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Document Tells Scientology Plans to Infiltrate Agencies

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WASHINGTON—A plan by the Church of Scientology to infiltrate federal agencies with "covert agents" and steal thousands of government documents over a period of nearly four years was outlined Thursday in an unusual document filed in federal court by prosecution and the defense.

The 284-page "stipulation of evidence" against nine Scientology leaders was filed with U.S. Dist. Judge Charles R. Richey, who is expected to render a verdict today.

The defendants have said they expect to be found guilty based on the government's evidence, but they declined to plead guilty to the charges because they would thereby lose their right to appeal.

Upon a finding of guilty by the court, the defendants can continue to challenge the validity of a July, 1977, search by the FBI of Scientology headquarters in Los Angeles, which resulted in the seizure of the doc-

uments that make up the government's case.

Those documents consisted of internal memoranda circulated among church officials in Los Angeles, Washington, D.C., and England, authorizing infiltration of federal agencies to obtain government information relating to the church and its founder, L. Ron Hubbard.

Since the federal indictment, Scientology leaders have virtually conceded their illicit campaign to obtain government information on the church. But they have contended that their tactics were the only way they could fight what they allege is a 20-year campaign of harassment by federal authorities.

A Scientology spokesman issued a statement Thursday that read in part, "It has always been official church policy to uphold the laws of the land. The church did not and does not condone violation of this policy."

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The statement said that the individuals involved were from only one department of the 21 within the church and it is assumed, "they will comment at the appropriate time on advice of their attorneys."

The church describes itself as an "applied religious philosophy" and offers a form of counseling to its adherents aimed at improving self-confidence.

Various federal agencies over the years have investigated Scientology or its members for alleged income tax evasion and other illegal activities. The current indictment, however, is the first federal criminal prosecution.

The voluminous documents filed with the court disclose a wide-ranging conspiracy starting in late 1973 to infiltrate government agencies, including the Justice Department and the Internal Revenue Service.

"It is important that we get crack-

ing and obtain these files and I leave it to you to work out how," Jane Kember, "World Wide Guardian," wrote from England in November, 1973, to her subordinates in Los Angeles, which is the U.S. headquarters for Scientology.

Another letter two years later from "U.S. Guardian" Henning Heldt indicated that although Scientology's legal department was attempting to obtain documents about Scientology and Hubbard through the federal Freedom of Information Act, the church's intelligence division should also attempt to obtain the data.

"The legal route is at best lengthy," Heldt wrote.

The mound of documentation filed with the court—nearly a foot high—shows that Scientology followers illegally entered offices of the Justice Department and Internal Revenue Service in Washington during hours in which both were closed. Government papers were taken to copying

machines and duplicated before the material was replaced.

By Scientology's own estimates, during the first five months of 1975 one of its members worked as a clerk-typist for the IRS and surreptitiously duplicated government documents.

At another point, Scientology memoranda disclose, more than 15,000 documents were sent from Washington to Scientology leaders in Los Angeles.

Most of the government papers were duplicated during the evening and on weekends by Scientology members who entered the IRS with the use of faked government identification cards. The papers filed with the court show that in late 1975, Scientology leaders sent a member from Los Angeles who used lock-picking equipment to break into a "red seal" area in which only the most sensitive documents were kept by the IRS.

The evidence also discloses that in order to get information on the IRS' attitude toward granting a tax exemption to Scientology, members of the group bugged a Nov. 1, 1974, conference of IRS attorneys at the agency's headquarters.

A bugging device resembling a three-way plug was placed in an electrical wall outlet, according to the evidence, and it transmitted the conversations of the attorneys to three Scientologists in a car outside the IRS headquarters.

Documents seized from the church also disclosed that Scientology had "covert agents" operating not only in the IRS and the Justice Department, but also in the Drug Enforcement Administration, the intelligence division of the Coast Guard, as well as in the Los Angeles County district attorney's office and the California attorney general's office.

It was disclosed previously that Scientology attempted to place agents within the U.S. attorney's office in Los Angeles. The new documents released Thursday indicate that Scientology also considered placing someone in the Immigration and Naturalization Service.

Efforts to place an Scientologist in the U.S. attorney's office in Los Angeles were aimed at determining if the group's founder, Hubbard, was the subject of any civil or criminal prosecution.

Documents outlining Scientology's "early warning system" suggest that the group believed that the IRS was investigating Hubbard for "income tax invasion (sic) or something similar."

Hubbard, a former science fiction writer who started Scientology in the 1950's based on theories in his book, "Dianetics," is believed to be living in California, but his exact whereabouts are unknown.

His wife, Mary Sue Hubbard, is said to be controller of Scientology and is one of 11 defendants in the criminal case. Jane Kember and an assistant, Morris Budlong, have been indicted but have so far avoided extradition from England to face the U.S. charges.

In a May 27, 1975, letter, Mrs. Hubbard directed Miss Kember to "use any method at our disposal to win the battle and gain our nonprofit status (from the IRS)."

The same letter suggested to "buy

all the time we can in terms of yours . . . so we work to win, but also to delay as time works on our side, not theirs."

The documents filed with the court disclose a carefully thought-out campaign that included a cover story for how to publicly disclose the stolen documents without having the thefts traced back to Scientology.

The government's case against Scientology was broken when Michael Meisner, a high church official who supervised the covert activities in Washington, went to federal authorities.

Meisner, who has been in protective custody since June, 1977, provided the FBI with the information necessary to obtain the search warrant of Scientology headquarters executed one month later in Los Angeles.

Defendants scheduled to appear before Judge Richey today besides Mrs. Hubbard include Henning Heldt and Duke Snider (no relation to the former Dodger baseball player), both of Los Angeles; Richard Weigand of Van Nuys; Gregory Willardson of Beverly Hills; Cindy Raymond and Mitchell Hermann, both of Hollywood, and Gerald Wolfe of Arleta.