

San Francisco Chronicle

WORLD

U.S. Celebrities Defend Scientology in Germany

By William Drozdiak
Washington Post

Berlin

A vitriolic feud between German authorities and the Church of Scientology has intensified in the wake of accusations by American celebrities that the Bonn government is oppressing members of the group in the same way that the Nazi regime persecuted the Jews.

A letter, signed by 34 prominent figures in the U.S. entertainment industry and published last week in the International Herald Tribune, is the latest round in an emotional publicity campaign waged by Scientologists and their supporters comparing the treatment of church members in contemporary Germany with that of Jews in Adolf Hitler's day.

The letter included the names of actors Dustin Hoffman and Gol-

die Hawn, director Oliver Stone, novelists Mario Puzo and Gore Vidal, and TV talk show host Larry King.

Germany has barred Scientologists from belonging to the main political parties, and the state of Bavaria has started screening all applicants for civil service jobs to determine if they are members of the group.

Last summer, the youth wing of Chancellor Helmut Kohl's Christian Democratic Party tried unsuccessfully to mount a nationwide boycott of the movie "Mission Impossible" because its star, Tom Cruise, is a Scientologist. In 1995, the state of Baden-Wuerttemberg blocked a performance by jazz pianist Chick Corea because he is a member.

The open letter accuses the government of excluding children

"This organized oppression is beginning to sound familiar . . . like the Germany of 1936 rather than 1996"

—LETTER SIGNED BY U.S. CELEBRITIES

of Scientologists from public schools and draws a parallel between efforts to boycott performances by actors and musicians who are Scientologists to the book burnings staged by Nazis in the 1930s.

"These acts are intolerable in any country that conceives of itself as a modern democracy," it said. "This organized oppression is beginning to sound familiar . . . like the Germany of 1936 rather than 1996."

Kohl responded by denouncing the celebrities as hopelessly igno-

rant about the true situation in his country. "They don't know anything about Germany, and they don't want to, either. Otherwise, they wouldn't have talked such rubbish," he said.

In a rare display of unity, leaders of Germany's Jewish community and German politicians of every ideological stripe have rallied around Kohl in denouncing the advertising blitz as a gross distortion of history that offends the dignity of those who died in the concentration camps.

"To compare our efforts to ex-

pose the machinations of Scientology with the methods of Hitler is nothing more than a display of coarse tastelessness toward the victims of Auschwitz," Labor Minister Norbert Blum said.

Ignatz Bubis, president of the Central Council of Jews in Germany, said that conditions in modern Germany bear no resemblance to the Nazi era and that any attempt to link them is "insulting to the memory of the victims."

The Scientologists, who have recruited about 30,000 followers in Germany since 1970, insist that they represent a godless religion that strives for spiritual growth and self-improvement. But German authorities contend it is a dangerous cult that brainwashes its members and forces them to pay enormous sums of money for what amounts to thought control. The interior ministers of all 16 German

states have urged a tougher policy against Scientology.

In December, Kohl's government said it was setting up a central office to coordinate federal and state efforts against the movement, including the possibility of placing it under round-the-clock surveillance as an extremist organization with global political aims.

The German government's measures against Scientology have elicited criticism and charges of human rights violations from the United Nations and some foreign governments, including the United States. But German officials say they are acting within the bounds of their postwar constitution, which allows the state to take action to prevent the growth of coercive or totalitarian movements that are deemed a threat to the country's democracy.

Scientologist Purchases Rights to Identity Of Bankrupted Anti-Cult Organization

In an ironic twist, a prime foe of the Cult Awareness Network (CAN) has purchased the right to the CAN name, Post Office box, and phone number and aims to reestablish CAN with a new agenda.

As part of bankruptcy liquidation proceedings, attorney Steven Hayes, J.D., a member of the Church of Scientology, purchased the rights to CAN's name, address, and phone number for \$20,000 in late November.

Hayes told a *Washington Post* reporter that he and a group of people "united in their distaste for CAN" planned to reopen the organization so that it "disseminates the truth about all religions."

The former CAN was forced into Chapter 7 bankruptcy last June when Scientologist attorney Kendrick Moxon, J.D., contested CAN's plan to reorganize under Chapter 11. Moxon was representing Jason Scott,

the plaintiff who won the \$1.1 million judgment that bankrupted CAN.

Chapter 11 would have allowed CAN a voice in how it met obligations to creditors, but the court sided with Moxon. Under Chapter 7 responsibility for all assets was automatically transferred to the bankruptcy trustee. This deprived CAN of a voice in how its assets were handled.

