in the blaze that followed.

**The Family (formerly Children of God):** In the late 1960s, conservative minister David Berg, greatly affected by the hippie movement, founded a fundamentalist organization in Huntington Beach, Calif., that eschewed such earthly creations as government. Members became known for street preaching and "firty fishing," in which females used sex to recruit males. By the late 1970s, the group had been depleted by sexually transmitted diseases, but membership worldwide approached 10,000. In 1978, Berg moved to Europe. The group recently returned to the United States.

**Church of Scientology:** Part religion, part self-improvement program, Scientology was founded in the 1950s by science-fiction writer L. Ron Hubbard. It charges recruits fees for counseling, called "auditing," to "clear" them of anxieties and enable them to experience a higher consciousness embracing a cosmology going back millions of years. Headquartered in Los Angeles, the group now claims 8 million members and some 700 local outlets in 65 countries and attracts such celebrity adherents as actors John Travolta and Kirstie Alley.

**Church Universal and Triumphant:** Followers of Red Bank, N.J.-born Elizabeth "Guru Ma" Prophet, said to number in the thousands, await a nuclear apocalypse at the church's fallout-shelter-equipped compound in Paradise Valley, Mont. Neighbors say the group is heavily armed. Prophet, 53, calls herself "Mistress of the Universe" and claims to have received messages from Jesus, Shakespeare and Merlin the Magician. The "church" lost its tax-exempt status in 1992.

**Divine Light Mission (also called Elan Vital):** The Guru Maharaj Ji was only 13 when he arrived in the United States in 1971 to spread his father's teachings. Followers of "the Perfect Master" (real name: Prem Pal Singh Rawat) became known as "premies" and quickly numbered in the thousands. The guru moved to Denver, Colo., and launched several publications and social-service agencies. He also married his secretary and bought an estate in Malibu, adopting a "Western" lifestyle that alienated some followers. In 1973, the group rented the Houston Astrodome to celebrate the guru's father's birthday. Attendance, however, was poor. The guru hasn't been visible in the United States since the late 1970s.

**est (now called the Forum):** Erhard Seminars Training is a mass-therapy technique pioneered in the 1970s by former car and encyclopedia salesman Werner Erhard. Described as "60 hours that transform your life," the seminars are given to as many as 250 customers at a time. The grueling sessions, which at one time required people to go for hours without food and bathroom breaks, are known for their emotional confrontations. During the 1980s, Erhard sold off est, and the Internal Revenue Service seized many of his holdings. Though members of his immediate family accused him of child abuse on 60 Minutes, charges have not been filed.

**International Society of Krishna Consciousness:** The shaved heads of Hare Krishna disciples became familiar in the 1970s, not long after the movement was imported from India by Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada. Adherents seek a state of blissful consciousness by reading scripture and chanting the Hare Krishna mantra. Members, once estimated at 500,000 worldwide, often live communally near their temples; some are believed to have stockpiled weapons. After Prabhupada's death in 1977, the movement splintered, and charges of illegal activity dogged several sects. Most notorious was the commune headed by Keith "Bhaktipada" Ham, who was sentenced to 30 years in federal prison for running an illegal business and conspiring to protect it by murder, kidnapping and beating former followers.

**Lyndon LaRouche network:** Followers of this Marxist-turned-conservative presidential candidate generally woo young people and the elderly with theories about international political conspiracies and drug cartels. LaRouche (formerly Lyn Marcus) was convicted in 1986 of tax fraud and is serving a 15-year prison term. Based in Leesburg, Va., the group operates numerous political or-

## ...Or Having 'Cultic Characteristics'

ganizations and has been prosecuted for obtaining money from recruits through credit-card fraud.

**Matamoros satanists:** This Mexican drug-running cult came to light in 1989, when authorities searching for missing American premed student Mark Kilroy uncovered dismembered bodies and satanic-ritual paraphernalia near the U.S. border at Brownsville, Texas. Victims reportedly were lured by female members and then murdered, their hearts cut out in the manner of the ancient Aztecs. Leader Adolfo de Jesus Constanzo later died in a shootout with Mexican police. Second-in-command Sara Aldrete was convicted of murder in Texas.

**People's Temple:** The deaths of more than 900 members in Guyana in 1978 established this group as the cult phenomenon at its most dangerous. Founded in the mid-1960s by Indiana-born minister Jim Jones, the temple set up shop in San Francisco and Los Angeles, initially winning praise for members' volunteer work. By 1977, Jones' staged faith healings, mental abuse of followers and misuse of funds drew attention from journalists, and he moved his followers to a jungle compound in Guyana, South America. After investigating Rep. Leo J. Ryan, D-Calif., was assassinated in 1978 on a remote airstrip, Jones led 914 men, women and children — possibly at gunpoint — in taking poison-laced fruit drink.

**Rajneesh Foundation International:** In the early 1980s, the group made headlines when it virtually took over the town of Antelope, Ore., renaming it Rajneeshpuram. Bhagwan "the God man" Shree Rajneesh claimed to have achieved complete enlightenment while a student in 1953. Followers, estimated to number 250,000 worldwide, meditate, sing, dance and allow permissive sex. They gave the Bhagwan 100 Rolls Royces. Neighbors complained of the group's weapons stockpiling and domination of town politics. In 1985, the Bhagwan was indicted for immigration fraud and deported. He died in 1990. His personal secretary was later convicted of conspiracy to murder and engineering a food-poisoning epidemic.

**Rama (the American Buddhist Movement):** Known as the "yuppie guru," Frederick P. Lenz, 43, lives in a Long Island mansion where, as Zen Master Rama, he offers business-oriented teachings. Some 900 members in several cities believe Lenz is the last earthly incarnation of the Hindu deity Vishnu. To attend seminars and meditation sessions sponsored by Lenz's Advanced Systems Inc., adherents in such high-paying fields as computer programming allegedly pay up to \$70,000 a year. Female members have said Lenz exploited them sexually.

**Sullivan Institute:** During its heyday in the 1970s, this New York City commune of about 400 psychiatric patients lived under patriarchal leader Saul Newton, who named the group for famed psychiatrist Harry Stack Sulli-

van. Members undergoing expensive therapy were required to share sex partners and to keep records of all contacts with other members. Sometimes they were forced to hand their children over to new "parents" and were subjected to heavy fines for breaking rules. The group disbanded when Newton died in 1991.

**Transcendental Meditation:** TM enthusiasts meditate for 15 to 20 minutes twice a day to relieve the stress of modern life and, on a societal level, to promote world peace and reduce crime. In 1972, TM's founder, India-born Maharishi Melesh Yogi, announced his "World Plan" to share "creative intelligence" with all mankind. Critics challenge the group's scientific claims and complain of Hindu proselytizing. The group operates Maharishi International University in Fairfield, Iowa, and rejects the "cult" designation.

**Unarius Academy of Science:** Followers of 93-year-old Ruth Norman believe that spaceships in the year 2001 will land on her 67-acre retreat near San Diego to welcome non-violent earthlings into an intergalactic network. Norman claims to be the reincarnation of Buddha, King Arthur, Mary Magdalene and Peter the Great and to communicate regularly with her deceased husband on Mars.

**Unification Church:** Followers of South Korean industrialist-turned-evangelist Sun Myung Moon, known as "Moonies," have been active in the United States since the early 1970s. The church asserts that Moon is the messiah and that God's plan for mankind is being played out in the conflict between South Korea and communist North Korea. U.S. followers became known for streetcorner flower vending, mass rallies and the marriage ceremony in Madison Square Garden in 1982 for 2,000 couples matched by Moon. That year, Moon was convicted of tax fraud. The group has vast holdings, including fishing fleets, Bridgeport University in Connecticut, real estate and media properties, among them *The Washington Times*.

**The Way International:** Founded in the 1940s, this Christian fundamentalist group was led by one-time radio minister Victor Paul Wierwille until his death in 1985. The Way maintains its headquarters in New Knoxville, Ohio, and a college in Emporia, Kan. Its "ambassadors" actively recruit young people. In the early 1980s, The Way surpassed the Unification Church as the main target of deprogrammers.

Sources: Flo Conway and Jim Siegelman, *Snapping*, (1979); Steven Hassan, *Combating Cult Mind Control*, (1988); J. Gordon Melton, *Encyclopedic Handbook of Cults in America* (1986); Time-Life Books, *Manias and Delusions* (1992); *New York Newday*, July 30, 1991; *Newsweek*, March 15, 1993, p. 52; *Time*, May 6, 1991, p. 50; Cult Awareness Network.





The Rev. Sun Myung Moon

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lowers with answers to personal problems. Courts are choked with cases involving questions of coercion, kidnapping, conservatorships." Sen. Mark O. Hatfield, R-Ore., commented: "The government need not and should not avert its eyes from every act done in the name of religion. . . . The First Amendment is not an absolute. Invoking a religious context does not sanitize every enterprise carried out in the supposed service of the Lord."

The American Civil Liberties Union, meanwhile, took up several cases of cult members and argued their rights to be free from government interference. "All religions are equally good or bad," said Jeremiah Gutman, then-president of the New York Civil Liberties Union. "That's what the First Amendment says."

## Why People Join

"I keep getting asked, 'Who are all these crazy people who join these groups?'" says Rachel Andres, director of the Commission on Cults and Missionaries for the Jewish Fed-

eration Council in Los Angeles. "And my answer is, I don't think they're crazy at all. I think they're all of us at one point or another in our lives."

Observers of cults have long noted how many of the members are well-educated — the Branch Davidians in Waco included Harvard University Law School graduate Wayne Martin. Marcia Rudin says the Rajneesh community in Oregon included several successful television producers, and deprogrammer Ted Patrick says many of his subjects have been doctors and lawyers.

"I had tried drugs, psychiatric analysis, Eastern meditation, political militancy and Werner Erhard's est, and had emerged from these experiences relatively unscathed," wrote Larry Levey, a Jewish lawyer in Washington, D.C., describing why he embraced, and then rejected, Messianic Judaism. "Still, a restlessness remained. Would I ever find the security, the fulfillment, the cosmic understanding that, as a child, I had assumed to be the due of every 'grown-up'?"

The Roman Catholic Church, in a 1986 report on cults prepared for the Vatican, described cult joiners as having an emptiness and a need to feel special: "When they are foodloose, unemployed, not active in parish life or voluntary parish work, or come from an unstable family background or belong to an ethnic minority, or live in places which are far from the church's reach, etc., they are a more likely target."

Melton of the Institute for the Study of American Religion in Santa Barbara says people are most receptive to cult recruiting in their late teens or early 20s, when they're most open to changing their religious outlook. "It's much more of a 20th-century phenomenon because it relates to religious freedom," he told *USA Today*. "In cities, you have a greater freedom to deviate. Whatever kooky idea you have, you can find six or seven other people to agree with you."

As many as 30-40 percent of the cult population are thought to be

Jewish. Philip D. Abramowitz, director of the cult task force at the Jewish Community Relations Council of New York, speculates that more Jews join because cults recruit on campuses, where there are more Jews than in the population at large, and because cults represent themselves as charities. "Jews are very philanthropic," he says, citing the old saying about "the flickering soul of a caring Jew."

In a study of 41 Jewish families that had consulted the cult hotline run by the Jewish Board of Family and Children's Services in New York City, researchers found that "cult-involved families, when compared with a control group, were more concerned with political, social, intellectual and cultural activities. They were also less likely to allow and encourage individual family members to act openly and express feelings directly. Moreover, these parents indicated less satisfaction with their children than did the non-cult families, even though both groups of young people did, in fact, perform very well academically."

Other observers emphasize that the individual's receptivity is less important than the cult's aggressive tactics. A member of the Branch Davidians who left the Waco compound before the fa-

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The Rev. Jim Jones



# Deprogrammers to the Rescue: Some Call It Kidnapping

**D**ire situations invite dire remedies. Since the early 1970s, hundreds of families distraught by a loved one's immersion in a cult have resorted to the radical technique known as deprogramming.

Developed by Ted Patrick, a former aide to Gov. Ronald Reagan, deprogramming involves luring or snatching a cult member away from the isolated world of the cult. Then, with other family members present or nearby, the deprogrammer forces the believer to hear critiques of the newfound theology. The confrontation is far from harmonious: The snatching can lead to kidnapping charges, and the victim is frequently locked in a room with the windows nailed shut and the telephone disconnected.

In his 1976 book, *Let Our Children Go!*, Patrick recounted how he asks questions that force the subject to resume use of his "dead bantery" mind. He described how he began deprogramming a Hare Krishna adherent by taking scissors and cutting off his remaining lock of hair. The subject responded by struggling, screaming the "Hare Krishna" chant at the top of his lungs and then smashing Patrick's tape recorder. Patrick then picked him up "by the front of his robes and marched him backwards across the room, slamming him bodily against the wall. 'You listen to me! You so much as wiggle your toes again, I'm gonna put my fist down your throat!' His eyes got bigger and bigger with fear. He sat down abruptly. I had a picture of Prabhupada, and I tore it up in front of him and said, 'There's the no-good son of a bitch you worship. And you call him God.'"<sup>†</sup>

Though out of the limelight, Patrick still runs a deprogramming service in San Diego. He says he has performed 2,600 deprogrammings successfully, having lost 54 subjects because they escaped. Eight more cases were unsuccessful, he says, because the subjects had "so much brain damage, they were to the point of no return."

