



Fair and sunny today with a high of 85, a low of 65. Details, 2A.

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L. Ron Hubbard's son says his father 'destroys' foes

By BILL PRESCOTT
Sun staff writer

The son of L. Ron Hubbard, founder of the Church of Scientology, testified Wednesday his father was obsessed with controlling people and "destroyed" those who opposed him and the church.

"My father only knew how to do one thing; that was destroy them," said L. Ronald Hubbard Jr., who has changed his name to Ronald Edward DeWolf.

DeWolf contended also the elder Hubbard fabricated most of the personal qualifications and scientific expertise he claimed when forming the sect.

"I can say flat that 99 percent of what my father wrote about his own life is false," said DeWolf.

DeWolf, 47, was the second witness to testify in the opening session of Clearwater's public hearings on Scientology. Edward Walters, at one time a high-ranking Scientologist, testified earlier he would not have joined the church had he known the alleged discrepancies of Hubbard's past.

DeWolf will continue his testimony at 9

Mood of the hearing, 1C

a.m. today. Also scheduled to speak, according to city consultant Michael Flynn, are Laurie Taverna, Rosie Pace and David Ray, all former workers in the church's Clearwater organization.

The scheduled 10 days of hearings are the culmination of close to a year of behind-the-scenes work by the Clearwater City Commission and Boston attorney Flynn, who has battled the sect in court for three years.

City officials have said the public hearings will help determine whether charitable-solicitation and consumer-fraud ordinances are needed to control alleged criminal activities by Scientology.

The hearings began on a tense note as Tampa attorney Paul B. Johnson, representing Scientology, walked out of the City Hall proceedings when commissioners denied him a chance to make an opening statement. Johnson said he was "shocked at the attitude" of the commission.

(* See HUBBARD'S, next page)