In late December, an appeal was filed with the bankruptcy court contesting the legitimacy of the November sale of the rights to the CAN name. Most of CAN's major creditors joined the appeal by attorney David Bardin, J.D., which held that the sale was inadequately advertised and hence failed to bring the best attainable price.

CAN's former executive director, Cynthia Kisser, spoke with *Psychiatric News* about the Hayes purchase. Kisser is

worried that CAN's confidential files containing the names, addresses, and phone numbers of people who complained about Scientology will be sold. But there is some precedent for protecting confidential records under bankruptcy.

"I do hope [the former] CAN is able to maintain the confidentiality of its records," said Kisser. Although the bankruptcy trustee has indicated he intends to sell the records, he has yet to accept a bid, said Kisser. An earlier bid from Scientology attorney Moxon was rejected as too low, she noted.

There are important confidentiality issues that should transcend the mission of the bankruptcy trustee to get the highest price for assets, Kisser explained. Courts have previously held that confidential records are not assets in the same way that furniture or computer equipment is, she noted.

CAN was bankrupted by a \$1.1 million judgment last June (*Psychiatric News*, September 6, 1996). Although the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals agreed in December to hear an appeal of the ruling that bankrupted

CAN, it is unclear what would happen if the court ultimately upheld the appeal. Attorney Dan Leopold, J.D., a CAN creditor who has defended other clients against the Church of Scientology, said he believes the appeal will be upheld and may result in the former CAN being able to reconstitute itself in some form and reorganize under Chapter 11. Further, said Leopold, "If CAN ever survives, CAN is going to have the biggest lawsuit ever against Scientology."

Paul Lawrence, J.D., president of the Washington state chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union, who is handling the appeal for CAN, was more cautious. Even if CAN does not get the right to its name back, a victory on appeal "would be meaningful," said Lawrence. "As long as this judgment is out there, it makes [the former CAN] an easy target" for those opposed to its activities, he commented.

Although a victory on appeal would do nothing to restore the former CAN's assets, a countersuit by CAN against Scientology for malicious harassment is pending, he noted.

CAN focused on cults it deemed "destructive," defined as involving unethical and deceptive recruitment and indoctrination techniques and strong behavior modification techniques without the consent or knowledge of recruits. According to former executive director Kisser, the Church of Scientology was one of the three most frequently cited organizations in telephone calls and letters to CAN from worried friends and family of cult members.

—R.B.K.

Advanced Course Notice

An advanced course in mental health administration will be held April 11 to 13 in New Orleans, not April 11 to 17 as reported N/2105.

have led some readers to believe that CAN was little more than an anti-Scientology group.

In fact, the CAN office in Chicago served as a clearinghouse for extensive data on destructive cult groups of all sorts, and it was a respected source of information on such groups to media all over the world.

I was privileged to attend a number of CAN annual meetings, where (aside from being photographed by Scientology private detectives) I had an opportunity to network with former cult members and families of current cult members. This has allowed me to gain firsthand insight as to how destructive cults indoctrinate adherents without informed consent.

Cults will be with us for a while longer. Various cult-related fiascos such as the siege of the Branch Davidians by the FBI and the bombing of the MOVE compound by the Philadelphia Police Department have hardly clarified public understanding of cult indoctrination. Advocates for gun control, religious freedom, civil rights, and tough law enforcement have all weighed in with their versions of tragic events, causing cautious politicians to run for cover.

Not all cults are big and wealthy, and CAN was never big or wealthy. *Time* magazine had the resources to fend off a \$416 million libel suit that resulted from its 1991 cover story, "Scientology: The Cult of Greed." It is hoped that CAN will still be with us in the future, even if it is in a different incarnation.

John Hochman, M.D.
Encino, Calif.

Therapy for Therapists

I was pleased to read Dr. Helen Egger's Residents' Forum in the August 2 issue in which she wrote in favor of personal therapy for residents. Perhaps as the daughter of a psy-



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GERMANY

U.S. Challenges German Stand on Scientology

By THOMAS W. LIPPMAN
THE WASHINGTON POST

WASHINGTON—The State Department's annual survey of human rights conditions around the world will contain expanded, toughened language criticizing Germany for restrictions on the Church of Scientology and its members, administration officials say.

The report, to be issued Wednesday, will chastise Germany for what a senior administration official called "a campaign of harassment and intimidation" against the controversial church. He said the United States, seeking to protect religious freedom, has urged Germany through diplomatic channels "not to prosecute people for wrong thinking" but has been rebuffed.

The German response is, "We won't change our policy, no matter what you say," a German diplomat here said. "You are a big country. You can afford to have militias and cults. We can't." He said Germany, with 80 million people in a Montana-size country and a unique sensitivity to the dangers of "extremism" because of its Nazi past, is obliged to limit activities of groups perceived as threats to national well-being.