Deprogramming has plenty of critics. J. Gordon Melton, director of the Institute for the Study of American Religion in Santa Barbara, Calif., described it as, "A massive assault upon the psyche and value system of the victim, as traumatic for some as physical rape. On several occasions, deprogramming of female victims has led to sexual assault and in one case, the husband of a woman undergoing deprogramming was severely cut with a razor while trying to free his wife from her abductor."<sup>††</sup> The National Council of Churches since 1974 has had a policy condemning deprogramming.

Other critics, among them members of the Church of Scientology, point to the deprogrammers' high fees. Galen Kelly, a well-known deprogrammer whom a branch of the wealthy du Pont family retained to "rescue" their son from the Lyndon LaRouche group, has been paid \$30,000 since 1986, according to *Vanity Fair* magazine.<sup>†</sup> "It's more a

money issue than a religious issue," says Scientology media coordinator Linda Simmons-Hight. "Deprogrammers don't care if someone is a lesbian, a member of the Church Universal and Triumphant or a follower of Lyndon LaRouche if (the person's family) will put up \$50,000."

Scientologists have also charged that deprogrammers receive referrals from the Chicago-based Cult Awareness Network (CAN), and that the network receives financial kickbacks in exchange. CAN Executive Director Cynthia S. Kisser denies both charges, arguing in turn that the Church of Scientology operates through "front groups" such as the Washington, D.C.-based Deprogramming Survivors Network. (That network's Sue Taylor denies any connection to Scientology.)

In reaction to hot controversies and lawsuits over deprogramming (some courts have ruled in favor of deprogrammers, others for their victims), many observers of cults have substituted "exit counseling" as a voluntary alternative to involuntary deprogramming. Back in the early 1970s, says Margaret Singer, a cult expert and professor emeritus at the University of California-Berkeley, "there was nothing to do but drag the kid home and talk to him. Nowadays there are thousands of ex-members who are exit counselors. They give the most return on getting the person a job and working with the families." Despite cult efforts to disparage deprogramming and link it to violence, she adds, the word *deprogramming* resonates well in the computer age. "The public knows that the person has ceased thinking for himself."

Voluntary exit counseling involves a rigorous intellectual challenge to the subject's beliefs, mostly in the form of questions and information about the cult's negative traits. (Example: "Where does all that money go?").

Michael Langone, executive director of the American Family Foundation, says about two-thirds of deprogramming attempts are successful. Melton puts the success rate at 50 percent. Even in successful cases, the subject's resentment toward his family and the deprogrammer may take years to dissipate.

Patrick, who has spent more than three years in various jails on kidnapping charges, is skeptical of exit counseling. "They say it will work only with someone who comes in voluntarily," he says. "But if the person gets angry and says he wants to leave, he'll get up and leave. I wouldn't take that deal for a million dollars. It would be a false hope, only half the job."

<sup>†</sup>Ted Patrick with Tom Dulack, *Let Our Children Go!* (1976), p. 188.

<sup>††</sup>J. Gordon Melton, *Encyclopedic Handbook of Cults in America* (1986), p. 247.

<sup>†</sup>Maureen Orth, "Blueblood War," *Vanity Fair*, April 1993, p. 184.

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tal showdown described David Koresh's appeal as follows: "He will teach you what the Seven Seals [of the Book of Revelation] are, by his interpretation. Then he will say only the lamb of God can open the seal. Once he has

you believing he is the lamb of God, then he's got you.... The main motivation [for following him] is fear. With women, it's a combination of fear and the chance of being married to God."<sup>24</sup>

As Hassan puts it, "People don't join cults, cults recruit people."<sup>25</sup> ■

## CURRENT SITUATION

### What Happened in Waco?

No sooner had federal agents surrounded the compound of the Branch Davidians outside Waco than questions were raised about whether they should have attempted to serve a search warrant in the first place, or whether David Koresh should have been arrested on illegal arms possession charges much earlier, when he was out in the community. Evidence emerged that the government had been warned by the U.S. embassy in Australia, the homeland of several Branch Davidians, that disciples at Koresh's 77-acre "Ranch Apocalypse" were armed and dangerous.

The post-mortems became politically charged for the young Clinton administration, and freshly installed Attorney General Janet Reno.<sup>26</sup> A frequent criticism was that exhausted federal agents, having threatened and negotiated with Koresh while bombarding him and his followers for weeks with annoying music, animal sounds and search lights, failed to understand how seriously the cult leader took his own vision of being at the center of mankind's final battle.

"It's easier to understand David Koresh's behavior than it is to understand the FBI's strategy," wrote *Texas Monthly* editor Jan Jarboe the day of the fatal confrontation. "Mr. Koresh was fulfilling his own prophecy. In his mind, he was good, the government was beastly and evil and because of the unbridgeable gap between good and evil, there was no other way out other than death."<sup>27</sup>

The debate over Waco also stirred great controversy among cult observers. Soon after the standoff began, Rosedale of the American Family Foundation wrote to the federal Health Care Task Force being run by first lady Hillary Rodham Clinton to express concern that "the unfortunate situation concerning the Branch Davidians ... underscores ... [the important fact that] the leader's psychological control over the group members can be so powerful that the group essentially becomes a project of the leader's psyche." He also wrote of "the risk cults pose to the health, and sometimes even the lives, of children." Still other observers called for a new push on gun control.

The Family released a statement saying: "We express concern and alarm at the way the anti-cult movement is currently exploiting the tragedy in Waco. By lumping all new religious movements together, despite the extreme diversity of beliefs and practices held by the various [new religious movements, the [anti-cult movement] is attempting to label and stigmatize all such groups as 'destructive cults' capable of violent anti-social acts."

George Robertson, a fundamentalist Christian who studies cults for the

Friends of Freedom, in Hunt Valley, Md., blamed the Waco debacle on anti-cult activists such as the Cult Awareness Network. "The cult hysteria surrounding the Texas sect began a little more than a year ago," he wrote in a March press release, "when Rick Ross, a deprogrammer from the Cult Awareness Network, began targeting the Davidian Sect for potential kidnappings and deprogramming paid for by relatives of members of the group." This deprogrammer, Robertson says, persuaded the federal agents to take ill-advised action.

### Courtroom Battles

Cult-related legal cases, meanwhile, continue around the country. Public hunger for tales involving the wealthy was whetted last fall with the Alexandria, Va., courtroom battle involving Lewis du Pont Smith, a 35-year-old du Pont heir, and his father. In recent years, Lewis Smith had donated more than \$200,000 from his trust fund to advance the international drug cartel conspiracy theories of Lyndon LaRouche. Smith told an interviewer that he greatly resented the attempt by his father to declare him mentally incompetent. "Do you have the right to go into court to manipulate your son, humiliate him, destroy his reputation and give him a stigma?" he asked. "He wants to possess me like his yacht."

"I've been very generous to my son," responded the father, Newbold Smith, "because I wanted to rescue him, pure and simple. Because I think he needs rescuing."<sup>28</sup>

In Boise, Idaho, this April, a trial began on kidnapping charges filed against deprogrammers hired by the family of a 39-year-old female member of Elizabeth Clare Prophet's Church Universal and Triumphant. A man posing as a pizza delivery man had grabbed her at her front door as her children looked on and had taken her to an isolated cabin. For days

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<sup>24</sup>Attorney General Reno strongly defended the government's actions at the Branch Davidian compound, including the use of tear gas, in an April 28 hearing of the House Judiciary Committee probing the Waco disaster.

## Is the alarm about cults justified?

MARION E. RLDN

Director, International Cult Education Program  
FROM STATEMENT, APRIL 1975

**Y**es, nearly 15 years have passed since the tragic events at Jonestown, but recently the public has once again been shocked by the Branch Davidians' conflict with federal agents in Waco, Texas...

There are more cults than ever before, with more members. Three research studies indicate there are 3,000-5,000 groups in every area of the United States and throughout the world. Experts estimate that 6 to 10 million people have recently been involved with cults.

Cults harm their members and injure family relationships. They harm society and pose a serious threat to religious freedom, religious pluralism and to our democratic system because they are authoritarian, anti-democratic and totalistic.

Since cult leaders and members believe "the ends justify the means" and that what they are doing is more important than society's laws, they often break civil and criminal laws to advance the organization. Some groups stockpile illegal weapons as did the Branch Davidians, and train members, sometimes even children, to use them. Cults may violate minimum-wage, child-labor, child-abuse and sexual-abuse laws, health and sanitary codes and immigration regulations. Some cults transport minors across state lines or across international borders, engage in college-loan fraud schemes, welfare fraud, income-tax evasion and other kinds of tax fraud, and even drug-smuggling, kidnapping and murder of dissidents. Basic human rights are violated, especially the rights of women and children.

Cult leaders hide behind the U.S. Constitution's First Amendment to mask their illegal activities and to escape prosecution. Everyone wants to protect our precious freedom of religion and freedom of belief guaranteed by the First Amendment, *but the First Amendment doesn't provide immunity when any group or individual violates laws.* One must distinguish between freedom of belief and freedom of action as a result of these beliefs. According to attorney Susan Landa, "There is no absolute fundamental right of total religious freedom to act. While the government cannot interfere with the individual's religious *beliefs* and *opinions*, the government may prohibit religious conduct and practices motivated by those beliefs." Ms. Landa explains, "The U.S. Supreme Court has consistently held that you have to apply a balancing test that weighs the state's interest against the interest of the group."

JAMES LEVY

Executive director, Association of World Academics for Religious Education  
FROM AWARE NEWS, APRIL 1975

**N**o, as presently used in popular discourse, "cult" is a pejorative label that has been applied to a wide variety of religions. Because of the negative connotations of "cult," academics prefer to use the expression "new religious movement" (NRM). While there exist some unhealthy NRMs, the great majority are well-meaning organizations that provide their members with fellowship and a sense of meaning for their lives...

The most important criticism leveled against NRMs is that they utilize powerful forms of mind control (popularly referred to as "brainwashing") to manipulate their members. The operative question that social scientists have asked with respect to this accusation is: How does one distinguish "cult" brainwashing from other forms of social influence — forms of social influence like advertising, military training, or even the normal socialization routines of the public schools? Some anti-cultists have theorized that NRM members are trapped in a kind of ongoing, quasi-hypnotic state, while others assert that the ability of members of controversial religious groups to process certain kinds of information has "snapped." Still others refer to "coercive" or "destructive" persuasion that is judged by the narrow norms of the critic.

The problem with these and similar theories is that if cultic influences actually overrode the brain's ability to logically process information, then individuals suffering from cultic influence should manifest pathological symptoms when they take standardized tests of mental health — and when tested, they do not. In point of fact, such empirical and longitudinal studies indicate that members of new religious movements are actually healthier than average members of mainstream American society....

Because of its vested interest in maintaining the conflict, the anti-cult movement has been unresponsive to objective scholarly studies, and has proceeded with business as usual, as if these studies were non-existent. Scholars whose work directly challenges the "cult" stereotype are dismissed as either naive or as being in collusion with the cults. Rather than responding directly to mainstream social science, a small band of anti-cultists with academic credentials have instead conducted research on their own terms, and have created alternative periodicals which feature studies supporting the worst accusations against NRMs.

## Cults on Campus: Vulnerable Students Are Easy Targets

"One day, as I was reading a book in the student union cafeteria, three attractive women of Japanese background and an Italian American man approached me. They were dressed like students and carried books. They asked if they could share the table. I nodded, and was engaged in a friendly conversation within minutes. Since I had a three-hour break between classes, I stayed and talked. They told me they were students, too, involved in a small community of 'young people from all over the world.' They invited me to visit them."<sup>†</sup>

That was how it started for Steven Hassan, currently a cult "exit counselor" who wrote a book on his much-regretted experience in the Unification Church, "The Moonies." The techniques used to recruit him at Queens College in New York City back in 1974 are still widely used among cults on campuses — an orchestrated succession of what is called "love bombing," flattery, flattering repetitions of the target's name, limited and vague details of a "new group" and finally, pressure to choose from a narrow set of options for seeking new meaning in life.

College students are "the prime recruiting population for cults," says Cornell University Registrar Ronald Loomis, who has been counseling college students and administrators about cults for 15 years. The most active groups at Cornell, Loomis says, are the Unification Church (under the name College Association for the Research of Principle) and Transcendental Meditation. But his visits to campuses elsewhere in New York state and in Canada indicate that the most pervasive recruiters are from the Boston Church of Christ, which he says misleads many students into thinking it is the United Church of Christ.

College students, like people recovering from divorce or the death of a loved one, are living through a period of transition, which makes them more vulnerable to the temptation to latch quickly onto a new group of smiling companions. "Freshmen commonly believe that there are absolute rights and wrongs and that these truths are known to those in positions of authority, such as college professors," writes Gregory S. Blimling, vice chancellor for student development at Appalachian State University in Boone, N.C. "The process of education moves students from this dualistic reasoning to an acceptance of

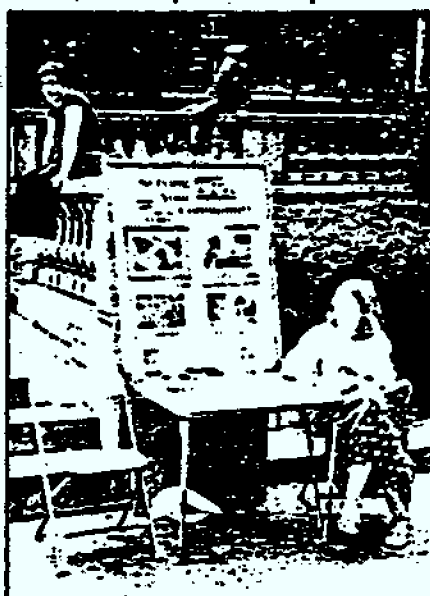
pluralistic truths... Confronted by an uncertain world in which truths are relative, some students seek the sanctuary of a cult group, which absolves them of decision-making and supplies them with a complete set of absolute truths."<sup>††</sup>

What has changed in recent years, notes Loomis, who receives an average of two calls a week from students or family members concerned about cult involvement, is that modern cults, particularly New Age and therapy-oriented cults, have particular appeal to middle-aged people. "It's a complete reversal," he says. "We now get calls from a

21-year-old saying that his 45-year-old parent is on the verge of turning over his savings or mortgage to some guru."

