

# Affidavit of Tonja C. Burden - 1980

My name is Tonja Burden of Las Vegas, Nevada. I am 20 years old. On or about March 3, 1973, when I was 13 years old, my father and mother were recruited to join Scientology. I joined Scientology after being recruited by Billy Kahn, and signed my Sea Organization contract for one billion years on or about March 3, 1973.

Kahn stated that we would be placed on the staff in Las Vegas, live in well furnished, private quarters, eat well and earn a substantial amount of money with two days off per week. My father sold his Cadillac and sports car, and we drove to Los Angeles with our recruiter.

Scientology placed me in the Cadet Organization, and my parents in the American Saint Hill Organization (ASHO). The Cadet Organization, headed by Dorothy Jefferson, at 811 Beacon Street, Los Angeles, California, consisted of two three-story buildings that housed approximately 400 children. The Cadet Organization was designed to teach children about Scientology. My duties were to care, clean and feed the children. Myself and another girl my age were the two oldest children at the Cadet Organization. The living conditions were squalid. Glass from broken windows lay strewn over the floors. Live electrical wires were exposed in areas where young children played. We received little food. On several occasions spoiled milk with maggots was served to children. The maggots were removed by hand before the milk was served. In addition to caring for the children, I cleaned toilets daily. I wrote to L. Ron Hubbard explaining the conditions, but nothing improved.

Children were not allowed to live with their parents. Scientology permitted one visit every other week, and only for 45 minutes during mealtime. My parents were placed at American Saint Hill Organization and left Scientology in September 1973, when I was aboard the ship, the Apollo.

One day a man arrived at the Cadet Organization from Flag. Flag headquarters was on the Apollo. This man spoke of 'The Source,' L Ron Hubbard. Hubbard, the founder of Scientology, needed 'messengers' and others to work aboard his ship.

I left the Cadet Organization after approximately three months. I was then sent to FOLO, another Scientology base located at the Manor on Franklin Street in Los Angeles, California. At FOLO I was placed in the Flag Readiness Unit (FRU). Chuck Pierce ran this unit. The program was designed to conduct 'security checks' of individuals to ensure they were appropriate subjects to work for L. Ron Hubbard aboard the Apollo.

During questioning they attempted to determine if I was connected to any 'Suppressive Persons.' (A Suppressive Person is one hostile to the Scientology cult.) I was given a personality test and an IQ test and other tests. I participated in indoctrination (brainwashing) for three months. Finally, I was approved and sent into Briefing.

The Briefing process occurred on or about August 1973. In briefing, Peter Cook instructed me to give specific answers to certain questions that may be asked me by non-Scientologists. Basically, briefing involved how to answer questions that I might encounter while en route to the Apollo. Many of the things I was instructed to say were not true. The location and operations aboard the Apollo remained secret. I was told if a customs agent or other non-Scientologist asked about my destination, I should respond I was 'in transit'.

Peter Cook briefed me on my cover story. I was to tell people I was 'in transit' to the Operation and Transport Corporation (OTC), a business management school on board ship. In briefing, Cook demonstrated my 'in transit conduct' by using modeling clay. He would construct a clay ship and clay people and simulate my interactions with other people while 'in transit;' using this method, he ingrained the standard responses.

I flew to New York after briefing and was met by Kevin Campbell. Campbell worked in a building in New York and assisted in operating RONY. RONY, I later learned, was a liaison point that received coded Telex messages from the Apollo and relayed those coded messages via Telex machines to other organizations ('orgs') in the United States and other parts of the world. Aboard the ship I would see Mike Henderson take Telex messages from the ship and go ashore to send those messages to RONY in New York. On other occasions, Henderson would go ashore to receive Telex messages from RONY, New York. I was privy to these practices as L. Ron Hubbard's personal messenger Campbell placed me on a plane and instructed me to meet Chuck Adams at my destination, Lisbon, Portugal. Adams met me at the airport in Lisbon and informed me that the Apollo had set sail. Several hours later, Adams discovered the ship's destination was the island of Madeira. I was placed on a plane to Madrid, Spain and at Madrid switched over to a flight that arrived on the island of Madeira.

Questioned by customs agents, I told them I was 'in transit.' I located a taxi driver who drove me to the Apollo.

I saw the Apollo for the first time and was greatly disappointed by its dilapidated condition. Once aboard, I was assigned a 'buddy' and given two days to learn about the ship. The Apollo was one of five ships operated by Scientology which Hubbard used to direct the worldwide organizations. There were approximately 300 - 500 'Sea Org' Scientologists aboard the Apollo. I was given a berth in the women's dorm and placed in the Estates Project Force (EPF).

The EPF was designed to work on the individual to gauge how much strain one could tolerate. I was told the EPF would transform me to an 'able-bodied seaman.'

In EPF, my day began at 6:00 am. I scrubbed clothes from 6:00 am until 12:00 noon without breakfast or any breaks. The clothes were scrubbed by hand in a bucket, and I was directed to rinse each article in 13 separate buckets. Then I hung the clothes on the deck to dry.

