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**Clearwater Sun**

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# Parents vs. Scientology

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THE HEARTBREAK of a family whose children have been captured by Scientology was classically illustrated Thursday in Clearwater.

Mr. and Mrs. Leon Haigler came here from Virginia to try to persuade their son, Donald, 23, to return home with them.

Donald has been a cult member for two years. On Thursday he met his parents, embraced them, went off with them for several hours, but then decided he will remain with Scientology.

He did this despite the presence of Nan McLean, a former Scientologist who accompanied the Haiglers in the hope of persuading Donald to abandon the cult.

The three Haiglers and Ms. McLean talked Thursday afternoon in a motel room on Clearwater Beach.

Somehow, the Scientologists learned where the meeting was taking place.

At 5 p.m. they phoned Donald Haigler. The phone call apparently put an end to any hope Mr. and Mrs. Haigler had that their son would return to them.

Scientologists are cunning and powerful. Once the cult gets its hooks into a young person, it is often too late for

parents or friends to act.

What is needed is for each family to instruct their children, at a tender age, about cults, brainwashing and the results of turning one's freedom of thought and action over to any organization that does not allow its members the option of doubting, asking questions or leaving at any time the member desires.

The Haiglers cannot be blamed for the course of action taken by their son, or by their other two children, who also have embraced Scientology.

The parents will continue their efforts to change their son's mind. Although he may have turned his back on them, they do not intend to close the door on him, in return.

Throughout the country are many other couples like the Haiglers. However, as the truth about Scientology spreads, the years may bring less tragedy. Millions of Americans watched the "60 Minutes" segment on Scientology; millions of others are reading this month's Reader's Digest article about the cult.

The ugly facts are getting out. Somewhere today a young man or woman is responding to Scientology's overtures by saying "Stuff it in your ear." In this there lies hope.