Academia's main defense against cult exploitation, not surprisingly, is education. Cult Awareness Weeks have been held at numerous universities since the 1980s, and resident advisers have received training in cult methods. Some campuses require all student organizations to have a faculty sponsor and to accurately state their group's name. Others restrict door-to-door solicitation in dormitories and implement anti-harassment policies. Campus law enforcement personnel in recent years have become adept at monitoring cults, studying student-distributed fliers for local businesses to determine whether they are cult-owned, and securing the campus computers against tampering.

On the personal level, writes the Rev. Ross Miller, pastor of Trinity Methodist Church in Eugene, Ore., home of the University of Oregon, students are advised not to argue theology with aggressive cult recruiters. "You'll soon learn that they have little interest in your views... Their goal is, as they say, 'to win you to Christ,' or some guru or religious figure — a very competitive concept." Miller also advises students not to panic if recruiters pose cosmic questions for which there are no ready answers, and to feel free to ask questions of their own.<sup>‡</sup>



A member of the Collegiate Association for the Research of Principles, a college recruiting arm of the Unification Church, at an East Coast college during the early 1980s.

<sup>†</sup> Steven Hassan, *Combating Cult Mind Control* (1988), p. 13.

<sup>††</sup> Marcia R. Rudin, ed., *Cults on Campus: Continuing Challenge* (1991), p. 36.

<sup>‡</sup> Rev. Ross Miller, "How to Talk to People Who Are Trying to Save You," in *Ibid.*, p. 105.



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there and in a series of motel rooms, deprogrammers hired by her mother attempted to talk her out of her faith. On April 23 the jury acquitted two of the deprogrammers of aiding and abetting the kidnapping; the trial of a third defendant ended in a mistrial."

One expert witness at the trial was James Lewis of AWARE, who in October 1992 toured the Montana headquarters of Prophet's church, which

has stirred controversy with its alleged arms purchases and doctrine of a coming nuclear apocalypse. Lewis observed the group's ceremonies, schools, child care and its much-discussed bomb shelter. He said he found Prophet living in a small trailer with her husband and grown daughters. "The negative press the church ... has received is grossly inaccurate," he says. "The assumption that it will be the next Waco is absurd."

chiatry Professor West. "The media think [cults] belong on the religious pages — and religious editors are not investigative reporters. Unless some religious leader knocks off 913 people in one day, it tends to be ignored."

Groups that are often considered cults, meanwhile, have continued expanding their presence around the world. The Hare Krishnas and the Scientologists, for example, have established a strong presence in Israel in recent years. Last summer, the European Parliament devoted a session to dealing with sects and new religious movements. This December, a contingent from The Family, many of them children of the original Children of God members from the early 1970s, sang for President George Bush and Mrs. Bush at the White House.

## OUTLOOK

### Religious Freedom

As the major religions started out as cults, says Dean Kelley of the National Council of Churches. "The anti-cult cults say they're unnatural, but it's ironic that as the new religions progress, they become larger and more numerous and become pillars of the community, like the Mormons."

If the Cult Awareness Network "had been around in St. Francis' time," quips Peter Ross, a spokesman for the Unification Church in New York City, "his parents would have dialed 1-800-CULTLINE. CAN would have designated Jesus as a cult leader."

It is true that the major religions were once cults, says psychologist Singer, but "across time, they made provisions for the succession of power. And they did not remain at odds with the surrounding legal entities. They dropped their deception. And they did not remain at odds with the surrounding population. They stopped treating them as lesser beings."

Rosedale of the American Family Foundation recalls that a well-known religious scholar was once asked why the Jesuits were not considered a cult. The answer, he said, is that no one ever became a Jesuit by mistake.

"It is necessary to inform the faith-

ful, especially the young, to put them on their guard, and even to enlist professional help for counseling, legal protection, etc.," warns the Catholic Church's statement on cults. Yet, it continues, "we cannot simply be satisfied with condemning and combating the sects... The challenge of the new religious movements is to stimulate our own renewal for a greater pastoral efficacy."

The fact that many mainstream churches make common cause with cults to defend freedom of religion is a source of frustration to anti-cult activists. "It's discouraging that so many churches don't want to deal with the cult situation because they're afraid it will boomerang on them," says Kisser of CAN. "And as long as the government and institutions we charge with protecting our rights continue to permit a climate where cults can flourish, they will continue."

The human-rights violations of cults occur, she adds, "because government doesn't take responsibility. They occur not because the cult leader loses his temper but because the organizations systematically and methodically abuse people. Like the situation with illegal drugs, we won't ever totally eradicate cults, and in a pluralistic society we can't legislate them out of existence. But with proper education, we can cut down on them."

Generally speaking, "The public shrugs the whole thing off," says psy-

### Checks and Balances

"In the short run, I'm optimistic that we're making inroads with public education," says Marcia Rudin of the International Cult Education Program. "But in the long run, it's like asking, 'Do you think we'll cure cancer?' We make progress, but the cults keep multiplying, with new pitches and new people. There always will be people willing to take advantage of other people. And now we have second-generation manipulators. Unlike with rabbis and priests, cults have no one supervising them. We need some checks and balances, even if these sometimes fail."

The Cult Awareness Network advises families of people in cults to record the names, addresses and phone numbers of persons associated with the cult, and to keep a chronology of events and relevant news clippings. Never send money to the cult member, it advises, but rather non-cash gifts such as clothing and non-refundable airline tickets. Do continue to communicate.

When confronted with street recruiters, "Don't talk with strangers about your spiritual life," advises the newsletter of the Spiritual Counterfeits Project. "You should no more



discuss your spiritual life with a stranger than you should discuss the balance in your checking account or your sex life."

"There's a lot of potentially dangerous groups out there," says Abramowitz of New York's Jewish Community Relations Council. "As long as people are yearning for some answers to life's problems, there will always be people who prey on them. Perhaps many [of the cult leaders] started as charlatans but then came to believe and fell prey to their own fantasies."

Deprogrammer Ted Patrick, who got started when his own son began flirting with the Children of God, warns that seasoned deprogrammers will be needed "as long as man refuses to listen to the truth and seeks leaders who tell them what they want to hear. We have a society based on experts, but they don't always know their subject. I say if you want a drug expert, you should get an addict who's been on skid row."

With issues as important as freedom of religion at stake, defenders of new religions understandably may oppose repressive measures against cults, even those deemed potentially dangerous. But critics of cults can respond that the whole threat might be lessened if people avoided latching on to easy solutions to life.

Until that happens, the Cult Awareness Network will continue to circulate a grim warning from Jeanne Mills, a one-time member of the People's Temple who left the group and later died under mysterious circumstances:

"When you meet the friendliest people you have ever known, who introduce you to the most loving group of people you've ever encountered and you find the leader to be the most inspired, caring, compassionate and understanding person you've ever met, and then you learn that the cause of the group is something you never dared hope could be accomplished, and all of this sounds too good to be true, it probably is

too good to be true! Don't give up your education, your hopes and ambitions, to follow a rainbow."

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Singer wrote to the Health Care Task Force headed by first lady Hillary Rodham Clinton to express her concern about how the lack of medical insurance prevents former cult members from obtaining assistance. Her letter is dated March 16, 1993.

<sup>2</sup> Interview in *USA Today*, March 3, 1993.

<sup>3</sup> Richard Behar, "The Thriving Cult of Greed and Power," *Time*, May 6, 1991, pp. 32-39.

<sup>4</sup> See *The New York Times*, Dec. 30, 1992.

<sup>5</sup> Quoted in *Police Product News*, October 1985, p. 29.

<sup>6</sup> Marcia R. Rudin and Rabbi A. James Rudin, "The Effect of Religious Cults on Western Mainstream Religion," *Cultic Studies Journal*, Vol. 8, No. 1, 1991, p. 7. The Rudins also are the authors of *Prison or Paradise? The New Religious Cults* (1980).

<sup>7</sup> William A. Lewis, 63-year-old leader of a fundamentalist group in Michigan called the House of Judah, was convicted Sept. 12, 1983, of conspiracy to enslave children and causing the boy's death.

<sup>8</sup> Quoted in *New York Newsday*, July 30, 1991.

<sup>9</sup> Quoted in *USA Today*, March 2, 1993.

<sup>10</sup> Article to be published in the *Journal of the American Academy of Psychoanalysis*, draft provided by the author.

<sup>11</sup> Steven Hassan, *Combating Cult Mind Control* (1988), p. 63.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 70.

<sup>13</sup> Adapted from Michael D. Langone, *Cults: Questions and Answers*, 1988.

<sup>14</sup> Statement issued in March 1993.

<sup>15</sup> Langone, *op. cit.*

<sup>16</sup> David G. Bromley and Anson D. Shupe Jr., "The Future of the Anticult Movement," in David G. Bromley and Philip E. Hammond, eds., *The Future of New Religious Movements* (1987), p. 224.

<sup>17</sup> Quoted in Marc Galanter, ed., *Cults and New Religious Movements* (1989), p. 143.

<sup>18</sup> Marc Galanter, "Unification Church ('Moonie') Dropouts," *American Journal of Psychiatry*, August 1983, p. 984.

<sup>19</sup> M.J. Gaines, M.A. Wilson, K.J. Redican and C.R. Baffi, "The Effects of Cult Membership on the Health Status of Adults and Children," *Health Values: Achieving High-Level Wellness* (1984), pp. 13-17, summarized in a letter from Herbert Rosechale, president of the American Family Foundation, to the White House Health Care Task Force, dated March 22, 1993 (see p. 400).

<sup>20</sup> Dudrun Swartling, Per G. Swartling, "Psychiatric Problems in Ex-Members of Word of Life," *Cultic Studies Journal*, Vol. 9, No. 1, 1992, p. 78.

<sup>21</sup> L. Otis, "Adverse Effects of Transcendental Meditation," *Update: A Quarterly Journal of New Religious Movements*, Vol. 9, pp. 37-50, 1985, summarized in Rosechale letter.

<sup>22</sup> Writing in P.A. Keller and S.R. Heyman, *Innovations in Clinical Practice: A Source Book*, Vol. 10 (1991), p. 267.

<sup>23</sup> *AWARE News*, April 1993.

<sup>24</sup> Michael D. Langone, "Recovery From Cults: Help for Victims of Psychological and Spiritual Abuse," introduction to forthcoming book.

<sup>25</sup> See Galanter, *Cults and New Religious Movements*, *op. cit.*, p. 318.

<sup>26</sup> Marcia R. Rudin, "Women, Elderly and Children in Religious Cults," *Cultic Studies Journal*, May 1984, Vol. 1, No. 1, pp. 8-27.

<sup>27</sup> Langone, *Cults: Questions and Answers*, *op. cit.*

<sup>28</sup> Quoted in Galanter, *op. cit.*, p. 292.

<sup>29</sup> See *The Washington Post*, April 8, 1993.

<sup>30</sup> Quoted in Hassan, *op. cit.*, p. 22.

<sup>31</sup> Quoted in Galanter, *Cults: Faith, Healing, and Conversion*, *op. cit.*, p. 167.

<sup>32</sup> Quoted in the *Los Angeles Times*, March 10, 1993.

<sup>33</sup> Larry Levey, "Why I Embraced, Then Rejected, Messianic Judaism," *The Jewish Monthly*, April 1984.

<sup>34</sup> *USA Today*, March 3, 1993.

<sup>35</sup> Mark I. Sirkis and Bruce Grellong, "Cult v. Noncult Jewish Families: Factors Influencing Conversion," *Cultic Studies Journal*, Vol. 5, No. 1, 1988, pp. 2-22.

<sup>36</sup> Quoted in *The Washington Post*, March 15, 1993.

<sup>37</sup> Hassan, *op. cit.*, p. 48.

<sup>38</sup> Column in *The New York Times*, April 21, 1993.

<sup>39</sup> Quoted in Maureen Orth, "Blueblood War," *Vanity Fair*, April 1993, p. 184.

<sup>40</sup> *The Idaho Statesman*, April 24, 1993.

<sup>41</sup> Quoted in *The New York Times*, Dec. 30, 1992.

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## Selected Sources Used

### Books

Editors of Time-Life Books, *Manias and Delusions*, Time-Life Library of Curious and Unusual Facts, 1992.

Portraits written in a popularized style describe the behavior and beliefs of sects, cults and mass movements through thousands of years of world history.

Bromley, David G., and Anton D. Shupe Jr., *Strange Gods: The Great American Cult Scare*, Beacon Press, 1981.

Two sociologists argue that much of the country's alarm about cults during the 1970s reflected a misunderstanding of their nature.

Brooke, Tal, *Lord of the Air: Tales of a Modern Antichrist*, Harvest House Publishers, 1990.

The head of the fundamentalist Christian Spiritual Counterfeits Project describes his 1960s and '70s experiences as a follower of the Indian guru Sai Baba.

