

## Mysterious Suicides and the Church of Scientology

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*“Dear István, according to our records, you only have 1961 HUF [10 USD] on your account. Please send a donation.” – this is what Mrs. István Horváth can read in the letters regularly sent to his husband. No one is answering these communications though. After completing a purification cure and various Scientology therapies, István Horváth committed suicide on May 6th this year. The 37-year old man set himself aflame in his backyard.*

His illness started out in 2004, and its first symptoms were back and chest pains. István Horváth was a Development Engineer at Magyar Telekom [Hungary's biggest telecommunication company] and he was acknowledged as the “Employee of the Year” for his contributions in 2003.

Horváth was examined by several specialists, but nothing was found. Subsequently, he started seeing a psychiatrist and was treated for depression.

(The Church of Scientology has a very strong opinion of psychiatric treatments. Citizens’ Commission on Human Rights [CCHR], a foundation with links to the Church, regularly informs the general public in brochures about the “crimes committed by psychiatrists in these days”. The deep-seated animosity towards psychiatry might have something to do with the psychiatric treatment received by Church Founder L. Ron Hubbard.)

Initially, the pharmaceutical drugs prescribed to Horváth started to improve his condition and the symptoms became less severe. A little while later, István Demecs, his brother-in-law, who happened to be an auditor (apparently they have a similar function in Scientology as the ministers have in other churches), intervened.

The parents of Horváth now think that they had lost both of their children. Their son is dead and the relationship with their daughter, who is the wife of Demecs, has become rather toxic. They told me that István Demecs and his wife (the sister of István Horváth) convinced their son to stop with the medical treatment, and they would continue to cure him using Scientology methods for a hundred thousand forints [500 USD]. István Demecs even called the doctor who treated Horváth to inform him that they would “stop any further drugging of István Horváth”.

The psychiatrist who treated Horváth told me that she only met him a few times and the condition of the man was not very serious.

István Horváth went on a sick leave when the Scientology treatments started. As Demecs forbade the family from meeting Horváth until the treatment was complete, they did not know what went down. Their son told them later what the treatment consisted of: he had to sit in a hot sauna for 5-6 hours a day and consume huge amounts of vitamins. All this was “prescribed” by Demecs, an engineering college graduate. During the course of this “purification”, Horváth became very ill. Demecs and his wife informed the family that István “vomited all over the place, was very smelly and they had to wash his towels frequently”.

(Horváth was not the only patient of Demecs – he was also curing a woman using similar methods. However, her family got fed up with the so-called cure and rescued her from his clutches).

Following the suggestions of Demecs, István Horváth started to attend various Scientology courses. Demecs and his wife (Horváth's sister) accompanied him to Budapest. At these occasions, Horváth paid for the fuel, dinners and every other associated cost. The total amount Horváth paid for course fees, donations and the lifetime Scientology membership was 682078 HUF [around 3400 USD], as seen on an invoice issued by the Church of Scientology. According to this family, he paid thousands of dollars more, but there is no record of that. Additionally, he gave 1 million HUF [5000 USD] to Demecs.

Horváth's condition badly deteriorated by October, 2004. As his wife refused to join the Church of Scientology, Horváth's sickness was then attributed to the fact that his wife did not love him anymore. His mental condition became so grave that even the Church of Scientology was reluctant to deal with him any further; his parents were informed that Horváth committed an "overt act" and they assigned an "ethics officer" to him.

István Demecs refused to answer any of my questions. He kept insisting though that that 1 million HUF he received from István Horváth was only a "loan". I asked him what the definition of an "overt act" was and about the exact authority and responsibilities of an ethics officer, but he did not answer these questions.

By the winter of 2004, Horváth was determined to cut all ties to his past. He went to his place of work and called the CEO on the internal phone system and tried to convince him to adopt the universal teachings of Scientology in their HR matters. He then accused the boss of his wife with exploiting her and thereby preventing her to spend enough time with her family.

Pressured by his family and co-workers, he finally went back in February 2005 to the psychiatric ward in Győr [a city in Hungary]. According to the lead psychiatrist of the department, Horváth was completely uncooperative at first, but his condition improved after a few months of treatment, so he was released from the hospital and started to work again.

When Demecs found out that Horváth was seeing a psychiatrist again, he immediately visited the family "to see the patient". According to Horváth's wife, Demecs did not say a word to his husband, just gave him a look of disapproval.

On May 6, 2005, István Horváth poured petrol on himself and died. According to the official report of the medical examiner, he was momentarily insane when he committed this act.

This was not the first mysterious case of suicide in Hungary, which was tied to the Church of Scientology in some manner. In 2001, Gábor Pesti, a diabetic, changed his doctor to a Scientologist one, who was a neurologist by trade. What exactly happened after that is unknown (as neurologists cannot prescribe insulin), but the young man died.

Dr. Éva Oltványi committed suicide in 1999. Acting upon the advice of Scientologists, she reportedly refused psychiatric treatment and voluntarily left the hospital. Zoltán K. (2002) was another victim, who took his own life. The Scientologist had him sign a declaration that he would not accept any psychiatric help. After his death, representatives of the Church of Scientology told the family that

they are free to attend Scientology courses the man has paid for earlier (it was around 50000 HUF [2500 USD] in undelivered services).

A common theme in these instances is the disappearance of hundreds of thousands of forints [thousands of dollars] "without trace", which probably landed on the bank account of the Church of Scientology or one of its representatives.

The family members and friends of the deceased are willing to talk to the press. Publicity remains their only option, as these tragic events are not officially considered to be acts of criminal nature.

SZÁMLA		Bizonylatszám:	
SZCIENTOLÓGIA EGYZHÁZ BUDAPEST		<b>163813</b>	
1073 Budapest, Erzsébet krt. 5. Telefon: 321-5290; Fax: 321-5295 Adószám: 18160893-2-42, Bankszámlaszám: 10100716-41123900-00000002			
Név: <i>Horváth István</i>	Dátum: <i>20050204</i>	Számla sorozat:	
Cím:	Hétvége dátuma: <i>20050210</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Jövőrés <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Részpénz	
Tel:	Mh.tel:	<input type="checkbox"/> Terhelés	
Megnevezés:	Darab:	Egységár:	Összeg:
<i>A Faktorok</i>			<i>80.000.-</i>
<i>-107.145</i>			<i>2</i>
A végösszeg <i>20</i> % ÁFÁ-t tartalmaz.		Végösszeg: <i>80.000.-</i>	
Fizetési információk: <i>rekes</i>	azon:		
Kiállító: <i>[Signature]</i>	FSM/Könyveladó neve, címe:		Aláírás: <i>[Signature]</i>
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