

# FREEDOM

*Exposé:*  
Sowing the  
Seeds of  
Intolerance

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# Sowing the Seeds of Intolerance

Alberta.

Unlike his peers in the academic study of religion, Kent has taken a stance against religious freedom. He has openly proclaimed as much for many years by lending his support to the activities of coercive "deprogrammers" — hired thugs who seek to destroy religious faith by emotional duress or physical force — as well as his advocacy of already discredited theories challenging the very validity of religious faith. Yet this is the same man who told the *Toronto Star* in reference to satanism "If you want to drink blood it's your business. If you want to practice sex magic it's your business, a risky business but consenting adults can make those choices."

#### Support of Human Rights Violators

One area in which Kent has recently demonstrated his prejudice concerns Germany.

serious criticism of human rights violations in Germany since the Second World War.

Stephen Kent, on the other hand, has travelled to Germany at the expense of German officials and one of Germany's two *de facto* state religions — the Lutheran Church — to support the exact actions that have outraged the rest of the world.

#### "An unfettered iron fist"

Kent's position becomes apparent when comparing his views with those of others who have witnessed discrimination in Germany or commented upon it.

The "Ad Hoc Committee to Investigate Discrimination Against Religious and Ethnic Minorities in Germany" — a five-man body led by two members of the British House of Lords — traveled to Germany to investigate complaints from 17 minority groups. "Our inescapable conclusion is that the might of the state and church apparatus has been brought to bear on these minority religions and an uneven playing field has been created in an attempt to destroy them," they reported.

"[M]odern Germany, while professing to be a democratic republic with a clean human rights record, has, in fact, one of great contradiction. Nowhere is this more evident than in cases involving many newer religions," wrote Dr. Stephen C. Feinstein, Chairman of the History Department of the University of Wisconsin, River Falls.

"I am extremely happy that all of you, representing such a great diversity of religions and nations, are standing here today," said Dr. Gabrielle Yonan, religious scholar and teacher at Berlin University, speaking to a crowd of more than



*The intolerant and unorthodox views of University of Alberta sociologist Stephen Kent take on their full odor when viewed in context*

The most repugnant name in Canada today is that of Ernst Zundel, the infamous Canadian Holocaust denier, who has plagued the international Jewish community for decades with his hate, bile and propaganda. His legacy has been that of pushing to the limit Canadian tolerance for freedom of speech while espousing hatred and antisemitism. The counter-play between our cherished freedom of speech and our

overwhelming distaste of Zundel's cursed message has brought to Zundel a level of public awareness and notoriety in Canada he does not deserve.

One of Zundel's tactics to persuade individuals to his cause is the use of sympathetic academics. On his website, Zundel states that in 1979 he "attended the conference at Northrup University in California where the 'Institute of Historical Review' was founded. There, he conferred with Revisionists from around the world [sic], all of whom also researched and questioned the

so-called 'Holocaust' He was most impressed by Dr. Arthur Butz, Professor at Northwestern University and author of the Standard Revisionist text 'The Hoax of the Twentieth Century,' and Professor Dr. Robert Faurisson of the Lyon II University in France."

Sadly, this is a tactic that is also employed against other religions, especially ones termed as 'New Religious Movements' by credible scholars. The academic point man for the voices of hate against new religions is Stephen Kent, professor of sociology at the University of

Particularly since reunification of East and West, Germany has experienced a rising surge of intolerance against many religious and ethnic minorities. This has been severe enough that, for five consecutive years, Germany has been criticized in the annual Human Rights Report of the U.S. State Department. (See "U.S. State Department," page 10) Together with criticism from many other international human rights bodies including the United Nations as well as numerous scholars, politicians, artists and countless concerned individuals, this amounts to the most

10,000 gathered in Berlin to protest official discrimination and intolerance.

Discrimination against members of the Church of Scientology has been specifically noted by many authorities.

"There is no doubt that Scientologists in Germany have been denied their basic human rights by the German government," Professor Petro B.T. Bilaniuk, Professor of Theology and Religious Studies at the University of Toronto said in Frankfurt last year.



*Anti-religionist Stephen Kent (left) has drawn on numerous discredited and disreputable sources including Gerry Armstrong (above) a fugitive from justice who has boasted of his propensity for lying and fabrication.*

In a report from the Human Rights Centre of the University of Essex, England — one of the most respected bodies in the field — the authors noted that, "In Germany, democracy is used as an ideology to impose conformity. It has been dismaying to discover that the state, and some of its politicians and people, are using what we know from the past to be well-worn paths of discrimination and of intolerance and of inciting intolerance towards a new religious minority, the Scientologists."

"The mere attempt by politicians to censor art because of the artist's religious affiliation sends chills down my spine," said John Travolta, commenting on the failed efforts led by the youth faction of Chancellor Helmut Kohl's political party to invoke a boycott of his film "Phenomenon" because of his own religious beliefs. Travolta was speaking to U.S. senators and congressmen at special hearings of the Commission for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

"An unfettered iron fist looms over religious minorities in Germany," added soul legend Isaac Hayes, describing his own experience with religious discrimination in Germany.

The evidence of German intolerance is indisputable and could fill many more pages. Yet Kent has gone "out of his way" to defend the precise German officials criticized and to justify their acts of extreme prejudice.

