

An Editorial

In this age of religious searching and turmoil, it is not surprising that there has been an upsurge of the phenomenon of cults. Most Canadians have heard of Jimmy Jones and the so-called "Cult of Death", Sun Myung Moon and his Unification Church and Hare Krishna. Along with these major cults have sprung up thousands of more obscure, small groups, each with their own peculiar and potentially dangerous practices. The most recent to come to the attention of the media is a but growing cult whose headquarters are located on the northern shores of Lake Superior, about nine hundred and sixty miles outside Toronto. We know it as "Dorion Bible Cult".

It was last summer (the summer of '78) that our reporters infiltrated this group and observed cult-life firsthand. As with most other cults the group is marked by its communal behaviour: eating, sleeping, studying, playing and attending to other business together. Cult members turn over their possessions to the administration who store them in numbered envelopes. Some members have even been seen carrying clothing up to the house---presumably as a donation.

Much of the day is spent playing games that vaguely resemble football and volleyball in order to render the members docile and senseless for indoctrination sessions.

The structure of the cult seems to be hierarchical. Our observations led us to believe there were three distinct ranks, starting with, from the top, those called "staff", followed by others called "campers" and, at the bottom, a caste of semi-slaves called "kitchen girls".

Of course, as in all cults, life is marked by the dominating presence of the cult leader. All tremble when this man passes and silence immediately fills the room when he stands to speak. This man dwells in what is, comparatively speaking, a mansion. In addition, he spends much of his time in his office, brooding at his script-typewriter, trying to invent a "staff policy" for the letter x. This man has adopted the Biblical pseudonym of "Andrew James". Another family has chosen the name of the river Jordan. A further indication of the power James holds over his group was noted when one of our reporters heard some of the younger children refer to James as "Daddy". References are even made to "King James".

Our reporters were somewhat unsure as to the doctrine of the cult. It was obvious to them from the behaviour of younger maintenance staff that, unlike some other groups, they do not believe in salvation by works. Our reporters were only able to attend one indoctrination session, near the beginning of the week, which consisted mainly of the cult leader, James, establishing the rules of his tyrannical reign. The clearest indication of their doctrinal error is their celebration of Christmas in the middle of the summer.

Slogans and jingles abound, designed to bombard the mind of young cult members. An example is:

Do your giving
While you're living.
Then you're knowing
Where it's going.

--obviously a threat on the lives of those who would hold back their possessions from the greedy hands of "Daddy" James.

Chanting is a major part of the lives of those exalted members called "staff". Among their chants are such favourites as "Here's a bird. There's a bird. Here he comes again-plop!" and "Here's your coffee. Here's your tea. Here's your plastic bag—blaaah."

Whatever their doctrine is, there is obviously an authoritarian tone to it. Campers were observed making a Fascist style salute—formed by holding the Bible aloft with a stiff arm. Military training is even part of cult life, evidenced by karate lessons on the beach and long hours at archery practice. From observing the archers, our reporters concluded the cult lives in paranoid fear of an invasion of worms.

Foreign influence is suspected. Our reporters concluded this when, one day in July, the flag of a certain foreign country was displayed.

Is this a plot to undermine the morals of our youth by depriving them of the joy of rock music, sex and drugs? Are our young people in danger of being reduced to the level of mindless zombies who roar with laughter as a man stabs himself with a plate scraper? Is this cult a threat to our safety? One last fact and I believe these questions will be answered:

They drink Kool-Aid.

You have been warned.