

YOUR LOCAL NEWSPAPER

Clearwater Sun

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A big crock of bushwah

"All propaganda must be so popular and on such an intellectual level, that even the most stupid of those toward whom it is directed will understand it. Therefore, the intellectual level of the propaganda must be lower the larger the number of people who are to be influenced by it." —Adolf Hitler, "Mein Kampf," p. 197, 14th edition.

IF THEY used the above quotation as a guideline, the Scientologists must think the population of Clearwater is about 15 million.

The propaganda the local cultists pitched at the citizenry Friday afternoon was at a pitifully low level.

The Scientologists said, in effect, "When Clearwater calms down, we're going to give you some money. We won't tell you exactly when, or how much, but we'll do it."

The announcement, rendered at a 2 p.m. press conference by cult president Kenneth Whitman, has a number of holes in it.

regarded seriously.

Whitman will fly back to Los Angeles, leaving Wilhere in charge. At the Fort Harrison, nothing has been changed but the faces.

A NEW name was added this week to the honor roll of Clearwater groups that officially have announced opposition to the presence of the cult in our city.

The board of governors of the Greater Clearwater Chamber of Commerce said the Scientologists are not welcome here and should be investigated by the government.

Two of the 20 board members dissented from the resolution. Both men are entitled to their opinions and the right to voice them. One of the naysayers, Jim Gray, will be running for city commission and will probably be given plenty of opportunity to explain his views in detail.

The Chamber's taking up the banner of opposition to the cult gives further strength to our community's resolve.

For one thing, Clearwater doesn't want cash gifts from Scientology. What the city and the county want is property taxes, paid in full, and on the date due.

For another thing, Clearwater is already calm. Our streets are quiet. Even the anti-Scientology pursuits, such as rallies and fund-raising activities, are orderly and nonviolent.

WHITMAN'S OTHER comments Friday had all the impact of putting face powder on a toad.

He said a community relations committee has been appointed; he introduced a man named Hugh Wilhere, who will be the 1980 version of Nancy Reitze; he said the cult has issued a white paper dealing with illegal acts; he hinted strongly that Clearwater's churches will eventually become friendlier and more understanding toward Scientology.

And once more Whitman said the folks at the Fort Harrison had no advance knowledge of the crimes committed by the nine Scientologists recently sentenced to prison in Washington, D.C.

In short, it was mostly a rehash of an old story. It was window dressing, a juggling act, a shell game. It was low-level propaganda, not to be

A PATTERN of responsible unity is now developing throughout Clearwater.

On an individual basis, thousands of concerned men and women have stepped forward to declare their support of attempts to persuade the cult to pack up and depart.

At the same time, organizations such as the Chamber, the Clearwater Bar Association and a group of investors have taken either tentative or more pronounced action aimed at lining up against the cult.

A persistent theme in all of this has been lack of any rancor toward the individual Scientology members who we see each day downtown, walking between their classes and their places of temporary residence.

If anything, Clearwater has become more understanding of these misguided, mostly young men and women. They are dupes, and they don't know it.

In contrast, what has hardened is Clearwater's resistance to the soft-shoe, double-shuffle, personnel-switching, Band-aid press agency that Friday's news conference symbolized.

Whitman and his colleagues are trying to peddle a crock of bushwah. And Clearwater is too smart to buy it.

BIBLE THOUGHT

I am the Lord, thy God, who teacheth thee to profit. Isa. 48: 17.