



© 2004 Diocese of Novosibirsk

Press Conference, Novosibirsk November 11, 2004

From left to right: Archpriest Alexander Novopashin, head of Information and Consultation Center on Sectarian Questions, Novosibirsk; Archimandrite Varnava, Bulgaria; Professor Alexander L. Dvorkin, President of the St. Irenaeus of Lyon Center of Religious Research, Moscow; Archbishop Tikhon, Novosibirsk and Bersk; Gilles Bottine, Secretary General of Mission Interministérielle de Vigilance et de Lutte Contre les Dérives Sectaires (MIVILUDES), France; (behind M. Bottine) Jacques Richard, Honorary President of Fédération Européenne des Centres de Recherche et d'Information sur le Sectarisme (FECRIS); Gerry Armstrong, Canada; Antje Blumenthal, member of the German Bundestag, Hamburg, Germany. Behind Gerry and Frau Blumenthal are two translators.

Chilliwack Times Article [[Text](#)] [[Image](#)] 11-23-2004

Armstrong Paper: [Scientology: Cult of Total Espionage](#)

20 TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 23, 2004 CHILLIWACK TIMES

News

Collapse of Soviet regime left country open to cults

By Mike Chouinard
mchouinard@chilliwacktimes.com

A local man engaged in a long-standing battle with the Church of Scientology recently took his message to the ends of the earth—in this case, Siberia.

Gerry Armstrong spent nine days at a conference called Totalitarian Cults and the Democratic State, held in Novosibirsk, the Siberian capital. About 600 people attended to hear approximately 20 speakers, including Armstrong, speak on a number of topics.

"It was a big thing in the area and will have considerable impact," Armstrong said, adding that conference organizers plan to publish all the presentations, likely this winter.

Some of the presentations, he said, were more generalized while some focused on specific groups or trends such as the rise of Islamic cultism.

"Mine, of course, was specific to Scientology," he added.

According to Armstrong, Russia has been a conducive environment for new cults to take root because of the vacuum left when the old

Soviet regime collapsed.

"Their experience really relates to the fall of communism...so it has been rather fertile ground for cults."

However, he credits the Russian Orthodox Church for its efforts to stop this trend.

Armstrong, who was born in Chilliwack and now lives here again, used to work closely with the late Scientology founder L. Ron Hubbard but left in the early 1980s. He was been in court on occasion in the time since for speaking out and setting up a Web site about his experiences as well as criticizing Scientology for how it treats its critics.

The name of his paper at the Russian conference was 'Scientology: Cult of Total Espionage', and he said his experience this time at the conference was a little different compared with past ones. This time he had some extra security and faced no disruptions, which he said Scientology supporters had caused in the past.

"They have on those occasions jumped up and tried to create a situation."

Now back in Chilliwack, Armstrong is preparing his response to the Church of

Scientology's appeal of a Marin County court decision this spring.

At that time a judge said Armstrong owed the Church of Scientology \$500,000 (U.S.), although the group had been seeking a figure in the neighbourhood of \$10 million (U.S.). For Armstrong, the matter is one of freedom of speech. On the other hand Church of Scientology representatives have said they simply want Armstrong to stick to an agreement not to speak out about his experiences. Armstrong has to file his response to the appeal by Dec. 9.

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 23, 2004 [CHILLIWACK TIMES](#)
News

Collapse of Soviet Regime left country open to cults

By Mike Chouinard
mchouinard@chilliwacktimes.com

A local man engaged in a long-standing battle with the Church of Scientology recently took his message to the ends of the earth—in this case, Siberia.

Gerry Armstrong spent nine days at a conference called Totalitarian Cults and the Democratic State, held in Novosibirsk, the Siberian capital. About 600 people attended to hear approximately 20 speakers, including Armstrong, speak on a number of topics.

"It was a big thing in the area and will have considerable impact," Armstrong said, adding that conference organizers plan to publish all the presentations, likely this winter.

Some of the presentations, he said, were more generalized, while some focused on specific groups or trends such as the rise of Islamic cultism.

"Mine, of course, was specific to Scientology," he added.

According to Armstrong, Russia has been a conducive environment for new cults to take root because of the vacuum left when the old Soviet regime collapsed.

"Their experience really relates to the fall of communism...so it has been rather fertile ground for cults."

However, he credits the Russian Orthodox Church for its efforts to stop this trend.

Armstrong, who was born in Chilliwack and now lives here again, used to work closely with the late Scientology founder L. Ron Hubbard but left in the early 1980s. He has been in court on occasion in the time since for speaking out and setting up a Web site about his experiences as well as criticizing Scientology for how it treats its critics.

The name of his paper at the Russian conference was '[Scientology: Cult of Total Espionage](#)', and he said his experience this time at the conference was a little different compared with past ones. This time he had some extra security and faced no disruptions, which he said Scientology supporters had caused in the past.

"They have on those occasions jumped up and tried to create a situation."

Now back in Chilliwack, Armstrong is preparing his response to the Church of Scientology's appeal of a Marin County court decision this spring.

At that time a judge said Armstrong owed the Church of Scientology \$500,000 (U.S.), although the group had been seeking a figure in the neighborhood of \$10 million (U.S.). For Armstrong, the matter is one of freedom of speech. On the other hand Church of Scientology representatives have said they simply want Armstrong to stick to an agreement not to speak out about his experiences. Armstrong has to file his response to the appeal by Dec. 9.

§ [What's New](#) || [Search](#) || [Legal Archive](#) || [Wog Media](#) || [Cult Media](#) || [CoW](#)® || [Writings](#) || [Fun](#) || [Disclaimer](#) || [Contact](#) §