

Scientology

Police chief condemns ex-cop's eavesdropping

Los Angeles Police Chief Daryl Gates, April 23, strongly condemned the purported actions of an LAPD officer, who allegedly authorized a fired police sergeant to conduct "electronic eavesdropping" in an investigation of the Church of Scientology.

Chief Gates, in a public announcement, said the alleged improper act of Phillip Rodriguez, a Northeast Area officer, was to sign a letter believed to have been drafted by the one-time Hollywood Sgt. Eugene M. Ingram, now a private investigator, authorizing Ingram to engage in eavesdropping.

Los Angeles Police Department spokesman Commander William Booth said the LAPD's internal affairs division has been ordered to make a thorough investigation of the incident.

Ingram was discharged effective Oct. 31, 1980, the day he was charged with some 12 counts of wrongdoing involving narcotics suspects. An LAPD board of rights found Ingram guilty of six of the counts and recommended his dismissal in January of 1981, but the discharge was effective on the date he was relieved from duty.

Meanwhile, a statement by the Scientologists places Ingram on the side of the church, in contrast to LAPD's belief that he was investigating the church.

In a written release, the church

claimed that videotapes purportedly authorized by Rodriguez and made by Ingram were part of a church "sting" operation and revealed "a bizarre, multigovernment-agency ... plot designed to take over the control, property and assets" of the church.

The tapes were made of meetings in Griffith Park to document an FBI counterintelligence program against the church, the release stated.

On the subject of the letter and

Rodriguez's purported involvement, Gates said, "It has come to my attention that a member of the LAPD, very foolishly, without proper authorization and contrary to the policy of this department, signed a letter to Eugene M. Ingram, believed to have been drafted by Ingram himself."

The letter purports "to authorize Ingram to engage in electronic eavesdropping," said Gates. "The letter, along with all the purported authorization, is invalid and is not a

correspondence from the Los Angeles Police Department.

"The Los Angeles Police Department has not cooperated with Gene Ingram — it will be a cold day in hell when we do," Gates continued.

"I have directed an official letter to Ingram informing him that the letter signed by Officer Phillip Rodriguez dated Nov. 7, 1984 and all other letters of purported authorizations directed to him and or signed by any member of the LAPD are invalid and unauthorized," Gates said.