Conway, Flo, and Jim Siegelman, *Snapping: America's Epidemic of Sudden Personality Change*, Delta Books, 1976.

A seminal examination of the psychology and sociology of the 1970s phenomenon that led thousands of Americans into such groups as the Hare Krishnas, the People's Temple, est, Scientology and the Children of God.

Galanter, Marc, *Cults: Faith, Healing and Coercion*, 1988.

A New York University Medical Center psychiatrist reports on his research and treatment of active and former members of such groups as the Unification Church and the Divine Light Mission.

Galanter, Marc, ed., *Cults and New Religious Movements*, American Psychiatric Association, 1989.

A professional Committee on Psychiatry and Religion compiled these essays on the nature of cult membership, treatment of disturbed members and related public-policy issues.

Hassan, Steven, *Combatting Cult Mind Control*, Park Street Press, 1988.

A member who defected from the Rev. Sun Myung Moon's Unification Church explores the nature of what he calls mind control and describes his work as an "exit counselor" to active and former cult members.

Mehon, J. Gordon, *Encyclopedic Handbook of Cults in America*, Garland Publishing, Garland Publishing, 1986.

The director of the Institute for the Study of American Religion in Santa Barbara, Calif., surveys dozens of cults, giving his reasons for characterizing them as cults as well as their histories, beliefs, techniques and controversies.

Patrick, Ted, with Tom Dulack, *Let Our Children Go*, E.P. Dutton, 1976.

The developer of the technique of deprogramming for cult members describes his extraordinary career and related legal and social issues.

Raschke, Carl A., *Painted Black: From Drug Killings to Heavy Metal — the Alarming Story of How Satanism is Terrorizing Our Communities*, Harper & Row, 1990.

A University of Denver professor of religious studies examines the murky world of Satanic cults in America, from teenagers who "dabble" in devil worship to groups that engage in murder.

Rudin, Marcia R., ed., *Cults on Campus: Continuing Challenge*, American Family Foundation, 1991.

The director of the International Cult Education Project in New York City assembled these essays from campus officials, clergy, law enforcement officials and mental health professionals discussing cult recruiting at colleges and universities.

### Articles

Behar, Richard, "The Thriving Cult of Greed and Power," *Time*, May 6, 1991.

The newsmagazine's cover story likening the Church of Scientology to the Mafia provoked a \$416 million libel suit from the group. Among other anecdotes, Behar details the suicide of a 24-year-old Russian-studies scholar who had turned over most of his savings to Scientologists.

Orth, Maureen, "Blueblood War," *Vanity Fair*, April 1993.

A journalist examines the aristocratic family feud surrounding a branch of the famous du Pont family, whose Philadelphia-born son Lewis du Pont Smith has been resisting his parents' efforts to deprogram him away from his financial relationship with political extremist Lyndon H. LaRouche Jr.

# The Next Step

## Additional information from UMI's Newspaper & Periodical Abstracts database

### Branch Davidians

Lacayo, Richard, "Cult of death," *Time*, March 15, 1993, pp. 36-39.

David Koresh's cult, which is the product of an apocalyptic theology, was the site of a one-hour assault in which four federal agents and 10 cult members were killed. Negotiations that have led to the release of 21 children and two elderly women from the compound are discussed.

Morrow, Lance, "In the name of God," *Time*, March 15, 1993, pp. 24-25.

World events that are being orchestrated out of faith, including the bombing of the World Trade Center and the self-contained tragedy at the Branch Davidian compound near Waco, Tex., are discussed. The world is becoming more secular and more religious at the same time.

Treen, Joe; Joseph Harmes, Bob Stewart, Carlton Stowers, et al, "Zealot of God," *People Weekly*, March 15, 1993, pp. 38-43.

David Koresh, leader of the Branch Davidians, is profiled. Known to see himself as the Messiah, Koresh has used his amazing ability to recite verse and his hobby of playing rock music to entice others into his cult.

### Children and cults

Eddy, Mark, "Dad says cult's belief in reincarnation imperils girl," *Denver Post*, Aug. 29, 1991, p. B1.

A man who hopes to block his estranged wife from seeing their child testified on Aug. 28, 1991, that her fellow cult members believe that the little girl is the reincarnation of their leader's grandmother. They believe that if they cannot have the 20-month-old alive, they can kill her so that her spirit enters another baby.

Kaplow, Bobby, "Cult may be using cemetery," *The Washington Post*, Nov. 7, 1991, p. 1.

Falls Church, Va., police are investigating the possibility that members of a cult have been holding religious healing ceremonies, including the use of animal sacrifices and hand-sewn ritualistic dolls, in Oakwood Cemetery.

Viets, Jack, "Researchers debunk ritual child abuse," *San Francisco Chronicle*, Aug. 20, 1991, p. A3.

Much satanist child abuse occurs only in the minds of mentally ill people, two researchers told the American Psychological Association.

### Crimes involving cults

Gillerman, Margaret, "4 teens charged in ritual slaying," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, July 23, 1992, p. A3.

Four teenagers have been charged with first-degree murder in the satanic cult killing of Joel Duane Homan in Warren County, Miss. Charged with the murder are John A. Richman, William F. Warne, Tina L. Kenyon and a 15-year-old juvenile.

Manson, Patricia, "Widow breaks down after testimony about slayings," *Houston Post*, Jan. 13, 1993, p. A12.

A federal judge called a recess in the trial of William Heber LeBaron, Patricia LeBaron and Douglas Lee Barlow on Jan. 12, 1993, after Laura Chynoweth broke down upon hearing testimony about the slaying of her husband and daughter. The defendants are charged with murder in what authorities claim was an act of vengeance by members of the Church of the First Born of the Lamb of God, a polygamous religious sect.

### Hare Krishnas

Ahrens, Frank, "A Krishna clan's chants for survival," *The Washington Post*, Sept. 8, 1991, p. F1.

New Vrindaban, the largest Hare Krishna community in North America, located near Moundsville, W.V., is featured.

"Begging off," *Los Angeles Times*, June 27, 1992, p. B7.

An editorial praises a recent Supreme Court ruling that allows Hare Krishnas to distribute leaflets in airports but forbids them from soliciting donations.

Niebuhr, R. Gustav, "Legal beat: Diverse religions ally in free-speech case," *The Wall Street Journal*, June 11, 1992, p. B2.

In an unlikely case that may test the Supreme Court's approach to religious liberties, mainstream religious groups are supporting the Hare Krishnas in a battle over whether they have the right to hand out tracts and ask for money from travelers in New York's airports.

### Nation of Yahweh

Rohrer, Larry, "Sect's racketeering trial is set to open," *The New York Times*, Jan. 6, 1992, p. A14.

Yahweh Ben Yahweh, leader of the black Muslim group

Nation of Yahweh, is on trial in federal court in Fort Lauderdale, Fla., for allegedly masterminding the killing of 14 people in the Miami area in the 1980s. Yahweh Ben Yahweh asserts that all whites are devils.

### **Opinion and studies**

Caro, Mark, "Playing mind games," *Chicago Tribune*, March 9, 1993, p. 3.

Cults, especially David Koresh's group near Waco, Texas, are explained to kids as organizations that attract people by preying on their need to belong.

Eddy, Mark, "Disturbed people join cults to fulfill needs, expert says," *Denver Post*, Aug. 30, 1991, p. B5.

Laird Wilcox, an expert on extremist groups, says that while some cults are dangerous, the vast majority are harmless. Generally, people are disturbed before entering cults.

Fennell, Tom, "Nightmare tales," *Maclean's*, Feb. 8, 1993, pp. 26-27.

Experts say that about 3,000 cults exist in North America. While many of them are non-violent and operate openly, others operate in the shadows. Two infamous groups that symbolize violent cults, Charles Manson's Family and Jim Jones' People's Temple, are discussed.

Goode, Erica E., "Victims in the company of cults," *U.S. News & World Report*, March 15, 1993, pp. 4-5.

The influence that cults can have is frightening. Social scientists have stated that people often naturally accept the orders of a presumed authority, as in the case concerning David Koresh.

Kinredge, Clare, "Cults seen on rise again," *Boston Globe*, July 7, 1991, p. NH1.

Cultlike behavior in New Hampshire is discussed.

Mathison, Dirk, "They want your mind...", *Self*, February 1993, pp. 120-123.

The white-collar world of cults is luring professional women in with promises of personal growth. The trend in cults and several American cults are discussed.

Rudd, David C., "Group gives judges, legislators the lowdown on cult groups," *Chicago Tribune*, April 22, 1991, p. 3.

The Barrington, Ill.-based Cult Awareness Network, a nonprofit group that gathers information on cults and cult behavior, is examining ways to better educate lawyers, judges and lawmakers on such groups.

### **Paganism**

Flint, Anthony, "Paganism seeing a resurgence," *Bos-*

*ton Globe*, April 27, 1992, p. 1.

A resurgence of paganism in the Boston area is detailed.

### **Satanism**

Anderson, Jack and Michael Binstein, "U.S. teen suicide pact foiled in Panama," *The Washington Post*, Feb. 27, 1992, p. B19.

Jack Anderson and Michael Binstein discuss a Satan-worshipping ring of about 20 U.S. teens at an Air Force base in Panama. The teens had planned a mass suicide.

Johnson, John and Steve Padilla, "Satanism: Skeptics abound," *Los Angeles Times*, April 23, 1991, p. A1.

Thousands of people across the U.S. are claiming to have been childhood victims of Satanic cults, but most of the stories, once investigated, are unsubstantiated.

### **Unification Church**

Alterman, Eric, "In Moon's Orbit," *The New Republic*, Oct. 27, 1986, pp. 12-14.

Sun Myung Moon, the leader of the Moonies back in the 1970s, was feared because people believed he would steal their children. Others feared the Moonies because some cults had committed strings of mass murders. Today, Moon's World Media Association is about as sinister as a convention of insurance salesmen. Moon and his Unification Church are profiled.

Hays, Constance L., "Bridgeport U. ponders its future," *The New York Times*, April 27, 1992, p. B7.

The student reaction to the University of Bridgeport's acceptance of \$50 million from the Professors World Peace Academy, a wing of Sun Myung Moon's Unification Church, is discussed. Many students said they said they are disappointed that the school's problems got so bad that it had to "accept money from a cult."

Shogren, Elizabeth, "Moonies in the U.S.S.R.," *Los Angeles Times*, March 4, 1991, p. E1.

The Rev. Sun Myung Moon's Unification Church is sweeping through the Soviet Union. Young people seeking a spiritual life and travel abroad are attracted to the church as an alternative to Russian Orthodoxy.

"Unification church rebuffed in its bid to start a ministry," *The New York Times*, Jan. 19, 1992, p. 39.

Sun Myung Moon's Unification Church is actively recruiting students on the Dartmouth College campus. The recruiting is being directed by Gunnard Johnston, a Dartmouth graduate who has been with the church for 16 years.

# Back-Issues

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Youth Gangs  
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World Hunger

## NOVEMBER 1991

Fast-Food Shake-Up  
The Greening of Eastern Europe  
Business' Role in Education  
Cuba In Crisis

## DECEMBER 1991

Retiree Health Benefits  
Asian Americans  
The Obscenity Debate  
The Disabilities Act

## JANUARY 1992

Term Limits  
Oil Spills  
Hunting Controversy  
Alternative Medicine

## FEBRUARY 1992

Threatened Coastlines  
New Era in Asia  
Assisted Suicide  
Jobs in the '90s

## MARCH 1992

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Underage Drinking  
Garbage Crisis  
Mafia Crackdown

## APRIL 1992

Ozone Depletion  
Welfare Reform  
Politicians and Privacy  
Illegal Immigration

## MAY 1992

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Jobs vs. Environment  
Too Many Lawsuits?  
Fairness in Salaries

## JUNE 1992

Nuclear Proliferation  
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Lead Poisoning  
Hard Times for Libraries

## JULY 1992

Alternative Energy  
Prescription Drug Prices  
Alzheimer's Disease  
Infant Mortality

## AUGUST 1992

The Homeless  
Work, Family and Stress  
NATO's Changing Role  
Marine Mammals vs. Fish

## SEPTEMBER 1992

Domestic Partners  
Violence in Schools  
Public Broadcasting  
Women in the Military

## OCTOBER 1992

Depression  
U.S. Auto Industry  
Youth Apprenticeship  
Hispanic Americans

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Physical Fitness  
Privatization  
Paying for College  
U.S. Policy in Asia

## DECEMBER 1992

Crackdown on Smoking  
The New CIA  
Eating Disorders  
Women and AIDS

## JANUARY 1993

Hate Crimes  
Child Sexual Abuse  
Nuclear Fusion  
U.S. Trade Policy

## FEBRUARY 1993

Community Policing  
Europe's New Right  
School Censorship  
Violence Against Women

## MARCH 1993

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Aid to Russia  
War on Drugs  
TV Violence

## APRIL 1993

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High-Speed Rail  
Children's Legal Rights  
Muslims in America



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► **Software Piracy**

► **National Parks**

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October 5, 1993

Honorable Christopher Shays  
House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515-0704

Dear Congressman Shays:

I am writing in further response to your September 1st communication to Attorney General Reno on behalf of [REDACTED] who is concerned about cult awareness and shared her views and material on this subject with you. b6 b7C

I appreciate your interest in passing this information along to the Department of Justice. I will, in turn, share it with my colleagues here in the FBI. b6 b7C

Sincerely yours,

*CEM/da*  
Charles E. Mandigo  
Inspector-Deputy Chief  
Office of Public and  
Congressional Affairs

- 1 - OLA, DOJ - Encs.
- 1 - ES, DOJ - Encs.
- 1 - Mr. Collingwood, Room 7240
- 1 - [REDACTED] Quantico - Encs.
- 1 - Congressional Affairs Office, Room 7240
- 1 - FBICR, Room 4913

63-HQ-1050305-607

NOTE: [REDACTED] wrote to Congressman Shays, prompted by the Waco matter, expressing her views on cults and her personal interest since her younger son has been a member of what she considers a cult for many years. [REDACTED] is a member of the Cult Awareness Network (CAN) and enclosed a number of articles about various groups perceived as cults. According to SSA [REDACTED] TD, CAN is made up primarily of direct or indirect victims of cults, such as family and friends of cult members. CAN sends out newsletters about groups it has labeled as cults and tries to aid law enforcement and families of cult members and concerned citizens by providing information about various groups based on what CAN has learned from former members of these groups. CAN has established its own criteria for labeling groups as cults, and those so labeled, such as the Church of Scientology and Lyndon LaRouche and his followers, have worked vigorously to avoid such classification by discrediting CAN through various publications, the media, letter-writing campaigns, etc.

