

SON OF CHURCH Founder

Scientology Student Death Probe

By SHARON SPIGELMYER

SUN Staff Writer

Police and private investigators are probing the mysterious death of the Church of Scientology founder's son, found unidentified three weeks ago near McCarran International Airport in a coma, Coroner Dick Mayne said Monday.

Cause of death is still unknown for Geoffery Quentin McCally Hubbard, 22, of Clearwater, Fla. He was a student and counselor in Scientology.

The homicide division of the Metropolitan Police Department Monday combed the scene where Hubbard was found, and discovered identification, license plate, car registration and title. The items had been buried under a rock.

Sgt. Fred Anderson said, "The information I have leads me to believe it was not a murder," he said. A final conclusion as to cause of death is pending the coroner's report, he said.

Currently, police are seeking information as to who saw Hubbard last and where he had planned to stay in Las Vegas.

Mayne said at a press conference Hubbard was found in his car south of the airport near Sunset Road by a jogger about three weeks ago. He was treated as a "John Doe," person unidentified, for two weeks at Southern Nevada Memorial Hospital before he died Nov. 12.

Hubbard is the son of L. Ron Hubbard, who founded the Church of Scientology 26 years ago.

Art Maren, publicity agent for the church, who was in Las Vegas following the death of Hubbard, said the church has been considered "very controversial" in recent years because of investigations into the International Police Organization (Interpol), the Central Intelligence Agency and massive use of the Freedom of Information Act.

Asked if the family had enemies, Maren said it was a possibility although he could not cite names. He said the family has hired a private detective to look into the mysterious death.

Mayne said Hubbard was found by a jogger Oct. 28. He was taken to the hospital, where he underwent "intensive" care.

No drugs were found in his body when admitted, and examination by neurologists and other specialists turned up no cause for the coma, Chief Health Officer Dr. Otto Ravenholt said.

Once in the hospital, he never spoke a word or improved.

Following his death, he was identified through a police check of the car's serial number. Members of the Church of Scientology aided in the identification.

Maren said Hubbard was in Las Vegas for a vacation, specifically to enroll in a flight training school. He was on a three-week vacation, and as a result no one had reported him missing.

His parents, out of the country, were notified Saturday. A representative of the wealthy family was expected in Las Vegas Monday to arrange funeral services. It was expected the funeral would not be in Las Vegas.

Maren said he and the family do not believe the youth committed suicide. "He was a happy guy, more importantly he was very stable," Maren said.

Coroner Mayne said a gross autopsy and toxicological examinations failed to determine cause of death, and a microscopic examination of vital organs should be completed this week.

He said it is possible certain bizarre drugs might not have shown up in exams already conducted.

The youth at death was described by Mayne as about 5'1", 111 pounds, blond hair and blue eyes. There were no scars or marks on the body. He weighed about 120 to 125 pounds when he entered the hospital.

The church, which has about 600,000 active members, emphasizes "great personal awareness, happiness, self-respect and awareness of the world affairs," Maren said.

He said he did not know whether the family has been threatened in recent months. The church is currently attempting to get a past medical history of young Hubbard.

Hubbard Death Mystery

Geoffery Hubbard, the son of Church of Scientology founder L. Ron Hubbard, has been cremated at the request of his family, it was reported Wednesday.

Hubbard, who died from an unknown cause Nov. 12, was cremated Tuesday by Palm Mortuary. His remains reportedly were being taken to Los Angeles, where the church has its main headquarters.

Results from microscopic tests to determine what killed Hubbard were expected later. An autopsy and a toxicological exam failed to turn up any clues as to the cause of death.

Richard Mayne, Clark County medical coroner, said the cremation did not pose any problems for his office because samples of all the vital organs already had been taken.

Hubbard, 22, of Clearwater, Fla., was found in a car in a semi-comatose state Oct. 28. Hubbard was listed as a John Doe when he was taken to Southern Nevada Memorial Hospital for treatment because neither he nor his car contained any identification.

He didn't respond to medical treatment and died two weeks later at the hospital. He wasn't positively identified until last Thursday, when authorities traced the serial number of his car.

Police scoured the area near McCarran International Airport for a second time Monday and found some of Hubbard's identification papers buried under a rock.

Authorities said their investigation appears to rule out the possibility of murder.

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Sociologist reports on sects

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Some cults may aid blacks

By DAVID E. ANDERSON
UPI Religion Writer

As many as 20 million Americans may be involved in the fringe religious cults such as Scientology, Hare Krishna, the Unification Church and some black gospel groups, according to some sociologists.