After one-half hour lunch I was assigned to clean six cabins. Cabins had to meet white glove inspection. This meant a white glove or Q-tip was used to check corners and shelves of each cabin for dust. If the cabins were not cleaned to white-glove perfection, I had to run a lap around the boat before recleaning the room. A lap was equivalent to about one-fifth of a mile. My day would end about 12:00 midnight.

On rainy days I ironed the clothes dry. This required ironing during the evening hours and into the morning hours. On many occasions I ironed through the night, finishing at 6:00 am. I then started washing the next morning's clothing. On occasion I worked three or four days without sleep. I fell asleep at the ironing board with a hot iron in my hand. My senior, 'Doreen' Gilliam, 'caught' me sleeping and yanked my head off the board. She ordered me to run laps and assigned me a condition of 'Doubt.' A condition of 'Doubt' required 15 hours of 'amends work'. This additional work had to be performed during my sleep and meal time. Until I completed my amends work, I was ordered not to communicate with anyone. I ate lunch alone. Finally, I spoke up, telling them I had enough. I was sent to the Commanding messenger, and she assigned me one month in the galley, washing pots and pans. I washed pots and pans for one month and went back into the EPF.

EPF was like prison. I had to say 'sir' to everyone and was generally allowed 15 minutes for meals. They would not let me out of the EPF until I proved myself. I was totally brainwashed to receive and take orders. I was paid \$2.90 per week for this work.

While in EPF I never heard from my parents, no phone calls or letters. Aboard the ship, I received a Telex from Peter Albert, who was the Continental Justice Chief, FOLO. The Telex informed me my father had been declared an SP (Suppressive Person). They said he was a 'plant,' a spy within Scientology. I began crying and asked to leave, telling them I could convince my father to return to Scientology.

Dede Riesdorf, the 'Super Cargo' of our 'org', would not permit me to leave. I explained I wanted to leave and reunite with my mom and dad, but she would not permit this. She told me to 'disconnect' from my parents because my parents were SP's. Disconnection meant no more communication with my parents. They told me my parents would not make it in the world, but that I would make it in the world.

Tony Armstrong, the commanding officer, assigned me a 'condition of Doubt' and ordered me back on the EPF. She said since I wished to leave I had to return to the EPF. I was automatically assigned 15 'hours of amends' due to the 'condition of Doubt.' I returned to the 6:00 am - midnight schedule, again, occasionally working twenty-four hours a day. Approximately one month after, I was reassigned to 'Training Routines' (TR).

During the Training Routines, myself and two other practiced carrying messages to LRH. We had to listen to a message, repeat it in the same tone, and practice salutes.

'Ghosting' was on-the-job training where I learned how to serve LRH. I followed another messenger around and observed her carry his hat, light his cigarettes, carry his ashtray, and prepare his toiletries. Eventually, I performed those duties.

As his servant I would sit outside his room and help him out of bed when he called 'messenger.' I responded by assisting him out of bed, lighting his cigarette, running his shower, preparing his toiletries and helping him dress. After that I ran to his office to check it, hoping it passed white glove inspection. He frequently exploded if he found dust or dirt or smelled soap in his clothes. That is why we used 13 buckets to rinse.

I then would set up LRH's auditing room; he audited himself. Then I prepared a snack for him. LRH would go into auditing for several hours. Later, I delivered messages to LRH. I carried messages between Hubbard and the Telex machines on the Apollo, which were connected to Scientology Organizations on land. The messages were also sent via Telex to RONY when someone went ashore.

While on the Apollo, I observed numerous punishments meted out for many minor infractions or mistakes made in connection with Hubbard's very strict and bizarre policies. On a number of occasions, I saw people placed in the 'chain lockers' of the boat on direct orders of Hubbard. These lockers were small, smelly holes, covered by grates where the chain for the anchor was stored. I saw one boy held in there for 30 nights, crying and begging to be released. He was only allowed out to clean the bilges where the sewer and refuse of the ship collected. I believe his 'crimes' were taking or using a musical instrument, I believe a flute, of someone else without permission. I also saw a young boy and a young girl thrown in the chain lockers at separate times because of romantic involvements they had with other people. Hubbard fanatically prohibited involvement between the sexes, or out-2D, as it is called in Scientology. Married persons were allowed to see each other but it was strictly controlled.

LRH told me he was selling the ship and moving to a land base. The boat was sold sometime during October 1975. Approximately 500 people moved to Daytona Beach. We rented several hotels in Daytona. After several months we moved to the Fort Harrison in Clearwater. At first, LRH called it the United Churches. I heard LRH scheme this cover. He said we would be called United Churches, although no other real churches were involved. Finally, Mayor Cazares discovered that United Churches was a cover name for Scientology.

I discovered this scheme by reading public relations office papers. These papers were prepared by the public relations office, and the papers explained the United Church front. A public relations officer was a person who dealt with the public.

At Fort Harrison, security guards were stationed outside to prevent people from 'blowing'. To 'blow' meant to leave Scientology. People were not allowed to just leave Scientology. Approximately 30 to 40 people tried to escape. These people were caught and placed in the RPF (Rehabilitation Project Force). The RPF was a Scientology 'concentration camp', where people who were 'security threats' were kept under guard. The RPF at Fort Harrison was in a storage area.