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OCT 05 1993

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Director's Office	_____

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Sept. 16, 1993

Louis J. Freeh  
Director of FBI  
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. Freeh:

Enclosed is an article from the  
Post, Sept. 5, 1993. I am deeply  
offended by the implication that  
Steve Schneider shot and killed  
David Kerech. 63-HQ-1050305-608

How do you think this makes  
the Schneider family feel who  
mourn the loss of their son  
daughter-in-law and grandchild?

It would be different if this  
was brought out in a formal  
hearing or a court procedure.  
Why would Bob Ricks tell a civic

ack 10/9/93

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grant such a thing?

This entire episode was a disgrace and enough of the violation of the rights of American citizens, strange though their lifestyle was, let alone making remarks which only cause distress to families.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]

b6  
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## AROUND T

### Koresh's Top Aide Killed Cult Leader, FBI Official Says

DALLAS—The FBI's chief spokesman during the Branch Davidian standoff near Waco, Tex., said there is evidence that David Koresh's top aide fatally shot the cult leader after apparently deciding the self-proclaimed messiah was a fraud.

FBI Agent Bob Ricks was quoted in the Dallas Morning News as having told a Tulsa civic group last month that Steve Schneider "probably realized he was dealing with a fraud."

Ricks reportedly said of the cult leader: "After he had caused so much harm and destruction, he probably now wanted to come out, and Mr. Schneider could not tolerate the situation."

Schneider shot Koresh and then killed himself, Ricks was quoted as saying. He could not be reached for comment.

As the FBI pumped tear gas into the compound "apparently many inside decided they wanted to come out. Over 20-some-odd people were shot that day," he was quoted as saying. "As a warning to others, they were shot and executed."

About 80 Branch Davidians died in the April 19 fire, which ended a 51-day standoff between cult members and federal agents.

Koresh's body was too badly burned to determine whether the single gunshot to his head was self-inflicted or a homicide, Tarrant County Medical Examiner Nizam Peerwani told the paper.

But Peerwani, who performed autopsies on the bodies recovered from the cult compound, said "it is possible" that the FBI's account of Koresh's death is correct. "The FBI has something we don't have: There were listening devices in there," Peerwani said.

63-HQ-1050305-608  
ENCLOSURE

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October 8, 1993

[REDACTED]

b6 b7C

Dear [REDACTED]

Your recent communication to Director Freeh regarding comments made subsequent to the standoff with the Branch Davidians in Waco, Texas, has been referred to me for reply. While we are not in a position to comment on your specific concern, I do appreciate your writing and sharing your views with us.

Sincerely yours,

151

Michael F. Knapp  
Inspector-Deputy Chief  
Office of Public and  
Congressional Affairs

63-HQ-1050305-609

- Mr. Collingwood, Room 7240  
- [REDACTED] Room 5042

NOTE: Response coordinated with SSA [REDACTED] Violent Crimes Unit, CID. Bufiles show [REDACTED] wrote to the FBI in April expressing her dismay with the Waco situation, and we responded on May 5, 1993.

b6 b7C

b6 b7C

MAILED 18

OCT 13 1993

FBI

- Dep. Dir.
- ADD Adm.
- ADD Inv.
- Asst. Dir.:
- Adm. Servs.
- Crim. Inv.
- CJIS
- Ident.
- Info. Mgmt.
- Insp.
- Intell.
- Lab.
- Legal Coun.
- Tech. Servs.
- Training
- Off. of EEOA
- Off. Liaison
- Off. Int. Affs.
- Off. of Public
- Off. Cong. Affs.
- Off. Office
- Telephone Rm.
- Director's Office

MAIL ROOM



THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

SBT

9-3-93

DATE

MEMORANDUM

FOR:

DOJ

FROM:

JENNIFER MCCARTHY  
DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF AGENCY LIAISON

SUBJECT:

REFERRAL OF CASEWORK

I am forwarding the attached letter to your office for a response. Please return the original correspondence and a copy of your written or telephone response, should any be appropriate, to the following address:

Ms. Jennifer McCarthy  
Director, Office of Agency Liaison  
Room 6, OEOB  
The White House  
Washington, D.C. 20500

If you have any questions you can reach me at 202/456-7486.  
Thanks.

63-HQ-1050305-610

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June 22, 1993

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Dear Mr. President,

Waco TX

I am writing to you and enclosing the June 21, 1993 issue of New York Magazine and wish to call your attention to the cover story The Cult of Tilak. Recently our nation's attention was focused on the events in Waco, Texas and another cult leader and the tragic events that befell he and his followers.

[REDACTED]

b6  
b7c

I fear that current members of Tilak's following are in grave danger and may pose a danger to the surrounding communities in which they operate. I feel compelled to write to you, President Clinton, and implore you to speak to the attorney general and seek a department of justice investigation into the activities of Tilak Fernando and his followers. It would be a dreadful tragedy if events in Waco were to be reenacted on the streets of New York City, Los Angeles, or San Francisco. Please help.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]

63-14-1050305-610

b6  
b7c

ENCLOSURE

cc Janet Reno ENCLOSURE ATTACHED

b6  
b7c

ck  
4/93

enclosure [REDACTED]

# THE CULT OF TILAK

The Guru of West 87th Street

By Stephen J. Dubner

**T**HE SCENE suggests Da Vinci's *Last Supper*. But Jesus Christ had only 12 disciples, while Tilak Fernando, tonight at least, has 30.

They are painters and writers, real-estate brokers and administrative assistants. All but a few are women, in their twenties, thirties, and forties. Packed around a long kitchen table, they perch on metal folding chairs, with Tilak in a thronelike seat of wood and leather. Above his head hangs a painting: the face of a man, exploding with shards of yellow and red and blue. "Tilak asked me to paint that for him," says one student. "It is Tilak looking into infinity." (Tilak is always called by his first name, which is pronounced TEE-lock.)

It is early evening on a warm Monday in May, in



a brownstone just off Central Park West. The students have congregated to praise Tilak's work, to proclaim how he has changed their lives, and, above all, to defend him.

Tilak, 49, was born in Sri Lanka. A shallow cleft runs down the center of his nose. He has large, expressive eyes and smooth, boyish skin. His voice, a resonant baritone, often bursts into a singsong that could

be considered either charismatic or arrogant.

These students gather regularly around this table for dinners with Tilak—feasts of curried chicken and potatoes, beets with sun-dried tomatoes, and pickled scallions. Tilak likes his food blazingly hot. The students who prepare the meals use so much cumin and curry powder that the others scurry about the house, coughing, as they throw open windows to dissipate the spicy clouds.

Tilak is served first, on a special, decorative plat-

NEW YORK



TILAK FERNANDO,  
VESSEL OF LIGHT, IN HIS  
UPPER WEST SIDE  
UNIVERSE. FACING  
PAGE: THE FAITHFUL  
DON WASHCLOTHS FOR A  
"GROUP SESSION."

PHOTOGRAPH BY CHRIS OUELETTE

# THE CULT OF TILAK



ter. He eats intently, silently, with his fingers. After the meal, and after several toasts to Tilak, he sings folk songs in Sinhalese, accompanying himself on a conga. The students know the songs, too, and they sing along, shimmying like Tilak does. They gaze upon him worshipfully.

I had attended one of these feasts using a name other than my own. Now, several weeks later, having identified myself as a journalist, I ask Tilak to describe exactly what he is, what he teaches, or what he gives to his students.

"In one word it can be said," he answers confidently. "Freedom. Only one word. Freedom."

"Absolutely," says one woman. And then the others join in:

"Absolutely."

"Freedom."

"That's it."

Freedom from what?

"Not actually freedom from anything," says Tilak. "That's the beauty about it. Freedom means a realization of the true nature. It's not something I do at all. It's something that happens around me. That's why I say I am not a teacher, guru, this or that. Things happen around me. I can't help it."

And the things that happen, his students say, are wonderful: He creates mysterious light beams and explosions as brilliant as fireworks; he "changes their energy"; he alleviates their allergies. (One woman at the table holds a small dog. "Are you allergic to dogs?" Tilak asks me. "You will not be when you leave, if you are.")

"I was a desperate case," says one woman, with an earnest smile. "All my life, I was hooked into tranquilizers. I remember him saying to me, 'You have a long way to go, but if I have to put you on my shoulders and carry you all the way, I will.'"

Nearly every student at the table tells her own tale about trading a life of dependency or disillusion for a life with Tilak. But last winter, several of Tilak's most devoted students left him. They—and dozens of other former students—now claim that Tilak is just another spiritual charlatan, using hypnotic techniques and mind control to sustain a group whose sole purpose is to exalt him. They say that he has had sex with dozens, perhaps hundreds, of female students; that his explosions of light are mere magic tricks; that he wrings hundreds of thousands of dollars from students while keeping a cash-filled briefcase at the ready for frequent trips to Atlantic City. These former students, jarred by the hellish demise of David Koresh's Ranch Apocalypse, have come to

TILAK, WHO IS MARRIED, LIVES WITH SIX FEMALE students and a teenage son from an earlier marriage. They occupy two floors of a brownstone at 29 West 87th Street, which is called the Center, or Sumithrayo (*soo-ME-tree-oh*), Sinhalese for "beloved friends." Tilak's current wife, Terri, lives with their two young children in a pair of joined apartments on Madison Avenue in the low Nineties. While Terri still professes support for

Tilak's work, she says that they have been separated, though not legally, for a year.

On the second floor of the Center is a large wainscoted living room where Tilak gives many of his lectures, each of which is recorded and neatly consigned to a closet filled with hundreds of tapes. Just off the living room is a tiny bedroom called the session room.

Most people remove their shoes before receiving a session from Tilak. They lie faceup on the springy twin bed, which is covered with a ribbed bedspread. The room is dark except for a dim blue light in the corner. Tilak always plays music during a session—lately, a melodic instrumental piece recorded especially for him by a favorite student, a faded pop star who at one time sold many millions of records.

Tilak sits on a chair at the end of the bed, leans over your face, and instructs you to close your eyes. He strokes your forehead and suddenly blows on your eyes, as if blowing out birthday candles. And the light appears—seemingly from Tilak's hands—first on one eye, then the other, then back to the first. It is a small circle of white light, smaller than a dime, as finite and bright as a penlight's.

"You can open your eyes now," he says. "Just stay cool, just stay without looking around. All right. Close your eyes again." He inhales loudly and then blows on your face, a flurry of short, loud breaths. There is more light—different this time, strobing flashes of white that seem to come from his mouth.

"All right," he says. "Very good."

The session is over. It lasted 90 seconds, cost \$100, and included no consultation whatsoever.

Tilak explains that a session is a *space*, a reality that has nothing to do with time as we know it. The brevity, therefore, is irrelevant. As for the cost, he says, "Money is part of your spiritual nature because money challenges you to really prove it—if you're so good, *show me*. I sometimes ask the people to bring the money in quarters, so you *feel it*."

Some of Tilak's regular students receive one or two sessions a week, for the session is the cornerstone of Tilak's work. Studying with Tilak means *being with Tilak*: This is not

## Some former students, jarred by the hellish demise of David

the conclusion that Tilak's world is nothing but a cult.

Tilak and his students dismiss these charges as gross misinterpretations and lies, the venom of spiritual cowards who are projecting their own failings onto their former teacher. Tilak claims that he is not a hypnotist, and that "mind control" is an inappropriate term for his work.

Alan, a 40-year-old woodworker, is now one of Tilak's most senior students. "A lot of people come with some agenda," he says. "They can't get over their agenda and be happy with *this*." He gestures around the room. "It's a very difficult thing to look in the mirror and smile at what you see. But since I met Tilak," Alan says, tiptoeing up to his punch line, "I never met a mirror I didn't like."

An eruption of laughter and applause greets Alan's bon mot. Tilak, too, smiles broadly.

"Very good, Alan," says Tilak, quietly, as the uproar continues. And now Alan beams, for praise from Tilak is a heady reward.

"That is very good."

Buddhism, he explains, not even spiritualism. There are no texts, no prayers, no exercises. Also, for \$1,100, Tilak conducts "intensives"—special sessions that often last through the night.

