

"The policy of our paper is very simple — merely to tell the truth."

Paul Poynter, 1875-1950

Nelson Poynter, 1903-1978

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SATURDAY, DECEMBER 8, 1979

Enforce Florida law

The high-ranking members of the Church of Scientology sentenced in Washington to prison terms have become victims of their own deceit. Before the defendants were sentenced by U.S. District Judge Charles R. Richey, each expressed regret for having conspired to obstruct justice.

Mary Sue Hubbard, the second most powerful member of the church and the wife of its founder, said: "I sincerely regret my wrongdoing, and I have done everything in my power to see that something like this can never, ever occur in the future."

WAS SHE speaking truthfully or was she following the church founder's written policy advocating lies and deception to achieve church goals?

The conduct of the Scientologists on trial has been such that no one can say whether they now are telling the truth. Their disregard for the normal rules of behavior in a free society — in this case by planting spies in the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) and the U.S. Department of Justice, bugging the IRS and stealing government documents — totally destroys any trust in them.

(Incidentally, Judge Richey should not have broken an implied agreement of the plea bargain by refusing to grant bond to all the defendants except Mrs. Hubbard. It is illogical to believe they would have foregone a trial and based their cases on the outcome of an appeal if they had expected to be refused bond pending that appeal.)

The Washington defendants' criminal activities clearly followed the writing of L. Ron Hubbard, the church founder.

He has described the goal of lawsuits as follows:

"... The purpose of the suit is to harass and discourage rather than to

win. The law can be used very easily to harass, and enough harassment on somebody who is simply on the thin edge anyway, well knowing that he is not authorized, will generally be sufficient to cause his professional decease. If possible, of course, ruin him utterly."

Or were the defendants practicing a form of "black propaganda" advocated by a church policy letter? It was described as "the technique is: a hidden source injects lies and derogatory data into public view."

THIS WEEK in Clearwater, another high church official, Christopher E. Finn, arrived to say it "is certainly willing to bury all hatchets." Was he speaking truth or black propaganda?

He also said the church will pursue a complaint to the Justice Department that church members' civil rights were violated by Clearwater City Commissioner Richard Tenney, former Mayor Gabriel Cazares and *Clearwater Sun* editor Ron Stuart, who have been defending themselves against attacks by Scientologists under the church's "fair game" policy.

Isn't that false charge just more legal harassment following Hubbard's policy?

By its policy that opponents of Scientology may be "injured by any means . . . may be tricked, sued or lied to or destroyed," the church has created a condition from which it cannot escape by words alone.

THE WASHINGTON trial does not complete the process of bringing justice to members of this cult. It produced evidence of the violation of many laws not yet prosecuted, including laws of the state of Florida. State Attorney James T. Russell should act promptly to enforce the laws against theft, burglary and any other crimes that might have been committed.