

# INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM

## Anti-Scientology books: targets of lawsuits

Having won out of court settlements and apologies from publishers of four recent books exposing the "inside story" on the "religion" of Scientology and its founder, Ron Hubbard, defenders of Scientology have vowed to take to court any Canadian library or bookstore that refuses to get rid of these "libelous" books. The Scientologists have conducted similar suits in England, Australia, and the U.S. The books in question are *The Mind Benders* by Cyril Vosper (reportedly once a high official at Scientology world headquarters); *Scientology: the Now Religion* by George Malko; *Inside Scientology* by Robert Kaufman; and *Scandal of Scientology* by Paulette Cooper.

Canadian libraries in Hamilton and Etobicoke have refused to remove the critical books from circulation, and they're now facing lawsuits. The books have reportedly been taken off the shelves of Sir George Williams University and St. Mary's University. One Canadian library has reported the theft of an anti-Scientology book and has complained of the difficulty in replacing it because most



National Book Committee poster

publishers have withdrawn such books from the market. They're available mostly from second-hand stores. While some booksellers have given in to pressure, others have either refused to discard the controversial books or they've retaliated by refusing to sell both pro- and anti-Scientology titles.

The Canadian Library Association has started a legal defense fund to aid smaller libraries in particular, and it has plans for organizing authors, publishers,

booksellers, and libraries into a common front against allegations from the Scientology group. Libraries, says CLA, are being asked to remove books that have not been found libelous in Canadian courts.

In the U.S., two publishers (Dell and Belmont-Tower Books) have agreed to out of court settlements: they paid damage fees of \$7500 and \$500 respectively, agreed not to republish, and offered public apologies.

The Scientologists' California chapter has written *LJ* to complain about favorable reviews which were given to both the *Scandal of Scientology* and *Scientology: the Now Religion*. The books were reviewed for *LJ* by Eleanor Smith of the Office of Education's New York Regional Office, who said, "libraries seem to have licked the sex problem, and they're now facing attacks on political and religious grounds."

The Scientologists' current drive is being compared to those launched by the Christian Scientists years ago against critics and to the John Birch Society campaign to get pro-Bircher books into libraries and anti-Bircher books out.

One report on the Scientology battle noted that there have been several incidents reported of unidentified persons raiding files of newspapers and removing materials evidently considered damaging to the Scientology cause.

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