Some people were allowed to 'leave' after being 'security checked', searched, and after having their Scientology-related books and materials confiscated, even if they had paid for them. These people also had to sign documents pertaining to their 'crimes' and sign various documents prepared by the Guardian's Office, the 'GO'. The GO was the secret police arm of Scientology.

At Fort Harrison I remained LRH's personal messenger. I observed LRH control the operation of Scientology in the various 'orgs' worldwide from Fort Harrison. I coded and decoded messages to and directly from Hubbard. Hubbard used approximately 15 codes at this time to conceal his operations, programs and policies, which he disseminated worldwide. I personally delivered messages concerning Operation Snowwhite, Operation Freakout, Operation Goldmine, and other Scientology secret and illegal operations. I also filed these operations in Hubbard's personal filing cabinet, and later in filing cabinets of the GO.

All Telex communications were processed through his messengers. These Telexes were coded and sent to: Los Angeles, United States Guardian's Office, Folo, RONY, Africa, Henning Heldt, Arthur Maren, Jane Kember and other individuals and locations. Telexes were sent to all Guardian Offices worldwide. One Telex from LRH questioned Mayor Cazares' educational background. He discovered this information through a private investigator.

LRH declared people Suppressive Persons if they escaped from Scientology. He sent Telexes to the Guardian's Office listing the SP's. I have seen names of people declared SP's by LRH.

In February, 1976 Hubbard left for New York. I performed the same duties of coding and decoding messages for the Guardian's Office. I received many messages from Hubbard. When Hubbard was in La Qunita, California, I continued to code and decode messages from Hubbard to the Guardian's Office seven days a week until August 1977.

In August 1977 I refused to perform a certain order and was sent to the galley, where I performed menial labor until I emotionally broke apart and was sent to the Rehabilitation Project Force (RPF) on the direct orders of Hubbard.

In the RPF you were labeled 'treasonous' and force to work 18 hours a day, 7 days a week, and oftentimes received only 'rice and beans' and water. During this time I personally observed a person chained to pipes in the boiler room in the Fort Harrison building for a period of weeks. In the RPF I saw people screaming and crying during the constant 'auditing' on the E-meter. The E-meter is a lie detector used during auditing. RPF prisoners were forced to undergo 'auditing' in order to 'audit out' their evil purposes against Hubbard and Scientology. I cried virtually the whole time I was in the RPF.

Finally, in November 1977 I decided I had to escape. At approximately 4:30 a.m. I stole the keys from a guard who was sleeping at the door to the storage area where we slept. I crawled through an air duct on my stomach, where I observed the telephone in the lobby. I saw no one, ran to the telephone, and called my father and told him of the situation. He told me he would send my uncle to come and get me and take me to Fort Lauderdale. I convinced the officers in the RPF that my uncle was a VIP for the Miami Dolphins (which was not true), and that if they refused his request to visit, that might cause bad public relations. Finally, with my uncle's assistance, I escaped and flew back to Las Vegas.

Approximately two weeks after I returned to Las Vegas, two of Hubbards's agents came to my house and told me that Hubbard wanted to see me. I told them I would never return. They then asked if I would go for a cup of coffee with them. After a short while I agreed to have coffee. I got in the car, in the front seat, and sat between the two agents. After driving a few minutes, I noticed we were driving to the highway, and I asked where we were going. They told me I was being taken to Los Angeles to see Hubbard.

In Los Angeles I was locked in a room and forced to undergo a 'security check' on the E-meter. I was very scared and crying, and told them I had a family reunion to go to during the Holidays. I told them I had relatives on the police department in Las Vegas, and that I would come back after the Holidays. I convinced them to release me, and I returned home by bus. For weeks after I arrived home, they constantly called me to find out when I would return. I said Never!

I was in Scientology from the age of 13 to the age of 18. I received at some times approximately \$2.50 a week pay, and at other times approximately \$17.50 a week. I received no education, and in fact phony classrooms were set up in Florida to demonstrate to educational officials of Clearwater from knowing we were living and sleeping on the floor in hallways and storage areas, sometimes without mattresses.

The Organization currently has approximately \$800.00 of my personal property. When I demanded it be returned to me, they sent me a bill for the amount of \$58,000, which I returned to them, and they thereafter sent me a "corrected" bill for \$36,005.70, which I have attached to this statement.

In December 1979, after a class action suit was brought by former members of Scientology, I received an 'Amnesty Proclamation', which I have also attached. It is possible that some former members of Scientology may be deceived by this Amnesty and return to Scientology. I feel frightened for them because I know what it is like inside Scientology. I just hope the public learns what Hubbard is really doing.

The facts, of which I have personal knowledge, set forth in the foregoing affidavit are true. Facts of which I do not have personal knowledge, I believe to be true based on my best information and belief. The dates stated herein cover many years and represent my best memory, but I am not precisely certain of their accuracy.

Signed under the pain and penalties of perjury this day of January 25, 1980.

Tonja C. Burden of Las Vegas, Nevada