

Gerry Armstrong

Scientology's Salman Rushdie

I am an ordinary man who for over twenty years has been the target of extraordinary persecution by the U.S.-based Scientology organization. My case exemplifies a new type of "religious" persecution being perpetrated by Scientology, persecution reinforced by the American justice system and government. But my case is not unique. There are thousands of people, including many here in Europe, who are similarly persecuted by Scientology. Mine, however, is the best-documented example, because of its duration and because of the steadfast refusal God has given me to be crushed or shuddered into silence. This synopsis can but scratch the surface of my story.

Inside Scientology

I was inside Scientology for over twelve years, from 1969, to when I escaped in 1981. For eleven years I was in the organization's inner pseudo-military core, the Sea Organization (SO). There I held a number of key positions, including the Legal Officer, Public Relations Officer and Intelligence Officer on board the organization's "Flagship Apollo," from which Scientology was managed and controlled internationally. I worked with Scientology founder and director and SO Commodore L. Ron Hubbard on board the ship, and later in Florida and California.

Hubbard's Biography Researcher

In my final two years in the SO, I had the task of collecting and assembling an archive of Hubbard's personal documents, and doing research for his biography. During the course of my research, I discovered and documented that Hubbard had lied about virtually every part of his life, including his education, degrees, family, explorations, military service, war wounds, scientific research, the efficacy of his "sciences" - Dianetics and

Scientology - along with the actions and intentions of the organizations he created to sell and advance these "sciences."

When I attempted to get Scientology executives to correct the lies that the organization was promoting about Hubbard, and which Hubbard promoted about himself, I was attacked and ordered to be security checked. A "sec check" is an invasive, incriminatory Scientology interrogation technique using its E-meter lie detector. During my years in the SO, I had been subjected to hundreds of hours of sec checks, and had twice been ordered by Hubbard to the Rehabilitation Project Force (RPF) [1], the organization's punishment and reprogramming camps, for a total of twenty-five months. Rather than being again locked up and forced to submit to further abuse and degradation, I fled.

Fair Game

Immediately after leaving the organization, I became a target of Scientology's basic philosophy, policy and practice for dealing with criticism or opposition, which the organization calls "Fair Game." In one short description of this noxious concept, Hubbard wrote:

"ENEMY - SP Order. Fair game. May be deprived of property or injured by any means by any Scientologist without any discipline of the Scientologist. May be tricked, sued or lied to or destroyed." [2]

An "SP" in Scientology terminology is a "Suppressive Person, " considered by the Scientologists to be supremely evil, without any rights, and meriting destruction. Scientology declared me a Suppressive Person in early 1982 and has been subjecting me to Fair Game ever since.

Pursuant to its Fair Game doctrine, Scientology or its agents have:

- * assaulted me on multiple occasions;
- * terrorized me on the freeway;
- * stolen photographs from me;
- * broke into my car and stolen documents, a manuscript and original artwork;

- * spied on me;
- * threatened to assassinate me;
- * threatened my family;
- * harassed my neighbors;
- * paid a corrupt police officer for a fake authorization to eavesdrop on me and my attorney and tap our telephones;
- * illegally videotaped me;
- * attempted numerous times to have me prosecuted on false criminal charges, including with the US Federal Bureau of Investigation;
- * sued me six times;
- * driven me into bankruptcy;
- * carried out covert intelligence operations against me; and
- * defamed me with hundreds of Black PR publications.

Black PR or Black Propaganda is Scientology's policy and practice of destroying a person's reputation or public belief in him by willful and relentless slander and libel. [3]

Scientology's First Lawsuit

The first case in which Scientology sued me went to trial in 1984 in Los Angeles, California Superior Court, and resulted in a scathing judgment against the organization and Hubbard , later affirmed on appeal:

"In addition to violating and abusing its own members civil rights, the organization over the years with its "Fair Game" doctrine has harassed and abused those persons not in the Church whom it perceives as enemies. The organization clearly is schizophrenic and paranoid, and this bizarre combination seems to be a reflection of its founder LRH. The evidence portrays a man who has been virtually a pathological liar when it comes to his history, background and achievements. The writings and documents in evidence additionally reflect his egoism, greed, avarice, lust for power, and vindictiveness and aggressiveness against persons perceived by him to be disloyal or hostile."

— Judge Paul G. Breckenridge Jr.

