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## Church civil fraud trial nears end

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The end of a civil fraud trial against the Church of Scientology and its founder L. Ron Hubbard drew unexpectedly closer Wednesday when the defense announced it would call no more witnesses on the church's behalf.

Defense attorney Earle C. Cooley surprised his opposition by resting the defense case early Wednesday in Multnomah County Circuit Court after one week of testimony and eight witnesses.

Cooley's decision means the church will not call any high-ranking officials to refute claims that the reclusive Hubbard remains in managerial control of the church and receives substantial amounts of money from church sources.

Garry P. McMurry, attorney for plaintiff Julie Christofferson Titchbourne, opened rebuttal testimony with several U.S. Navy and Veterans' Administration medical reports concerning injuries Hubbard claimed as a result of World War II military service.

The records showed that Hubbard was granted a 40 percent Navy disability pension in 1948 for an ulcer, bursitis, arthritis and an inflammation of the inner side of his eyelids called conjunctivitis.

McMurry offered the documents to support his contention that Hubbard and the church fraudulently claimed that Hubbard was crippled and blinded in combat, that he was twice declared medically dead and that he cured himself with Scientology techniques.

A 1947 medical examination said Hubbard injured his back and hip in a fall from a ship's ladder. Hubbard re-

ported in another examination that his eyesight suffered as a result of prolonged exposure to tropical sunlight in 1942 in the Pacific Ocean. There was no evidence presented that his disabilities were a result of combat.

A Naval disability rating sheet in 1948 gave Hubbard a 10 percent disability for a recurring ulcer, 10 percent for his eye problem and another 20 percent for arthritis and bursitis in his hip and right shoulder, respectively. A 1973 letter from the Veterans' Administration indicated that his disability pension at the time was \$106 per month.

Cooley noted on cross-examination that Hubbard told doctors in 1951 that he had tried many types of eyeglasses and that he thought he saw just as well without glasses. Cooley also noted that a book that led to the creation of Scientology in which Hubbard made a statement about being able to improve eyesight was published in 1950.

McMurry also presented a letter written by Hubbard in 1947 in which Hubbard requested psychiatric outpa-

tient treatment from the VA. Hubbard wrote that he suffered from "long periods of moroseness and suicidal inclinations" and that he was having difficulty reaching "equilibrium" in civilian life.

Cooley called the introduction of the request for psychiatric help "a disgraceful invasion of privacy."

Titchbourne claims that Hubbard and the church defrauded her during her involvement in Scientology in 1975 and 1976 by representing that Scientology was a science and that it could cure weak eyesight.

She also claims the church made misrepresentations about Scientology's ability to improve personal intelligence and provide more knowledge of the mind than psychology or psychiatry. Titchbourne also said she was told that Hubbard retired from church management in 1966 and that he received little money from Scientology organizations.

Hubbard, who disappeared from public view in 1980, is included as a defendant in the case but has not appeared in the trial.