

Church members guilty of conspiracy

WASHINGTON (AP) — A federal judge convicted nine members of the Church of Scientology on Friday, including the wife of the founder, of taking part in a conspiracy to steal government documents about the church.

Judge Charles Richey of district court set no date for sentencing the defendants, who included Mary Sue Hubbard, wife of church founder L. Ron Hubbard.

Mrs. Hubbard and six

others were convicted of conspiracy to obstruct justice, which carries a maximum penalty of five years in prison and a \$10,000 fine.

One defendant was found guilty of conspiracy to illegally obtain government documents, which carries the same maximum punishment. Another was convicted of stealing government records, with a maximum penalty of one year in jail and a \$1,000 fine.

The Scientologists' lawyers said they will appeal.

Documents seized from church offices in Los Angeles in 1977 revealed that church operatives stole documents from the Internal Revenue Service, the justice department and the U.S. attorney's office, among others.

The records also show that the church planted employees in the justice department and the IRS and once "bugged" a

meeting of the tax agency.

The church describes itself as an "applied religious philosophy which believes that man is a spiritual being who is basically good."

Church officials, claiming five million members worldwide, say the church believes that through counselling "an individual can better deal with his own life and take responsibility for the world around him."

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Scientologists convicted

WASHINGTON — A prosecutor says he will seek stiff prison terms for Church of Scientology members convicted of plotting to infiltrate U.S. government offices and steal records.

District Judge Charles Richey convicted the church members Friday for their roles in a conspiracy to take records from the justice department, the Internal Revenue Service and the U.S. attorney's office. The conspiracy also included planting employees in the Internal Revenue Service and the justice department and "bugging" a revenue service meeting.