

YOUR LOCAL NEWSPAPER

Clearwater Sun

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Questions for cultists

HAS JIM Russell begun his long-awaited move against the Scientologists?

Could be.

Russell, the Pinellas-Pasco state attorney, has subpoenaed 17 women Scientologists in Clearwater and has been asking them a lot of questions.

About what, only Russell can say, but you can bet we'll be finding out before many moons.

Too many moons have already waxed and waned without the local cultists being summoned to testify about conspiracy, harassment and other parlor games the Scientologists have shown themselves adept at playing.

This community has impatiently waited and hoped that Russell's office, or some other local law enforcement agency, would apply the squeeze to the local sect for the way it has acted since its arrival in Clearwater 4½ years ago.

Now, perhaps Russell is in a position to reveal the evidence he and his assistants have compiled.

OF COURSE, his investigations may reveal that the Scientologists are innocent as shorn lambs of any kind of wrongdoing.

At first glance, however, Russell appears to possess evidence that someone connected with the cult has been guilty of transgressions more odious than singing too loudly in the shower.

On Thursday, lawyers for four of the Scientology women asked Pinellas Chief Circuit Judge Harry Fogle to quash

the four's subpoenas.

Fogle studied the evidence for most of an hour, and then ruled that the subpoenas should stand.

An attorney for one of the women said honoring the subpoenas would have a chilling effect on the cult, in that prospective members would stay away from Scientology out of fear of government harassment.

Rubbish.

In more than four years, these are the first subpoenas Russell has handed out to the Scientologists.

That is a mighty low level of "harassment."

IN THE face of this week's action by Russell, cult flack Milt Wolfe performed predictably.

Wolfe said he doesn't know the whereabouts of, or the offices held by, any of the 17 women subpoenaed by Russell.

Wolfe has worked at the Fort Harrison for years, but he is apparently kept in a closet over there, like some sort of mushroom.

We keep wondering why Wolfe (and other Scientology employes) don't resign. It must be terribly depressing to work for an outfit whose members keep getting investigated, indicted and convicted.

We hope Jim Russell will forge ahead with whatever evidence he may have against the Scientologists' officials.

Scientology is not a religion. It is a boil on the face of Clearwater, and it must be lanced.