Ursula Caberta, one official of the Social Democratic Party — the party which funded Kent's trip — has been confirmed to be a "human rights violator" by German courts. She also told the *Los Angeles Times* that she "considers it a point of honor that [she has been called] 'the new Goebbels,' referring to the Nazi propagandist."

#### Discredited sources, uncritical reliance

One of the most significant ways in which Kent differs from others in his field is in his uncritical reliance on former adherents of a religion who have subsequently abandoned their faith and turned hostile towards it. Known as "apostasy" (Greek: apo, away from, and stana, to stand) this phenomenon is well known to religious scholars.

Bryan Ronald Wilson, Reader Emeritus in Sociology at the University of Oxford, is one of the most — if not the most — respected scholars in the field of the sociology of religion.

As Professor Wilson points out, apostasy has been a common phenomenon throughout the history of the various denominations of the Judeo-Christian-Muslim tradition: "There have been dramatic instances on a large scale, as in the

so-called 'great schism' of the eastern (Orthodox) and western (Catholic) churches, and in the emergence of Protestantism and the Reformation. ... Given the number of religious bodies in Christendom which originated in schism, it must be clear that apostasy has been of widespread and common occurrence."

Of more recent times, Wilson notes: "... Neither the objective sociological researcher nor the court of law can readily regard the apostate as a credible or reliable source of evidence. He must always be seen as one whose personal history predisposes him to bias with respect to both his previous religious commitment and to his former associates. If he is anxious to testify against his former allegiances and affiliations, the suspicion must arise that he acts from a personal motivation to vindicate himself and to regain his

can create documents with relative ease. I used to do it for a living... Just f---ing allege it."

Yet Armstrong's "allegations" are quoted in Kent's "academic" papers as if they were fact.

Kent also relies for "information" on Andre Tabayoyon — an apostate with a history of violence so extreme he has been restrained by courts from even approaching churches of Scientology and once threatened to kill his own son and daughter-in-law and "feed [them] to the coyotes."

Kent does his own academic credibility even further damage by his association with members of the former Cult Awareness Network — whose agents and accomplices were landed with a federal court judgment of almost \$5 million after a U.S. Court found them guilty of anti-religious crimes "so outrageous in character and so extreme in degree as to go beyond all possible bounds



**Top:** Berlin Free University Professor Gabrielle Yonan, one of many scholars who has spoken out against German intolerance.



**Left:** Lord Duncan McNair (at microphone) and members of the Ad Hoc Committee.

**Below left:** Professor Petro B.T. Bilaniuk, University of Toronto.

**Below right:** Dr. Bryan Ronald Wilson of Oxford.

self-esteem, by showing himself to have been first a victim but subsequently to have become a redeemed crusader. As various instances have indicated, he is likely to be suggestible and ready to enlarge or embellish his grievances to satisfy that species of journalist whose interest is more in sensational copy than in an objective statement of the truth."

Kent's academic papers, however, rely upon these types of statements from apostates. One such apostate, Gerry Armstrong, currently lives in Canada where he is a fugitive from justice in the United States. Gerry Armstrong's vitriolic denigration of the Church and Church Founder L. Ron Hubbard has resulted in court orders and hundreds of thousands of dollars in fines for his contempt of those orders. Reliance on anything Armstrong may say is contentious given his boast that "I

of decency and ... utterly intolerable in a civilized community."

It is a shame and waste of taxpayers dollars that between 1986 and 1992 Kent received approximately \$96,000 in "research grants" from Social Sciences & Humanities Research Council Canada, for the purpose of studying new and minority religions. Considering the path of his "research," it is outrageous that he would receive any support from the public purse.

Freedom of speech demands that Stephen Kent be permitted to hold his unorthodox views of religion, in the same vein that Ernst Zundel does. But his support of discrimination and intolerance which has led to human rights violations and even violence — in Germany as well as in Canada — should disqualify him totally from any government funding and support.



## What Religious Scholars Say About the Scientology Religion

The ideal way to find out about anything is to look yourself.

The next best alternative? Consult someone you can trust to be both knowledgeable and objective.

What is Scientology? Why is it a religion? How is it similar to other religions? How is it different? How do you determine what is a religion and what is not?

These and other questions have been independently addressed by the world's most authoritative scholars of religion, including:

Dr. M. Darrol Bryant Professor of Religion and Culture, Renison College, University of Waterloo

Dr. Bryan Ronald Wilson Reader Emeritus in Sociology, University of Oxford, England

Geoffrey Parrinder Professor Emeritus of the Comparative Study of Religions, University of London

Dr. K. Dobbelaere Professor of Sociology, Catholic University of Leuven, Belgium

Dario Sabbatucci Professor of History of Religions, University of Rome, Italy

Mr. Fumio Sawada Eighth Holder of the Secrets of Yu-itso Shinto (the oldest religion in Japan).

More than 25 authorities from 19 countries have conducted extensive academic studies on all aspects of the Scientology religion, resulting in the most detailed picture of the Church and its members ever compiled by qualified outside experts.

Copies of their reports are available upon request. Write to Freedom, 696 Yonge St., Toronto, ON M4Y 2A7.

Or, read their views on the Internet at:

<http://hatewatch.freedommag.org/hatewatch/experts>

