



LOAD-DATE-MDC: October 12, 1992

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January 15, 1992

SECTION: News

LENGTH: 277 words

HEADLINE: 12 Scientologists charged with fraud

DATELINE: PARIS

BODY:

Twelve leading members of the Scientology Church in France were charged here Wednesday with fraud and illegally practicing medicine, court officials said.

The head of the church's French branch, Jean-Claude Chapelet, was charged with the same offences Tuesday.

All 13 defendants were allowed to go free.

Thirty sect leaders were detained Monday and Tuesday after police raids on Paris headquarters and an annex of the controversial church.

Warrants were issued by a judge acting on complaints by former sect members who say they have been defrauded of a total of four million francs (740,000 dollars).

It was the second police swoop in less than two years against the Scientology Church here.

The Scientology Church, founded in 1954 by the late science-fiction writer L. Ron Hubbard, claims six million members worldwide.

But a French group opposed to religious sects, the Center for Documentation, Education and Action against Mental Manipulation (CCMM), says it has only about 400,000 members in some 30 countries, including several thousand in France.

Scientology claims all illnesses can be cured on condition the human brain rids itself of "aberrations." Learning how to achieve this costs around 100,000 francs (18,500 dollars) plus several costly "purification" sessions, CCMM



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says.

Converts include such celebrities as soprano Julia Migenes-Johnson, actor John Travolta and jazz pianist Chick Corea.

The sect has often found itself in trouble with officialdom the world over, accused of defrauding and brainwashing followers and, in France, of quackery at its illegal anti-drug clinics called "Narconon."

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE-MDC: January 16, 1992



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January 14, 1992

SECTION: News

LENGTH: 143 words

HEADLINE: Paris police detain 15 Scientologists

DATELINE: PARIS

BODY:

Police on Monday raided the headquarters and an annex of the Scientology Church here and arrested 15 of the sect's leaders on fraud charges, informed sources said Tuesday.

They said the raids were conducted on orders of a magistrate acting on a total of seven complaints by former sect members, who claimed they had been defrauded of nearly four million francs (740,000 dollars).

The searches were at the headquarters of the Church and a building called the Celebrity Center, which, although not officially a part of the Scientology Church, bills itself is an instruction center in dianetics, the philosophy behind the sect created by the late science-fiction writer L. Ron Hubbard.

The Scientology Church in France has been sued several times in the past, mostly on charges of coercion and for charging its followers exorbitant rates.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE-MDC: January 14, 1992



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January 14, 1992

SECTION: News

LENGTH: 418 words

HEADLINE: 30 arrested in Paris crackdown on Scientologists

DATELINE: PARIS

BODY:

Thirty leading members of France's Scientology Church were under arrest here Tuesday after police raids Monday on the Paris headquarters and an annex of the controversial sect, security forces said.

They said 15 sect leaders were detained on Monday and another 15 on Tuesday with warrants issued by a judge acting on complaints by former sect members who say they have been defrauded of a total four million francs (740,000 dollars).

The searches were at the headquarters of the Church and a building called the Celebrity Center, which bills itself is a school for dianetics, the philosophy of "spiritual awareness" at the center of the sect created by the late science-fiction writer L. Ron Hubbard.

Police said Yves Veau, director of the Celebrity Center, was among those detained.

It was the second police swoop in less than two years against the Scientology Church here.

About 30 Scientologists were arrested -- and 19 of them later indicted -- between May and October 1990 on charges of fraud, conspiracy to defraud and the illegal practice of medicine following the 1988 suicide of a church member in Lyon, eastern France.

Veau was one of those indicted in the 1990 arrests.

The Scientology Church, founded in 1954 by the mysterious Hubbard, who died in 1986, claims six million members worldwide.

But a French group opposed to religious sects, the Center for Documentation, Education and Action against Mental Manipulation (CCMM), says it has only about 400,000 members in some 30 countries, including several thousand in France.



Scientology presents itself as "an applied religious science," which promises "scientific mental health" through dianetics.

The philosophy claims that all illnesses can be cured on condition that the human brain rids itself of "aberrations" – learning how to achieve this costs around 100,000 francs (18,500 dollars) plus several costly "purification" sessions, CCMM says.

The answer to all the world's problems according to its followers, a cynical and manipulative financial operation according to its critics, Scientology is said to have an annual turnover of some 150 million dollars.

Converts include such celebrities as soprano Julia Migenes-Johnson, actor John Travolta and jazz pianist Chick Corea.

The sect has often found itself in trouble with officialdom the world over, accused of defrauding and brainwashing followers and, in France, of quackery at its illegal anti-drug clinics called "Narconon."



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January 14, 1992

SECTION: News

LENGTH: 253 words

HEADLINE: Scientology president assails sect members arrests in France

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

BODY:

Scientology leader Heber Jentzsch Tuesday assailed the arrest in France this week of leading members of the sect, alleging it was part of a conspiracy by the French intelligence services.