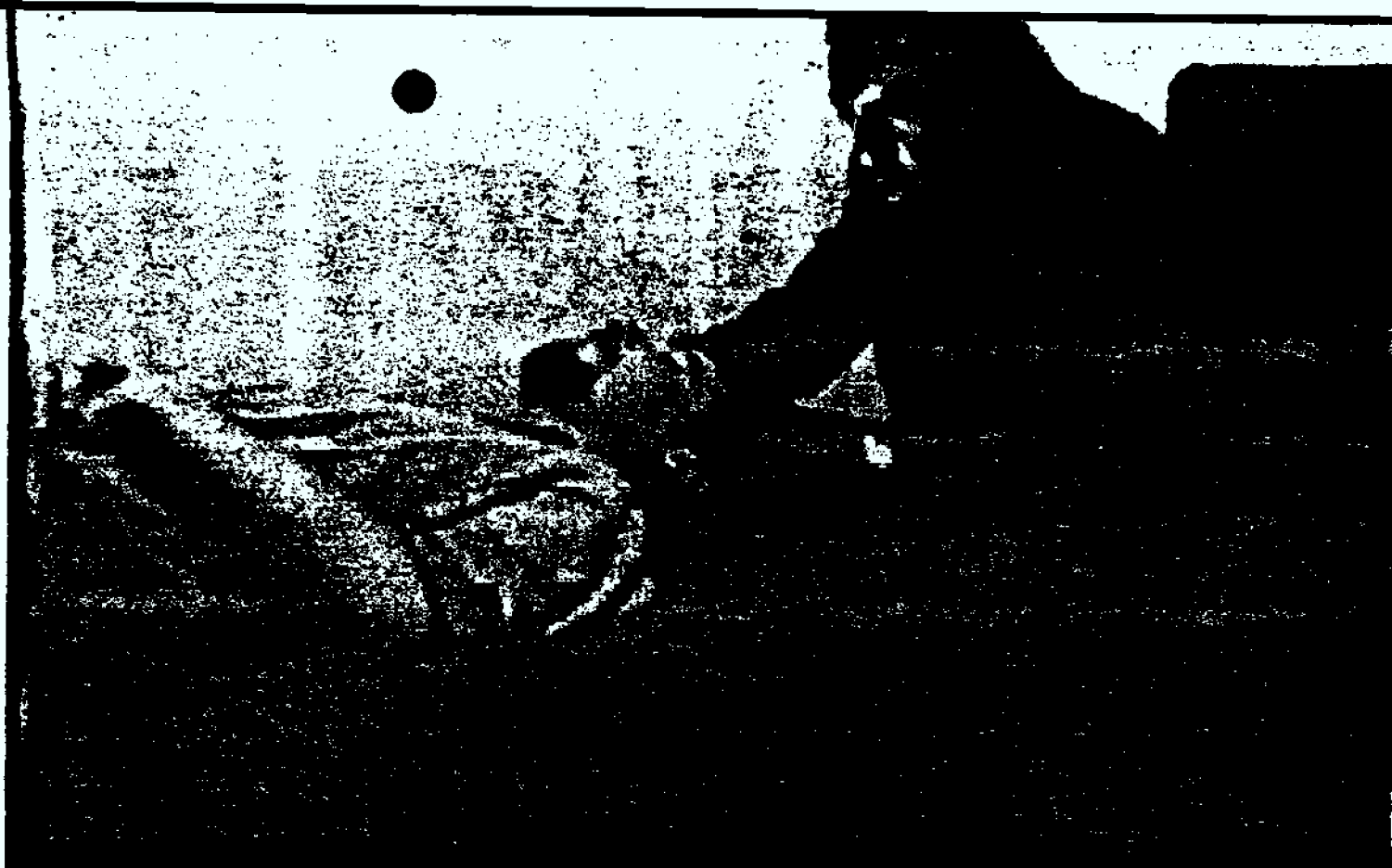
While Tilak's most devout followers—a few dozen, perhaps—live in New York, he has hundreds more around the world. Over the past several years, Tilak has performed thousands of sessions and intensives, on Buddhist scholars and lonely housewives, on psychologists and pop stars, on scientists and drug addicts. Some are unaffected; others enter a state of bliss, or feel a burst of energy.

"You can't understand through words or concepts what the light is," says one of Tilak's pamphlets, "because the light is everything."

But only for the past six years, says Tilak, has the light been visible.

"When I was in Sri Lanka, certain things began to happen," he says. "I was in school, in the second year of medical studies, and I had an accident."





IN THE DARK OF TILAK'S "SESSION ROOM," STUDENTS PAY \$100 TO SEE HIS BRILLIANT FLASHES OF LIGHT.

The son of a physics professor, Tilak was hit by a bus while riding his bicycle. It appeared that his leg would have to be amputated. But, he says, it healed miraculously (to a degree, at least; he still walks with a limp). Even more miraculous was the energy that Tilak began to emanate. He was, he says, sought out as a mystic and healer.

In 1973, Tilak moved to the United States to study at the Moreno Institute of Psychodrama in Beacon, New York. In the coming years, he says, he gave speeches at the American Psychoanalytic Convention and the Esalen Institute.

"I started playing games with Tilak," he explains, "saying that it's all bulls—, and he bought right into it. He led me to believe that his disciples were basically fools."

Virato saw that, fools or not, Tilak's students were avid. And that Tilak was adept at performing *siddhis*—feats combining physiological and psychological processes to produce paranormal results. "When you have those abilities and mix them with fraud or sleight of hand," says Virato, "you have a very powerful package."

In 1987, Tilak married Terri, a pretty young graduate student at Hahnemann University Hospital in Philadelphia. Tilak's business in Philadelphia was good, but that year, he began making

Koresh's Ranch Apocalypse, have come to

Tilak called himself Dr. Fernando, even though he had never received so much as a bachelor's degree. He lived in New York City and began conducting workshops in Philadelphia, which, a recent pamphlet called *Tilak* says, "showed how to liberate oneself from selfishness and deep neurosis into compassion and brilliance and to experience life as an outrageous adventurer."

In 1980, Tilak says, he returned to Sri Lanka and started an organization called the Sri Lankan Psychological Association. But in 1983, he moved back to Philadelphia, where he met Swami Virato (born Joseph Banks in Brooklyn), a former disciple of Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh's. Virato was now publishing a magazine called *New Frontier*, and Tilak wanted to be profiled. But Virato, who constantly had to separate sincere teachers from hustlers, engaged Tilak in what he calls "an artistic CIA routine."

the conclusion that **Tilak's world**

is nothing but a **cult.**

regular trips to New York, where the appetite for spiritual awakening seemed insatiable.

IT WAS AT THE NEW YORK OPEN CENTER, THE HOLISTIC EMPORIUM in SoHo, that Tilak says he first produced light.

He had just finished a lecture in front of 150 people. "I was about to leave, and I just put my hands together," he says. "I said good night, opened my hands, and like a floodlight, like—*shooooom*—the whole room was filled. People went *crazy*. They went *wild*."

The light began to appear during sessions. Already, students were coming to Tilak seeking clarity or energy or peace, a better job or relationship. Now there was the added seduction of the light, which, Tilak explained, only "special" students could see. It represented the "infinite space"; it was a beacon on the path to enlightenment. Tilak truly seemed to be



CLOCKWISE FROM  
TOP RIGHT: IN  
LONDON, TILAK  
EXPLAINING "THE  
FORCES," A  
HUMBLED DISCIPLE,  
MEDITATION IN  
AUSTRALIA,  
ENLIGHTENMENT IN  
ARUBA.



an "awakened being," as he often called himself.

He called himself many other things as well: a mystic, a psychotherapist, a healer, the next Buddha. "He became anything to anybody," says Annette Thibodeau, Tilak's assistant during the time he rented space at the Open Center. "His range was enormous."

So was the range of his clientele. Spiritual neophytes mingled with veterans of est, Buddhist studies, yoga, fire-walking, and a dozen other practices. There were ragamuffins still exhausted by the sixties and 60-year-old Upper East Side psychologists. But if a profile could be drawn of the typical Tilak student, it would be this: a vulnerable woman, often with a psychological or physical ailment, an addiction, or a history of abuse. "He finds your emotional hook," says a former student, "and then it doesn't matter how intelligent a person is."

Darlene Amato\* is a masseuse who went to Tilak at the suggestion of a friend. During her second session, Tilak "began to play with me, sensually." She told him to stop, but he said that because of her talent as a masseuse, she would soon be able to work at his side. "It was flattery—you're asked to be in the private sanctuary of the master." He later asked her for a massage, "and said that his organs needed massaging, too." In another session, "he pushed me down on the bed, and I saw the brutal essence of him. I didn't consider it rape then, but I regretted it immediately."

Tilak explained that it was not quite "sex"—but rather, "a sacred transmission of the light." Amato and Tilak had "shared a sacred space," and even to mention it to anyone else would tarnish the energy. Amato decided to stop seeing Tilak. She went to a breakfast gathering of other students—not to tell them about the sex but to say good-bye. "I saw that about twelve women were missing," she says. "And they all had similar qualities—attractive, compelling, compassionate, and gone."

Amato tracked down the other women and realized that hers

\*Names have been changed.

It was not "sex," Tilak exp.

was not an isolated experience. She discovered that, if nothing else, Tilak was a brilliant reader of human nature: He had told each woman exactly what she wanted to hear—that sex with Tilak would make her more attractive to other men; or that sex with Tilak would heal the scars of an abusive past; or that sex with Tilak was the way to achieve enlightenment.

Thibodeau, who had also slept with Tilak, confronted him when she heard Amato's story. (Like the others, Thibodeau had been told that she was the only student who shared Tilak's sacred space.) Tilak explained that he and Terri had a "nontraditional" marriage—that she didn't mind the sex with students as long as she didn't hear any details.

"I can have everything, not only sex—everything, if I want," he says today. "That's actually part of the thing I teach. There's no secrets. It's not like I screw somebody behind Terri's back. You have to live outrageously. If you want to live a good life, you have to take risks. You can't really live hiding and denying."

But over the years, several people have asked Tilak point-blank if he was sexually involved with his students. Some were lied to outright; others got a dose of Tilak's masterful double-talk.

"There is no such thing as truth," he is fond of saying.

**T**ILAK FERNANDO, VESSEL OF LIGHT, COULD HARDLY be toppled by a mere sex scandal. When the Open Center declined to extend his stay, he moved to the DiMele Center, on West 57th Street. He left less than a year later, when a devoted student named Elizabeth Janes\* offered him free space in her West Side brownstone. Janes, a noted psychologist and author, soon evicted him, feeling that Tilak insidiously used hypnotism to gain control over vulnerable students, including herself.

But by now, Tilak was a juggernaut. He had won followers in Seattle, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Miami, and London, and sent them videotapes of his lectures between visits. He began shepherding massive spiritual retreats: "group sessions" in Southern California's Joshua Tree park and on the beaches of Aruba; marches up the side of France's Mont Blanc. Students would prostrate themselves at Tilak's feet, or strip down to a diaper to signify their total surrender to his wisdom. In December 1990, Tilak and several students established Sumithrayo in the brownstone on West 87th Street.

The main architect of this expansion was David Rosenberg\*, a writer and theater director who was living in Los Angeles when he met Tilak, in November 1988.

Rosenberg, now 32, had studied literature at Princeton and received a master's degree in theater from Cal Arts. A year before he met Tilak, Rosenberg had watched his best friend bleed to death in a car accident. "For the first time in my life," says Rosenberg, "I felt I was in a spiritual crisis."

Rosenberg's mother, a New York psychotherapist and a student of Tilak's, suggested that her son see him. David was immediately seduced by Tilak's hypnotic, ever-changing mixture of psychotherapy, New Age dogma, and Buddhism. And, of course, by the light. "I believed he was the perfect unfolding of the cosmos," says Rosenberg.

A slight man with an angular face and tight, curly hair, Rosenberg had a sharp intellect and an aggressive manner that made him a perfect complement to the charismatic but disorganized Tilak. Rosenberg became like a son to Tilak. He also became his ambassador, defender, and biographer.

Rosenberg's *Adventures in the Light*, which Tilak commissioned, offers a cloyingly obedient portrait of a man who was "born awakened," constantly comparing Tilak to Jesus Christ and Buddha. The final chapter, "Handbook for a Warrior of Light," veers toward cultish propaganda: "Unquestioning allegiance to the commander, unconditional love of the teacher, are necessary attributes of the Warrior of Light. When the commander says fire,

By 1990, says Rosenberg, Tilak was making more than half a million dollars a year, most of it cash. One student recalls him pocketing what seemed to be \$20,000 from one weekend of sessions in Seattle. There were outright gifts as well. One student donated countless thousands of dollars—for Tilak's children's private education, for a six-week vacation, and many other uses. Another student, the heir to a major American fortune, sent Tilak a check for \$100,000 but demanded it back when he learned about Tilak's sexual affairs, which had hardly abated.

Some new students balked at paying \$100 for a session that lasted just a few minutes. The job of persuading them fell to Jerry Rackett. "You have to be very skillful—not rude but forceful," Tilak counseled Rackett. "Also, ask if you really understand the privilege, and the fact that you are with an awakened mind."

Rackett, Rosenberg, and the other inner-circle students acted as an intellectual gestapo. Students who dared complain about Tilak were duly informed that they were unworthy even to share his presence. But this never happened to new students: They were seated at Tilak's right hand during dinner and treated royally—especially if they were wealthy. Soon enough, though, Tilak himself began to break them down with insults and ridicule. He might fling a handful of rice at a student who posed what Tilak considered a stupid question.

