

Scientology leader renews fight over forged check

By JEFF MANGUM
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CLEARWATER — Church of Scientology President Heber C. Jentzsch renewed charges involving a forged \$2 million check and a "conspiracy" by sect foe Michael Flynn during a Wednesday press conference.

Flynn, a Boston attorney, represents more than a dozen ex-Scientists who have sued the sect. In May 1982 Flynn coordinated highly-publicized city hearings on Scientology.

"Mr. Flynn was involved and is involved in acts that involve organized crime," Jentzsch told reporters and 50 supporters on the steps of Clearwater City Hall.

"It's pure horse manure," Flynn said from Boston. "There's not a germ of truth in any of it. The bottom line is you've got the Church of Scientology paying off some guy who's sitting in an Italian prison."

The allegation stems from affidavits by brothers Ali and Akil Tamimi. Italian authorities are holding Ali Tamimi for extradition to the

United States in connection with an unrelated fraud case. Akil resides in the United Arab Emirates.

Ali Tamimi alleged that he met with Flynn in 1982 and agreed to cash a \$2 million check on an account belonging to reclusive Scientology founder L. Ron Hubbard.

Jentzsch, flanked by California-based private investigator Gene Ingram, said the church hired Ingram, a non-Scientologist, to conduct its investigation with no pre-conceived notions about who was involved.

Ingram ran ads in the Boston Globe and other newspapers offering \$100,000 for the arrest and conviction of those responsible for the forgery.

Ali Tamimi stands to gain at least \$25,000 of that reward, Ingram said.

Jentzsch and Ingram were joined Wednesday by Henry Ferro, a Miami lawyer and president of the Florida Chapter of the Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights.

"It's not too late for the city of Clearwater to reverse its position," Ferro said. "They are setting a bad precedent for America."