But, despite a lot of warnings about the potential negative impact of the cults, at least one sociologist believes that for blacks cults may play a positive social role.

"What cults and sects bring to the groups that form them is a sense of worth," according to Milt Sernett, assistant professor of Afro-American Studies at Syracuse University.

"They (cults) are developed by the disinherited to meet their need for status and a sense of belonging."

Only in their religious sects and cults, Sernett asserts, have blacks been relatively free of the influence of white society and been able to develop something of their own style.

Sernett has instituted a course at Syracuse to examine what he calls the "left-wing or underside of black religion" in order to "see how an undercurrent of African survivals has merged with traditional Protestantism, Ca-

tholicism, Judaism and Islam."

At the University of Chicago, Irving Zaretsky, an anthropologist who has recently completed a 10-year study of fringe religious groups, believes that the 20 million figure of involvement in the cults may be too modest.

"The number may be much larger," he said, "and it includes a great many respectable, middle-class and upper-class people who may also belong to traditional religious groups."

"It is hard to get accurate numbers because cult participation is often an occasional 'one-shot' experience, rather than a continuing membership situation."

Zaretsky also challenges the general public's image that cult followers are irresponsible dreamers and freaks. He said instead that the cults are very pragmatic and said many of them had been effective in getting people off of drugs or "resocializing" people who have gotten "too far out" to fit traditional social patterns.

He said that in his studies he found that performance rather than the substance of belief was a more important key to the success of the cults he looked at and that many of the leaders of these groups have a background in theater or one of the other performing arts.

1976 ?

TRAINING FACILITY

Scientology Yacht Apollo Up for Sale

The Church of Scientology has announced it is selling its 3,287-ton yacht Apollo, the sometime home of founder L. Ron Hubbard and the mobile site of the worldwide sect's high-level leadership training.

Many of the administrative functions conducted from the ship, acquired in 1968, will be transferred temporarily to Scientology's offices near London.

The organization said it expected to announce soon "the purchase of a substantial facility in a European country" for its international headquarters.

The advanced executive training sessions—besides those conducted in England, Copenhagen and Los Angeles—also will be held at a newly

acquired hotel building in Clearwater, Fla.

A company called Southern Land and Development Corp. bought the Clearwater hotel in December, but controversy developed when it was learned that 95% of the \$2.3 million cash for the purchase came from the Church of Scientology.

After a flurry of charges and countercharges, by early February:

—The Clearwater City Commission had agreed to finance the legal defense of Mayor Gabriel Cazares against a \$1 million suit filed by the Church of Scientology.

—Radio station WDCL had fired a radio talk show host who was an aggressive critic of Scientology.

—The St. Petersburg Times sought an injunction against the Church of

Scientology, alleging the organization was attempting to intimidate the newspaper and its reporters.

Hubbard, although said by Scientology to be only a consultant to the church's board of directors for the last decade, was reported seen in Florida during the early negotiations though he was not recognized at the time by those introduced to him.

Somewhat of a mystery figure to outsiders, Hubbard was thought to have spent most of his time aboard the 40-year-old former passenger ship.

But in the church announcement, quoting an official in England, but released also in Los Angeles, Hubbard was said to have spent in a year only "a month or more" aboard with his wife and family.

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El Asambleista Richard Alatorre entrega a Diana Hubbard Horwich el reconocimiento a su padre L. Ron Hubbard por sus méritos. Ella lo recibe emocionada.

Distinción a L. Ron Hubbard

LOS ANGELES.— "The California State Assembly" presentó a L. Ron Hubbard, fundador de "church of Scientology", un reconocimiento por sus distinguidos servicios a la gente en California.

Este reconocimiento fue entregado por el Asambleista Richard Alatorre, a Diana Hubbard Horwich, hija de L. Ron Hubbard, quien lo recibió en nombre de él.

"Estoy muy feliz de tener la oportunidad de hacer presente éste reconocimiento al señor Hubbard por sus contribuciones de gran valía", dijo el señor Alatorre al presentar la distinción.

Además del reconocimiento del Asambleista Alatorre, el señor Hubbard ha recibido honores de parte de varios organismos y nobramientos como el de "Embajador Cherokee de la Buena Voluntad", y electo para "Policemans Hall of Fame".

El señor Hubbard, es también distinguido escritor. En 1950 fue publicado su libro, Dianetics: The Modern Science of Mental Health, el que es considerado como "bestseller".

Scientology, de la que es fundador, no es una religión especial; los miembros pueden continuar con su creencia y religión, y ser a la vez cientólogos.