Rackett and several others recall a student who came sobbing to them, revealing a mass of purple bruises on her upper arm, saying that Tilak had begun hitting and strangling her when she had answered a question improperly.

This woman is still one of Tilak's students. "There was never any violence or aggression or negative forces used against me in any way with Tilak," she says now about the incident.

Why, then, was she crying? And why did she show the other students her bruises? "I tend to bruise very easily," she says. "I noticed that [these] bruises were kind of interesting, because they looked different than other bruises that I had ever gotten. And that was why I showed them."

Tilak was always searching for vulnerabilities to exploit, former students say. Before an intensive, for instance, a student would write three letters: one to herself, one to Tilak, and one to God, or the infinite light. Then she'd give all three to Tilak. "What you've done there is told him the very deepest things you feel," says Rackett. "You've told him everything he needs to do anything he wants to do."

Students were advised not to discuss Tilak's teach-



ed—rather, "a sacred transmission

fire. When he says wait, wait. Tilak has come to lead us in our adventure with the light."

The book was never published, but its philosophy was devoutly heeded by Rosenberg and the others who made up Tilak's inner circle: Jerry Rackett, a 48-year-old graphic-arts salesman who interpreted Tilak's practices for confused students; Carl Kaufman\*, a 32-year-old musician who became an accomplice to Tilak's paranormal phenomena; and Maria Gerber\*, a former Rajneesh disciple who scheduled the sessions and intensives. Rosenberg, together with Terri, marketed Tilak and handled his finances. Along the way, Rosenberg and Terri fell in love.

Tilak approved—even boasted—of the affair between his closest disciple and his wife. "Guess what I did," he says. "I invited him home to come and live with us, with my whole family and children." Indeed, Rosenberg, who had been living at Sumithrayo, began staying at the Madison Avenue apartment with Terri and the couple's two young children; Tilak, in turn, began spending more and more time at Sumithrayo.

of light." To mention it to anyone else

would tarnish the energy.

ings with anyone else. They were also discouraged from reading newspapers, watching television, and go-

ing to the movies. Tilak ridiculed other therapies and spiritual paths (he claims that he enables recovering alcoholics to drink in moderation). Many female students were told to stop having sex with anyone other than Tilak. Students were cajoled into spending tens of thousands of dollars—money they often borrowed from their families—on sessions and intensives and retreats.

All these constrictions, though, were actually steps toward liberation, Tilak explained. Fear of life must be replaced by a thirst for life. And Tilak was a brilliant Pied Piper. He might suddenly announce a trip to Atlantic City—where he still goes a few times a month—and pile several students into his black Volvo. A student who chauffeured one of these trips remembers how embarrassing it was to stop at tollbooths while two women in the backseat performed oral sex on Tilak.

He gambled at the Taj Mahal, where he tipped exceedingly well



# THE CULT OF TILAK



California. "A lot of it was done in silence, and was brutal. But you're with a god—and a god can do anything he wants, right?"

**S**EX AND GAMBLING, FEASTS AND CASH—THESE WERE all well and good. But Tilak wanted credibility, too. For a few months, at least, he found it. Robert L. Schwartz, a former journalist and entrepreneur who had founded the Tarrytown Conference Center, an experimental think tank, began attending Tilak's lectures. Schwartz had impeccable credentials and connections. He also sat on the board of the Institute of Noetic Sciences, an organization in Sausalito, California, devoted to exploring human consciousness through science, spirituality, and psychology.

Schwartz introduced Tilak to Robert Thurman, the chairman of Columbia University's religion department, the father of actress Uma Thurman, and a close student of the Dalai Lama, whom Tilak wished to meet. "I liked him personally," says Thurman, "but decided that it was a kind of guru scene that couldn't help but end not so well." Thurman thought little more of Tilak until he spoke with Brendan O'Regan, the Institute of Noetic Sciences' vice-president for research. O'Regan said that Tilak, in a presentation to several Noetics members, had boasted that Thurman considered Tilak to be the next Buddha.

Independently, O'Regan, who has since died, had taken Tilak for a charlatan from the outset. He suspected that Tilak used a tiny strobe light, perhaps clamped to a tooth, to produce the light from his mouth.

"Whether or not the light is fake," says Thurman, "the fact that his behavior is fake is self-evident. He encourages [his students] to get muddled, which, of course, suits his purpose. He doesn't want

and was given VIP treatment. His games were baccarat and roulette—but he didn't like his students to watch (they would "disrupt the energy," he claimed). He would, though, invite his female disciples into his complimentary suite for marathons of group sex. (Tilak denies this.) "It was really tedious," says one woman who now lives in

**Tilak threatened students who**

clarity at all, and he doesn't understand Buddhism at all."

But Tilak had hardly exhausted all of Schwartz's connections. He visited Rupert Sheldrake, a controversial but renowned British scientist, who in turn held a dinner in his Hampstead Heath home to introduce Tilak to some of England's New Age elite. Among them was William Bloom, the head of a large spiritual-education organization called Alternatives. Bloom, immediately impressed, decided to sponsor Tilak in a series of workshops, and had 20,000 mailers printed.

But Bloom began hearing from women who said that Tilak had prescribed sex with him as part of their spiritual quest. "It would be different if he were openly teaching Tantra," Bloom says, referring to the practice in which sexuality and spirituality commingle, with very specific guidelines—which Tilak clearly did not follow. "There's a universal taboo against fathers' sleeping with their children," says Bloom, "which is equally applicable to spiritual teachers." He canceled the workshops.

Today, Tilak claims that the workshops were canceled because Bloom wanted too large a cut of the profits. "He was trying to use me," Tilak says.

Bloom, Sheldrake, Thurman, and Schwartz have all disassociated themselves from Tilak. So have a great many others who, upon visiting Tilak's world, found it too exploitive, too shad-owy, and potentially too dangerous.

**spoke of leaving, usually**

**with cancer.**

"He would always say, 'I

**B**Y THE FALL OF 1992, EVEN TILAK'S CLOSEST DISCIPLES were beginning to feel that they belonged to a cult. Like children vying for a father's approval, they happily sabotaged one another to endear themselves to the master. "He played people against each other," says one former student. "He broke up friendships, relationships."

Carl Kaufman, the musician, won favor by adding fireballs to Tilak's repertoire of light phenomena, using a device that clips onto an index finger and ignites a wad of flash cotton. Kaufman also participated in Tilak's "fifth force" exercise. While several dozen students chanted, their eyes shut tight, Tilak would "change the energy" in a room and make one student disappear. The disappearance, in fact, occurred when Kaufman or another student climbed behind a couch or out a window. (The degree of difficulty was greater for the window trick, but so was the payoff, as it produced a cool breeze, for which Tilak also took credit.)

Rosenberg, while editing the videotape of a session he had recorded, thought he saw Tilak extract a tiny flashlight from his pocket and hide the bulb between his fingers. Rosenberg dutifully edited out that segment.

I asked Tilak if he had ever used foreign objects or substances to create the light. "It would be a really gross question," he said indignantly. "It would be absurd to even say that, that I would use anything." But he would not answer yes or no. I asked him about the "disappearances." "People will say anything," he said. "People can say anything."

Diana Jorgensen is an attractive young woman who was living on the West Coast when Tilak persuaded her, in July 1992, to move to New York and become Sumithrayo's "hostess." She had visited many times before, but she noticed that since Tilak had moved in, the atmosphere was more oppressive, the sex more overt. It became commonplace for Tilak to summon three women to his room for "a massage." One student confided to two others that Tilak had taken her to Times Square and asked her to have sex with a Sri Lankan friend who ran a peep show.

Students who slept with Tilak worried about contracting herpes and HIV (although Tilak had told one student that "the universe protects me from AIDS"). Still, Tilak commanded utter devotion. One student told another student that if anyone ever betrayed Tilak, she would find an HIV-infected needle and inject the traitor in his sleep.

Tilak himself regularly threatened

students who spoke of leaving, usually with cancer (a method of "phobia indoctrination" common among the Moonies). "He would always say, 'If you leave me, you will die,'" says one former student who, a few days after she finally did leave Tilak, got a message on her answering machine. A man's voice—not Tilak's—said, "You are finished. You are dead. It's over for you."

Even Rosenberg had grown weary of verbally abusing anyone who challenged Tilak, and of presenting him as the next Buddha. In fact, Rosenberg had come to consider Tilak a complete fraud. He realized that he was devoted not to his teacher but to his teacher's wife. And Tilak, while he had publicly blessed this relationship, never made it comfortable.

On one tension-filled Thursday night, Rosenberg, Tilak, and Terri were at Kennedy airport, waiting for a flight to England. Tilak challenged Rosenberg to a game of chess. "He said, 'David, if you win, you can have anything you want in the world,'" says Rosenberg. Tilak was a better player, but Rosenberg won the game. "Tilak said, 'You can have either Terri or \$1 million.' I said, 'I feel that I have Terri already. I'll take the million dollars.'"

"Tilak immediately ran over to Terri and said, 'David played me a game of chess for anything in the world, and he took a million dollars instead of you.'"

In November 1992, while Tilak and 30 students sought enlightenment on the beaches of Aruba, Rosenberg packed his things and left.

**R** OSENBERG'S DEFECTION SHOOK Sumithrayo. "He was the closest person Tilak ever had," says Jerry Rackett. Tilak rallied his students, reminding them that although Rosenberg had been an important part of Sumithrayo, nothing was more important than Tilak. "And then," Rackett says, "out of nowhere, he turned to one woman, and said, 'You'd kill for me, Karen', wouldn't you?" Karen said yes. Tilak asked the same question of a few others; they nodded. "That's when I went, Oh, f—, this thing is getting scary now," says Rackett.

Rackett and Diana Jorgensen, physically frightened of Tilak by this time, carefully plotted their escape from Sumithrayo. On a Wednesday night in December, while Tilak was in London courting a wealthy student, they hired trucks and moved their belongings out of the Center. Jorgensen also loaded up tapes of Tilak's lectures and hundreds of pages of mailing lists and other documents. She turned all this information over to the FBI, which has since declined to take action against Tilak.

Tilak says that he filed a police report about this theft but didn't press charges. Meanwhile, he—and his students—came to these conclusions: The students who left couldn't put aside their own agendas and simply "be with Tilak." If the organization had become a cult, it was because of their behavior, not Tilak's. Nor was it Tilak's fault if these students abdicated responsibility for their lives. "If they want to believe that he's the Buddha, there's nothing that's going to convince them that that's not true," says Terri.

Despite Tilak's dire predictions for those who leave him, Rosenberg, Rackett, Kaufman, and Jorgensen are doing just fine. Rackett, who hadn't worked for two years while living at Sumithrayo, is an account representative with a graphic-arts company; Jorgensen is also working again; Kaufman is writing advertising jingles; Rosenberg's second book will be published this fall, and he is halfway through his third, a study of the media and pop culture.

you leave me, you

will die," one former student says.

This question remains: Even if Tilak is nothing more than a con man, why were so many independent, educated, successful people conned?

"People, out of the need for certainty, will go beyond what life has to offer," says Dr. Frank Mosca, a psychotherapist, hypnotist, and member of the Society for the Application of Chaos Theory in Psychology. "The object lesson here is not so much that Tilak is a bad guy, but that human beings have to run their own lives. The good news is that human autonomy is absolute. When a person comes out of a cult and says, 'This person controlled my mind,' that's a cop-out. You have to be your own salvation."

Although some former students still feel bitterness or fear, the overwhelming sentiment is relief. But it wasn't until April 19, as David Koresh's Ranch Apocalypse was burning to the ground, that some former students fully realized just how devoted they had been to Tilak. "The people who died for Koresh were no different than the people who are involved in Sumithrayo," says Kaufman. "For whatever reason, they need something in their life to hold on to. It's easy to fool people who want to be fooled. I know I wanted it."



WITH HIS WIFE, TERRI, IN A SYDNEY RESTAURANT.

**A**S THE INNER-CIRCLE STUDENTS LEFT, OTHERS surged forward to assume their tasks. Tilak arranged a series of mandatory dinners at the Center. Even the most peripheral students were asked to come and see for themselves the "cleansing" that had taken place at Sumithrayo.

One of these dinners was held on December 12, 1992, a Saturday night.

There was some playful chatter during the meal and a few jokes afterward. But even though Tilak had pronounced himself unharmed by the recent defections of long-

time students, the mood at the table was far less festive than usual.

"I'm declaring war against the darkness," Tilak said. "Now we see who are the real warriors here."

Without cue, the students quietly began singing. The song was a simple, hymnlike melody about embracing "the light" and substituting peace for the fear of darkness. "Let me live the will of light," the students sang. "To serve with strength, to fall in love."

When it was over, Tilak invited one longtime student to offer an exegesis of the song.

"It's a song that Tilak wrote as if he were meeting a person like Tilak," the student began. "He basically wrote it for us, saying the words we would say to Tilak if we really understood who he is. We give our heart to him, we surrender totally—that just takes so much strength, to surrender, to be with him."

The table was enveloped in a very lengthy hush. Finally, Tilak spoke: "That is perhaps the best song I have ever composed."



DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE  
EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT CONTROL DATA SHEET

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From: EXEC. SEC.

To: [REDACTED]/FBI

ODD: 10-08-93

Date Received: 09-09-93 Date Due: 10-08-93 Control #: X93090920469

Subject & Date

09-09-93. ATTACHED ARE NINE (9) ORIGINAL PIECES OF WHITE  
HOUSE CITIZEN CORRESPONDENCE FOR FBI'S RESPONSE.