An Unconscionable Settlement

In December 1986, in the process of settling my own lawsuit against Scientology for years of fraud, Fair Game, and emotional devastation, I was coerced and tricked into signing a "settlement contract" with the organization, which is patently onerous, unfair and immoral. My attorney, who then represented some twenty organization victims, had himself been fair gamed for several years, and was desperate to have the organization's attacks on him and his family stop. I was part of a group settlement involving all of his clients, who also wanted the attacks on themselves to stop. My attorney insisted that the prohibitory conditions of the "contract," which prevented me from communicating about my Scientology experiences or knowledge, and which punished me with \$50,000 per utterance, were illegal and judicially unenforceable, but that I had to sign to have Fair Game end for everyone.

Scientology did not cease its Fair Game and Black PR attacks on me following the "settlement," however, but continued without letup. When, after enduring these attacks for some time, I finally responded to defend myself and my reputation, the organization filed suit against me to enforce its "contract." I then learned that my attorney had himself signed a "contract" with Scientology that prevented him from assisting me in my defense in this lawsuit or against any other attacks.

California Court Enforces the Unconscionable Settlement

In 1995, without a trial, and ignoring my Constitutional defenses, a Marin County, California Superior Court issued a judgment assessing \$50,000 in "damages" against me for every instance when, to defend myself, I spoke out about my experiences in or knowledge of Scientology. The California Court stated that every Scientology "church," entity or front group around the world, and all of their personnel, lawyers or agents may say whatever they want about me, no matter how false or perverse, and I may not say one word in response. This judgment forced me into bankruptcy, and made me subject to jail and fines if I continued to speak out to correct lies the organization and its personnel and agents were

continuing to disseminate, or if I in any way helped any other victims of the organization's abuse or targets of its Fair Game.

Scientology's IRS Tax Exemption

In early 1997, I discovered that Scientology had filed several pages of Black PR and lies about me with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) in the application that resulted in the granting of the organization's tax exemption in the U.S. In previous years, the IRS had based its denial of Scientology's application for tax exemption in part on the judgment against the organization in their first lawsuit against me. Being prohibited from communicating about this situation in the U.S., or even communicating about the unjust judgment against me, and facing imprisonment and fines if I did communicate, I left my home in California and fled to Canada.

I felt that in Canada, where I had grown up, and where Scientology was known as a criminally convicted organization, I would be safe to oppose the organization's persecution and correct the lies and injustices the organization and its agents were perpetrating. I wrote and spoke to the IRS, and to other U.S. agencies or officials about the fraud in Scientology's tax exemption application, and about the organization's "religious" persecutions, without success or response.

Court Orders Against Freedom of Opinion

Some months after I fled to Canada, Scientology, without proper notice, obtained an order of contempt against me in the California State Court for sending a declaration to a U.S. Federal Judge. I had been subpoenaed by a person defending himself against the organization, and I was then threatened with prosecution by a Scientology lawyer if I responded to the legal subpoena. The purpose of my declaration was to advise the Federal Judge of the illegal threat from the organization lawyer. The California Court sentenced me to jail and fined me, and Scientology had a warrant issued for my arrest.

From Canada, I filed an appeal of the judgment of the California Court, but Scientology had the appeal dismissed by arguing I had not served my jail sentence, and thus was not entitled to an appeal. I believe that if I did return to California I would never get out of jail, but would be brutally silenced by Scientology's agents, and even if in jail I could not appeal from the organization's unjust judgment nor have any physical security.

In 1998, the organization obtained another court order to jail and fine me for additional instances of communicating about the judgment and my Scientology experiences, specifically:

- * Internet postings made from Canada;
- * public statements in Europe, including:
 - o an interview broadcast on British television;
 - o a speech in Berlin;
 - o an interview with Berliner Zeitung;
 - o an appearance at a public event in Hamburg;
 - o interviews resulting in broadcasts on German channels N-TV, B1 TV and SAT 1 TV;
 - o an interview with Die Tageszeitung. [4]

Scientology then had a second warrant issued for my arrest.

In 2001, Scientology obtained a third order of contempt against me for 131 Internet postings I made from Canada.

New LawsUIT Against Freedom of Opinion in Canada and Europe

In April this year, 2002, Scientology filed yet another lawsuit against me, and included as co-defendants Robert S. Minton, an American critic of the organization, and the Lisa McPherson Trust (LMT), a cult victims assistance organization that Minton founded. The LMT is named after a Scientology victim who was locked up by the organization in 1995, and died after 17 days of agony while being held in isolation. The new suit seeks \$50,000 from me for each of 204 instances of my communicating about persecution by the organization or my experiences as a Scientologist, for a total of \$10,050,000. Scientology has

sued Minton and the LMT because Minton loaned me money and provided me with a computer. The organization claims that this facilitated my being able to communicate about Scientology and its persecutions, and thus breach the "settlement contract" and the California "judgment."

