

YOU'RE LOCAL. WE'RE A NEWSPAPER.

Clearwater Sun

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Let's freeze them out

YOU CAN'T say we haven't been warned.

This week Scientology's chief public relations man flat-out told Clearwater that the cult is not only here to stay but will grow even bigger.

The fellow's name is David Gaiman. He works at Scientology world headquarters in Sussex, England. He was in town to meet with, and quite possibly give orders to, the cult's president, Kenneth Whitman.

While he was here, Gaiman called a press conference and said, "We will never close the church." He said members are about to bust through the seams of local Scientology's capacity to house them, and that further space would be purchased in Clearwater within the next 18 months.

So there you have it. The Scientologists will be with us forever.

Or so they say.

action and with passivity. Some action steps already have occurred in the form of rallies, marches and anti-Scientologists stepping forth to be identified.

The passive policy, so to speak, is typified by Thursday's refusal of the Clearwater Downtown Development Board to take part in or sanction the cult's proposal to help redevelop Clearwater.

The Board said, in effect, "We want no part of you."

Its message was forceful and to the point. The Board did splendidly, and its example should be followed by all other elements of the city.

WITHOUT VIOLATING anyone's civil rights, Clearwater and its people should simply put the Scientologists on ice.

All the cult's entreaties and invitations should be rejected.

WHAT WE say is that forever is a long time, and that you tempt God and fate when you declare what you intend to do much past next Tuesday.

At any rate, it is clear what Clearwater's task is. If the cult stands firm for eternity, opponents of the cult must do the same, plus one day.

We must not only match, but exceed, Scientology's patience and determination.

As for the cult's plans to expand in Clearwater, we would think that is a very dangerous course of action.

The cult's leaders decry the tension and controversy they say exist here, and yet they plan to feed the fires of public obloquy by doing the one thing that will increase the opposition of Clearwater's people: namely, grow.

With each new purchase of property, with each new Scientology member added to the local totals, the citizens will feel even more threatened by the cult.

THEREFORE, AS the cult grows, the city must get tougher.

We can do this both with

Its open houses and "religious" services should be ignored.

Its redevelopment plans and beach trolleys should be scorned.

Is all of this cruel? No. We'll tell you why.

It takes no great amount of vision to see that, unless Scientology packs up and leaves, the day may come when literally — Clearwater will not be big enough to house both the Scientologists and the honest people of this city.

On that day, like a giant puffball or an overgrown toadstool, an explosion may occur. A flash point may be reached, and great may be the heat thereof.

The kind and prudent thing, then, is for all of us to keep up the fight, and to freeze the cult out.

We should not be deluded by Scientology's new faces, its revised policies, its latter-day affability.

The cult came here in deceit and trickery, and thus it remains.

So, faithful readers, do not be lulled. Do not be fooled. Do not give up.

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PUBLIC FORUM

Sect leader asks for understanding

To Colonel Clearwater

One of the central principles of the religion of Scientology is that through communication, understanding can be achieved. It is most unfortunate that in the years that the Church of Scientology has made Clearwater the home of its Advanced Religious Retreat that there has been too little real communication and a great lack of understanding. As it takes two sides to sustain a conflict, responsibility for resolution must be a mutual undertaking.

I would like to thank the Clearwater clergymen, public officials and businessmen who have opened channels of communication with the church. This has been a first positive step toward an adult resolution of the problems which face the church and the community. A complete resolution will take time, but in an atmosphere of respect for the rights of others, a great deal can be accomplished for the benefit of all. A peaceful settlement to past and present problems can only help Clearwater. Theatrics and continued escalation of conflicts can only harm many innocent people on both sides.

On behalf of the over 1,500 residents and visitors in Clearwater whose religion of choice is Scientology, I have personally taken on the mission to pursue a resolution to ease community tensions, through dialogue and responsible action. I have addressed the issue of openness

and invite the citizens of Clearwater to tour the Fort Harrison Church facility any day of the week between 9 a.m. and 10:30 p.m. Church representatives will also be available to give lectures to community groups regarding church beliefs and practices.

The church's stand regarding any illegal or harassive actions by church members has been clarified to point out that such acts are clearly contrary to church policy and creed. The actions of a handful of church members in the past are not representative of the millions of practicing Scientologists who are working toward "A civilization without insanity, and without war."

At this time I wish to offer my apologies on behalf of the Church of Scientology to the citizens of Clearwater for any past actions which have lead to the current emotional tensions in this community. In order to provide a forum for anyone wishing to discuss real problems underlying this high emotion which affect the church and the local community, I have established the President's Committee on Clearwater Community Relations. The committee is composed of members of the Scientology community in Clearwater, who will hold public meetings to get at the root causes of individual past and present difficulties and make recommendations to me on how such difficulties might be effectively addressed by the church. It is the church's intention through this committee to take responsive action to ease tensions in the community. I have appointed Rev. Hugh Wilhere

as my personal representative in Clearwater. He will remain here to oversee the activities of the president's committee and carry on with community dialogue.

As we enter the decade of the '80s, it is our hope that we can put the difficult times of the '70s behind us and by continuing to rationally and responsibility approach the problems which face the church and the community, that we may see in the 1980s a more peaceful and productive atmosphere for all citizens of Clearwater.

REV. KENNETH J. WHITMAN
President
Church of Scientology

Tarpon official thanks the voters

To Colonel Clearwater

Wishing for a more personal way to say "thank you," I would like to express appreciation to the voters of Tarpon Springs who supported me in the recent campaign for the city commission.

The largest voter turnout in the history of Tarpon Springs indicates that, yes, the people do care about the future of our city and, with the election behind us, it is sincerely hoped and desired that we all stand united in our future goals.

My best personal regards to them.

NANCY LEA BRANCH
Commissioner-elect
Tarpon Springs