

Clearwater Sun

Pinellas County's fastest growing newspaper

Clearwater, Florida

65th Year — No. 184 Clearwater, Florida, Saturday, November 3, 1979

(FRONT PAGE)

Judge rules papers available to public

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WASHINGTON—Documents revealing a Scientology espionage campaign against government agencies ranging from the IRS to the Clearwater City Commission were declared open to further public inspection Friday afternoon by a federal judge.

Scientology attorneys had argued strenuously that the papers should be sealed because they would cause "irreparable injury" to the church.

The public availability of the dozen cartons of government-seized documents—the basis of last week's conspiracy conviction of nine top church officials—was in doubt until U.S. District Judge Charles R. Richey issued his ruling.

Scientologists sought to reclaim

the papers, or at least block their release to the media on grounds they no longer were crucial to the government's case.

But Richey, who personally reviewed the material, ruled the Scientologists' argument invalid.

Richey said that returning or sealing the documents would "make a folly of the First Amendment."

The papers—largely confidential top-secret memos between sect leaders—include details of a Scientology scheme to "take control" of Clearwater by discrediting and spying on public officials. The documents also show a concerted far-reaching Scientology espionage campaign against government agencies such as the FBI, CIA, IRS and Justice Department, and private groups such as the American Medical Association

and the American Psychological Association, long viewed by the church as "enemies."

The papers, among more than 40 cartons of evidence seized during an FBI raid at the cult's Los Angeles headquarters in July 1978, show the Clearwater branch was involved in a worldwide spying mission dubbed "Snow White."

The operation was ordered by sect founder L. Ron Hubbard and carried out by ranking "guardians," including his wife, Mary Sue, the documents show.

Mrs. Hubbard and eight other top church officials were found guilty last Friday of conspiring to break into government offices, steal documents and bug meetings. Two indicted guardians remain in England, where extradition proceedings will See SCIENTOLOGISTS, Next Page

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begin next week.

Specific operations relating to Clearwater—projects "Goldmine" and "Normandie"—appeared to have been launched when Scientologists arrived in Clearwater four years ago under the guise of a group called United Churches of Florida. Only limited descriptions of these operations were among papers Richey released, but one document showed Scientologists were ordered to probe all aspects of city and county government and attempt to malign groups and individuals the church viewed as enemies.

Scientology attorney Michael Hertzberg attempted to convince Richey Friday to temporarily block any further release of the documents and to return them to the church. Hertzberg argued the government's need for the evidence "terminated with the guilty verdict of this court last Friday."

Without citing specific instances, Hertzberg continued that public release of the material would cause "irreparable injury" to Scientology activity.

Spokesman for the California-based sect have indicated the documents would be damaging because they "tell nothing about the actual working of the Church of Scientology or of the crimes of government agencies which the church has been fighting for over 25 years."

But Assistant U.S. Attorney Steve Tabakman said the documents would be used in the upcoming cases of two indicted guardians, Mo Budlong and Jane Kember, now in England.

Tabakman said returning the documents to the cult also would hinder grand jury probes in Tampa and New York.

Richey also rejected the Scientologist's compromise request that if the documents were not returned, they at least should be kept sealed.

"This case is the only one in this court in which documents are not being put on the public record," the judge said. "To continue to do so would not serve the public interest."

Scientologists asked for the restraining order Thursday night after Richey released documents showing the sect kept dossiers and ran "rumour campaigns" against public officials and private medical groups around the nation.

Richey also denied a last-minute appeal attempt after Friday's hearing but court officials said Scientologists will get another chance to stay Richey's order in the U.S. Court of Appeal next week.

Richey apparently will continue making documents available on Monday. He has been reviewing the papers privately since the conviction of the cult leaders and issuing those he feels are not damaging to innocent parties.