These claimed breaches consist of:

- * 165 Internet postings made from Canada;
- * several pickets of Scientology organizations in Canada;
- * communications with Canadian and American cult critics; and
- * the following European "violations:"
 - o a telephone interview with German TV ARD;
 - o a TV interview with ARD;
 - o an award ceremony in Leipzig;
 - o two interviews with news media in Berlin;
 - o an interview with a Christian newspaper in Denmark;
 - o a conversation with Hamburg Government official Ursula Caberta;
 - o participation in a conference on totalitarian cults in Nizhny Novgorod, Russia;
 - o an appearance on Russian TV;
 - o a request to speak to an executive at a Scientology office in Moscow;
 - o a picket of organization headquarters in Copenhagen;
 - o an appearance on Russian TV show TNT;
 - o a picket of Scientology in Paris;
 - o a picket of Scientology in Lyon;
 - o another award ceremony in Leipzig;
 - o and a web site created by someone in Holland.

See also:

Metzinger Volksblatt 06-08-2001

Rems-Murr-Rundschau 06-09-2001

In Germany

Because of the way Canadian officials are acting in another case, there are indications that the Canadian Government has reversed its previous opposition to Scientology and now supports the organization's persecution

of its victims and targets, as the U.S. Government has done and is doing. Consequently, and as a precaution, I recently left Canada with my fiancée Caroline Letkeman and am in Germany. I believe that in Europe, where Scientology is generally not considered a religion but a totalitarian psychocult, I will be free to continue to communicate about its persecution and to address the support it gets from the North American governments.

Even while here, however, I am still a target of Scientology's persecution as the organization's latest lawsuit shows. According to the U.S. "judgment," every European Scientology organization and every European Scientologist or their lawyers or agents may say whatever they want about me, no matter how defamatory, and I may not say one word in response or in my defense. Just for saying the word "Scientology," or the name of any European Scientologist, or mentioning one word about my now more than 33-year relationship with the organization, I am subject to a \$50,000 "damage" assessment, imprisonment and a fine.

As Scientology's latest suit also shows, anyone facilitating my defense against the organization's attacks is also subject to the U.S. "judgment," and is also at risk of being sued, bankrupted and jailed. Potentially, anyone giving me money, a job, an Internet connection, a telephone, a bed or even a meal or a drink of water, knowing that I will survive another day to communicate about Scientology and its persecutions, becomes Fair Game, subject to its "judgment," and target of its U.S.-supported litigation machine. [5]

My Position

Judicially prohibiting people from responding to Scientology's attacks, and punishing them with imprisonment and fines if they do respond, creates a new type of slavery, which Scientology, with U.S. Government support, is attempting to export around the world. Since the U.S. Government considers the organization a religion, and confers upon it all the privileges and benefits conferred on traditional religions, including tax exemption, Scientology's attacks on critics and its extreme measures to silence them amount to a new form of State-sanctioned

religious persecution.

There is no freedom of religion where there is no freedom to criticize, oppose or reform religion. Ironically, it is only in the U.S., which claims to be a bastion of religious liberty, where a person can be jailed just for mentioning a " religion" or his "religious experiences" in it. If the U.S. and its courts apply this concept equally to all religions, a person could be jailed just for saying the word "Christianity," or "Buddhism," or "Hinduism," or "Islam," or mentioning any "religious experience" in any of those religions. If the U.S. is applying this concept only to Scientology, then that organization has by this favoritism become the American State Religion.

Salman Rushdie was sentenced by a totalitarian theocratic government's legal edict, and is being threatened world wide, for writing a book that theocrats don't like. I am attacked and hounded around the world by Scientology's totalitarian religious poseurs, using the U.S. legal system, for writing and speaking what the poseurs dislike. The Islamic fatwah is directed not only against Rushdie but also against all persons associated in the publication of his book. Scientology's fatwah targets all persons acting in concert with me or in any way facilitating my speaking and writing. Iran is offering a \$2,500,000 reward to the murderer who silences Rushdie. Scientology has already paid that to U.S. lawyers to silence me. Going theocrats one better, however, Scientology's commercial cultists want their investment back, quadrupled.

I am being persecuted by Scientology, with its official U.S. support, not for speaking lies or defaming the organization, but for speaking the truth. I am speaking the truth in response to Scientology's lies about me, lies which are demonstrated even by the organization's latest lawsuit, which is riddled with lies. I am speaking out to prevent Scientology from rewriting its history of lying and of persecuting people who speak the truth. Because I am persecuted for speaking is precisely why I should speak. Because other people are persecuted for helping me to speak is precisely why they should help.

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