(CONSTITUENT NAME/ID#):

Referred To: Date:  
(1) FBI;FREEH 09-09-93

Referred To: Date:

W/IN:

(2)  
(3)  
(4)

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(6)  
(7)  
(8)

PRTY:

2W

INTERIM BY:

DATE:

OPR:

Sig. For: FBI

Date Released:

YOL

Remarks

(1) PLEASE RESPOND DIRECTLY TO THE WRITERS. WHEN PREPARING  
THE RESPONSE, NOTE THAT IT IS IN RESPONSE TO THE WRITER'S  
LETTER TO THE PRESIDENT/MRS. CLINTON. RETURN THIS CONTROL  
SHEET W/TWO COPIES OF THE RESPONSE AND ORIGINAL CORRES. TO  
EXEC. SEC., ROOM 4400-AA, AFTER ALL (9) RESPONSES HAVE BEEN  
MADE.

Other Remarks:

FILE:

*Copy returned to Exec Sec*

REMOVE THIS CONTROL SHEET PRIOR TO FILING AND DISPOSE OF APPROPRIATELY  
\*\*\*\*\*

November 8, 1993

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b7C  
Dear [REDACTED]

Waco TX  
Your June 22nd communication to President Clinton was referred to the FBI on September 9th and brought to my attention.

A review of the material you provided does not disclose a violation within our jurisdiction, however, we want to thank you for your interest in bringing this information to the attention of the FBI. If you have additional information which you feel is pertinent to this matter, you may wish to contact our office located at 11000 Wilshire Boulevard, Los Angeles, California 90024, telephone (213) 477-6565.

I am referring copies of your letter and the magazine article you mentioned to the Internal Revenue Service for its information. You might also wish to contact police authorities in New York City if you have not done so already in the event local laws have been violated.

I am returning your magazine for your future use.

Sincerely yours,

Michael F. Knapp  
Inspector-Deputy Chief  
Office of Public and  
Congressional Affairs

Enclosure

- 1 - Assistant Commissioner - Encs.  
Criminal Investigation CI  
Internal Revenue Service  
Department of the Treasury  
1111 Constitution Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, D. C. 20224

- 2 - ES, DOJ - Enc.

- 1 - SAC, Los Angeles - Encs.  
For information. NR of [REDACTED]

RE: FERNANDO IN BULLIED

- 1 - ADIC, New York - Encs.

- 1 - FBICR, Room 4913A

- 1 - Mr. Collingwood, Room 7240

63-HQ-1050305

MFK

(See NOTE page 2)

Exec AD Adm. \_\_\_\_\_  
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Director's Sec'y \_\_\_\_\_

MAIL ROOM ☐

63-HQ-1050305-611

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NOTE: Attempts to locate individual with knowledge of WMFO's handling of [REDACTED] previous referral of information has been unproductive.

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October 20, 1993

William Sessions, Director  
Federal Bureau of Investigations  
Washington D.C. 20510

Dear Mr. Sessions,

I am writing to you to ask some questions about the David Koresh incident in Waco, Texas. How many weapons were really in the compound? How did Koresh find out the F.B.I. was going to storm the compound when they did? Why did the F.B.I. finally decide to invade the compound? Also, was the fire started by the F.B.I. or was it started by Koresh's followers. I understand some of this information is confidential and still under investigation, but any public information you could send to me would be greatly appreciated.

63-HQ-1050305-612

Sincerely,

~~[Redacted Signature]~~

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ACK  
11/17/93  
MFR ~~[Redacted]~~

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~~[Redacted]~~

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November 17, 1993

[REDACTED]

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Dear [REDACTED]

Your October 20th letter to former Director Sessions requesting information regarding the standoff situation involving the Branch Davidians in Waco has been referred to me for response.

Our role in the standoff with the Branch Davidians in Waco, Texas, has been critiqued in a recently released report to Deputy Attorney General Philip B. Heymann. For a copy of the report, you may wish to correspond directly with the Office of Public Affairs, Department of Justice, 10th Street and Constitution Avenue, N.W., Washington, D. C. 20530.

Sincerely yours,

*MFK*  
Michael F. Knapp  
Inspector-Deputy Chief  
Office of Public and  
Congressional Affairs

1 - Mr. Collingwood, Room 7240

1 - [REDACTED] Room 5042

63-HQ-1050305

MFK

Rm. 6226

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Exec AD Adm. \_\_\_\_\_  
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Int. Affs. \_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone Rm. \_\_\_\_\_  
Director's Sec'y \_\_\_\_\_

MAIL ROOM

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MAILED 13  
NOV 19 1993

FBI



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Dear Sir:

I am writing to voice my concern over the events in Waco, Texas, and the involvement of Federal authorities in those events. Having followed the reporting in the various media with some care, I cannot help but feel that the FBI and the BATF have been less than candid concerning the debacle at Mt. Carmel, and that a concerted campaign of disinformation is being perpetrated against the American people to shift the blame for the carnage from the BATF to the Branch Davidians—and David Koresh in particular. There are a number of points that I feel merit investigation before any conclusion may be satisfactorily reached.

The first point is that I cannot help but feel the BATF exceeded its authority in staging the initial raid on Mt. Carmel by circumventing local authorities. It has been reported on CBS's 60 Minutes, citing several BATF agents as sources, that the raid itself was conceived by BATF as a blatant publicity stunt, a ploy to polish the already-tarnished public image of that agency. Other sources have charged that the helicopters used in that raid were obtained by telling the Governor of Texas that a drug lab was present upon the premises, an accusation "made up out of whole cloth," according to other BATF agents, to pressure Governor Richards into compliance with BATF's demands. Elsewhere in the media it has been reported that BATF went to great pains to coordinate its raid with a concerted media campaign against the Branch Davidians, in particular with a local Waco newspaper's investigative report into the alleged sexual misconduct of David Koresh. Do such activities fall within the mission of BATF? I think not.

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Second, I must question the propriety of the raid itself. What evidence does the BATF have in support of its allegations that they "knew they [Branch Davidians] had over one hundred automatic weapons" cached in their home, as stated afterward by Agent Jeff Jamar of the FBI. It has been published in the media that the warrant for search of the premises was based upon the information from BATF informants that a 50-caliber machine gun was seen in the possession of a member of the Branch Davidians, but surely BATF must already have known of that, since that weapon was obtained legally from a reputable, licensed dealer. The possession of such a weapon is not illegal, nor is the possession of the conversion kits cited in other media articles unlawful. While the allegations that the conversion of semi-automatic weapons to fully-automatic ones had been done is a serious charge, I cannot condone an armed raid to search for them when no evidence has been put forward to substantiate their very existence. Is it BATF's policy to stage such paramilitary raids based on conjecture and supposition? Where is the evidence? Where is "probable cause"? Why were the local civilian authorities kept out of the picture when they were known to have cordial relationships with Koresh and his followers, and had indeed served such warrants upon

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Koresh before—without incident? There has been no satisfactory answer to these questions from BATF.

Third, from reports by the media, I gather that the raid, questionable as it was, was mismanaged by the agents in charge. When it was voiced before the raid that the "element of surprise" had been compromised, the raid was not cancelled, but rushed into execution, disregarding the threat to the safety of the agents involved. What kind of commander would send his men into such a potentially dangerous situation? If BATF suspected that so many weapons would be turned against them, why risk the lives of the men? Obviously their intelligence was faulty and their leadership inadequate. Furthermore, the media has reported that Koresh came forward at the initiation of the raid, but was fired upon by BATF agents, which action precipitated the debacle that followed. It has been said by BATF that the first shots were fired accidentally by an agent while climbing out of the cattle trucks, but no conclusive evidence has been put forward by BATF, and the dead may not be interviewed to clarify the matter. What is the truth? While I deplore the loss of life that followed—both the BATF agents and the Branch Davidians—I feel that all of that might have been avoided if the planners of the raid had been less headstrong in their zeal to provide the media with a good show and more interested in preserving the lives of all concerned.

Now we come to the involvement of the FBI in the affair. From the beginning, the spokesmen of FBI branded the Branch Davidians as a cult in an obvious attempt to sway public opinion, and to create a media slant on the issues involved. I submit that it matters very little what nonsense the Branch Davidians may have believed. The fact that they did believe is sufficient to qualify their faith as a religion, and therefore protected under the Constitution. Such statements by agents of the Federal Government must then be interpreted as violating the doctrine of separation of church and state. Whatever the Branch Davidians believed is immaterial. Cult or not, they were entitled to respect as a religion and freedom to exercise it.

Further, the manipulation of the media by the FBI was heavy-handed and self-serving during the entire siege. It was obvious to all who followed the press coverage that the information supplied by the FBI was intended solely as a smoke screen for their real activities. Accusations by the FBI that Koresh was not negotiating in good faith ring hollow when it is considered that the FBI also had no intention of negotiating in good faith, either. Agent Jamar admitted this when he told a press conference after the fatal assault that there was, from the beginning, only "one basic plan." Not only that, but again and again we have heard the FBI claim that their chief concern was for the welfare of the children at Mt. Carmel, that they feared for their safety, that the children were "dying of hunger and disease due to poor conditions." Really? It had already been acknowledged that the Branch Davidians were well-

prepared with stocks of food, water, and medical supplies. If poor conditions were present, was it not the FBI that created them, and not the Branch Davidians? If there was such concern for the children, then why were psychological warfare techniques used to demoralize and terrorize them? Why press an assault that must lead to their injury or death? I don't believe a word of it!

When questioned by the press after the fire that destroyed Mt. Carmel, Agent Jamar said, "David Koresh had them killed...chose them to die." Where is the evidence for such an outrageous statement? To date there has been no evidence provided that Koresh killed anyone. This can be only more hype from the FBI to somehow divert the blame. When asked about intelligence concerning the internal state of affairs at Mt. Carmel, Agent Jamar said, "I'll just say to you we had outstanding intelligence in many respects, but very inconsistent and ... uh ... sometimes very inconclusive." I fail to see how inconsistent and inconclusive amount to outstanding. More double-speak?

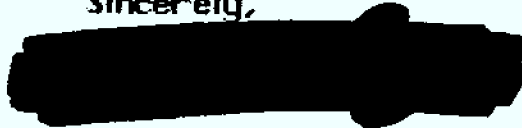
When it became obvious that the buildings were ablaze, why were fire and emergency personnel detained until the entire complex was destroyed? Was this yet another manifestation of FBI's concern for the children? I watched this entire episode live on television. There was no gunfire. There was no show of defiance from the Branch Davidians. There was one episode of personal valor shown by agents who helped in the rescue of a very few survivors—I applaud the bravery of those men, by the way—but to withhold help in order to drive them out was callous to say the least. Even the accusations by the FBI that the Branch Davidians set the fire themselves cannot be justified as there could have been no evidence—the ashes of the complex were still smoldering!

Even from the beginning, the question of a mass suicide was used as an excuse by the FBI for the formulation of plans to assault the Branch Davidian's home. How ironic then that the FBI subsequently used this same poor excuse as yet another circumstance forcing the agents to consider an assault. The FBI claims never to have expected a mass suicide; in fact the FBI even quoted Koresh's attorney to support their contention. It seems that it mattered little to the FBI whether or not Koresh and his followers contemplated suicide and the sole avenue considered viable by the FBI was an assault upon Mt. Carmel. To quote Agent Jamar, there was "one basic plan." One cannot help but wonder why no non-violent, non-invasive, less provocative type of plan was considered, indeed why did the FBI not simply wait them out?

In light of the contradictions, the disinformation from FBI

and BATF, the lack of concrete evidence, the allegations of poor leadership and inept intelligence, the conflicting testimony of the persons involved, and the questionable conduct of the BATF I believe it is absolutely necessary that a full, independent investigation of the events in Waco be undertaken, and that Congress and the Executive Branch review the policies and abuses of power perpetrated by the BATF.

Sincerely,

A large, solid black rectangular redaction box covering the signature area.

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November 15, 1993

[Redacted]

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Dear [Redacted]

Your recent communication to Director Freeh regarding the events in Waco, Texas, has been referred to me for reply.

Our role in the standoff with the Branch Davidians in Waco, Texas, has been critiqued in a recently released Department of Justice report with attachments on this incident. For copies, you may wish to correspond directly with the Office of Public Affairs, Department of Justice, 10th Street and Constitution Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20530.

Sincerely yours,

QG

Michael F. Knapp  
Inspector-Deputy Chief  
Office of Public and  
Congressional Affairs

1 - Mr. Collingwood (Room 7240)

[Redacted]

63-HQ-1050305-615

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- Asst. Dir. \_\_\_\_\_
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- Telephone Rm. \_\_\_\_\_
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**FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION  
FOIPA DELETED PAGE INFORMATION SHEET**

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Section 552Section 552a☐ (b)(1)☐ (b)(7)(A)☐ (d)(5)☐ (b)(2)☐ (b)(7)(B)☐ (j)(2)☐ (b)(3)☐ (b)(7)(C)☐ (k)(1)☐ (b)(7)(D)☐ (k)(2)☐ (b)(7)(E)☐ (k)(3)☐ (b)(7)(F)☐ (k)(4)☐ (b)(4)☐ (b)(8)☐ (k)(5)☐ (b)(5)☐ (b)(9)☐ (k)(6)☐ (b)(6)☐ (k)(7)

- ☐ Information pertained only to a third party with no reference to you or the subject of your request.
- ☐ Information pertained only to a third party. Your name is listed in the title only.
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7-18-94