Jentzsch, president of the Church of Scientology International, linked the arrests to a recent article in a sect publication alleging widespread corruption in French intelligence.

(In Paris, police sources said Tuesday that 30 leading members of France's Scientology Church had been arrested in an investigation into complaints by former sect members who said they had been defrauded of a total of four million francs (740,000 dollars).)

Speaking by telephone from Scientology headquarters in Los Angeles, Jentzsch said a total of 18 members were arrested. The president of the church in Paris, Jean-Paul Chapelet, was released without charge later Tuesday and further releases were expected, Jentzsch said.

He suggested the former members whose fraud complaints led to the French police swoop might be plants who were sent to disrupt sect activities as part of a "conspiracy" against the group.

Jentzsch said the sect claims eight million members in 91 countries. He said he had no figures for annual turnover, but the Church of Scientology would rank among the Fortune 500 if it were a private company.

A French group opposed to religious sects, the Center for Documentation, Education and Action against Mental Manipulation, says there are only about 400,000 scientologists in some 30 countries.

IMPACT

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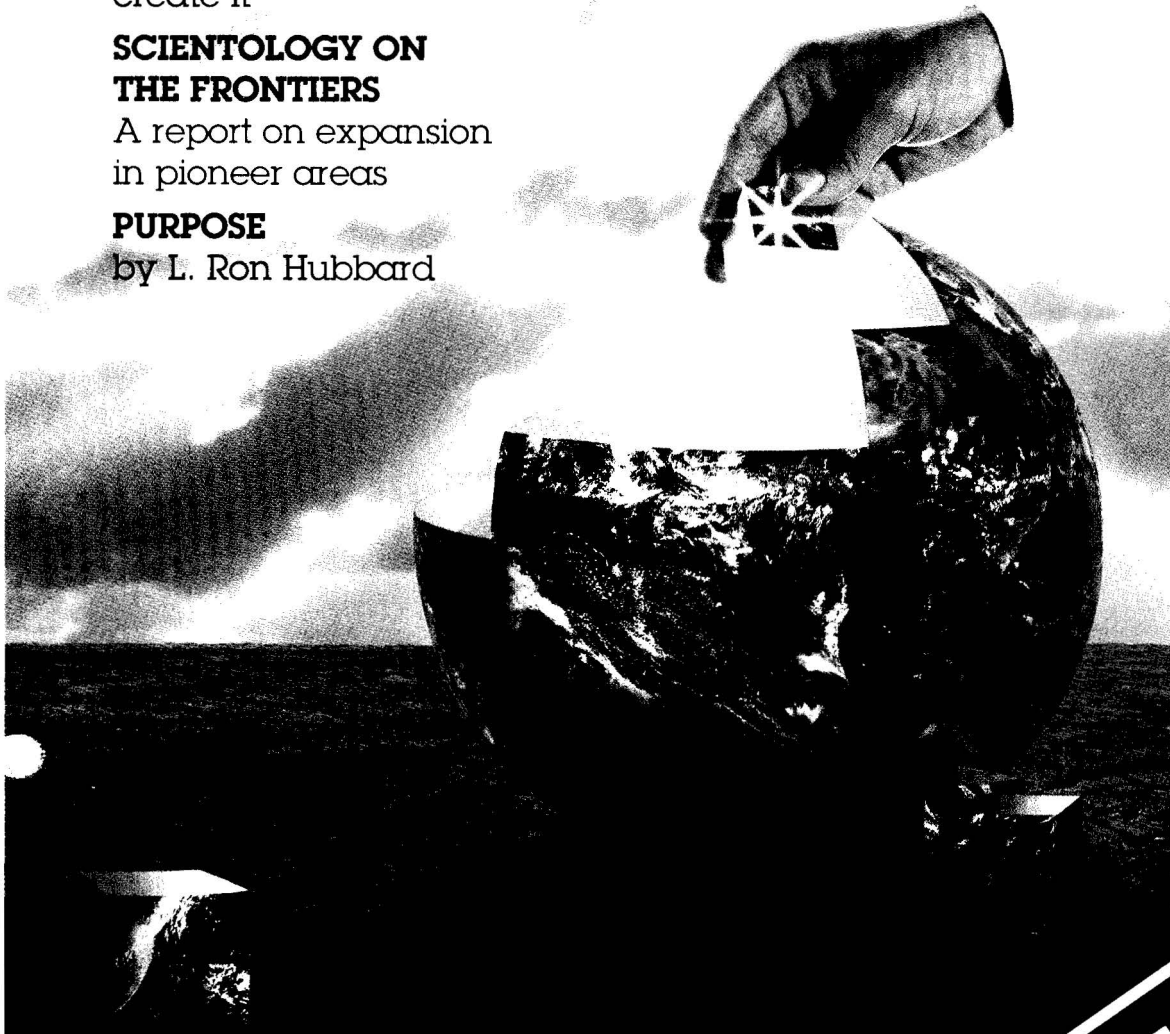
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