The U.S.-German disagreement over Scientology is a rare irritant in America's generally excellent relations with a key European ally. Although both sides agree it is hardly a major source of friction, the issue has a high decibel level because of the involvement of high-profile Scientologists such as actor Tom Cruise.

The subject is emotional also because of charges by the Scientologists that Germany's treatment of them recalls the Nazis' persecution of the Jews—a charge guaranteed to infuriate and pain Germans.

On Friday, the Church of Scientology in Germany filed a complaint with the European Commission on Human Rights, in Strasbourg, France, against the

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German government—claiming that the organization and its "parishioners" have been subjected to "a systematic campaign of discrimination . . . in violation of their human rights."

Officials in Germany say they are empowered by the first article of the German Constitution to protect "the dignity of the individual," a mandate widely interpreted here as a requirement to protect "vulnerable" people from religious cults.

The Clinton administration has been trying to walk a fine line, standing up for the principle of freedom of worship but distancing itself from the Scientologists' denunciations of a democratic ally.

"We have criticized the Germans on this, but we aren't going to support the Scientologists' terror tactics against the German government," State Department spokesman Nicholas Burns said.

Burns criticized statements from church supporters likening the campaign against Scientology to the Nazis' anti-Semitic programs, as did an open letter to German Chancellor Helmut Kohl earlier this month signed by 34 celebrities and published as a full-page advertisement in the New York Times and the Paris-based International Herald Tribune.

Burns and other officials said the issue is not whether Scientology is good or bad, benign or malevolent. They said the United States is obliged to support the church in the brawl between Germany and the Scientologists because German actions may have infringed on the rights of U.S. citizens who are Scientologists by encouraging a boycott of Cruise's movies and restricting performances by jazz pianist Chick Corea.

The youth wing of the governing Christian Democratic Union organized boycotts of "Mission Impossible," starring Cruise, last summer in several German states. And well-known Christian Democratic politicians have said publicly that Corea has no business playing in Germany, particularly not at concerts with official sponsorship.

During the "Mission Impossible" boycott, there were isolated reports of film posters and theaters being vandalized.

Scientology is a fast-growing international organization, founded in the 1950s by American science fiction writer L. Ron Hubbard, whose writings remain the group's guiding texts. The church claims 8 million members worldwide, including about 30,000 in Germany. The German government says the membership is smaller, perhaps between 10,000 and 20,000.

Scientology has long fought for legal acceptance as a religion and has succeeded in many countries, including the United States, where in 1993 it was given the same tax-exempt status as other religions.

To the German government, however, Scientology is not a legitimate religion but a greedy, cult-like organization built on "pseudo-science," in which "membership can lead to psychological and physical dependency, to financial ruin and even to suicide," according to a position paper distributed by the German Embassy here.

In Germany, the federal government has the power not only to decide whether organizations are churches or not, but it also handles tithing, in the form of payroll deductions at pre-determined amounts. Under this state-led system, members of organizations that do not get listed as authentic religions do not have complete guarantees of religious freedom.

The German position paper also says that "the German government has not taken any legislative action

against the Scientology organization," but some German state governments have. In heavily Catholic Bavaria, for instance, all applications for well-paid civil service jobs are screened for affiliation with the Church of Scientology. Those who admit to a connection are not hired.

The Scientologists say they are "blacklisted, boycotted, vilified, ostracized and threatened" because of their church membership.

Church of Scientology headquarters in Munich have documented more than 100 incidents in which members—and even Germans incorrectly "outed" as members—have been discriminated against, either by branches of the state, or by private organizations ranging from golf clubs to art galleries.

Many banks in Germany have policies against making loans to Scientologists, or letting Scientolo-

gists hold accounts. Newspapers in Germany refuse to accept advertising from companies owned by Scientologists. Teachers have been drummed out of their positions when parents have learned they practice Scientology outside the classroom.

Children have lost their places in private kindergartens when directors have learned that their parents are Scientologists.

The Christian Democrats have resolved to ban all Scientologists from the party on the grounds that their religion is incompatible with "Christian ethics." The main opposition party, the Social Democrats, also reject Scientologist members, and even the Progressive Greens have taken actions against Scientology.

Times staff writer Mary Williams Walsh in Berlin contributed to this report.

THE TAMPA TRIBUNE

4-Florida/Metro

Monday, January 27, 1997

THE TAMPA TRIBUNE



Daniel Ruth
BAYVIEW

Did anyone notice Lisa looked bad?

Always remember that the weird founder of the Church of Scientology, L. Ron Hubbard, got his start writing bad, very bad, science fiction.

Were the story of Lisa McPherson not such a tragic, sordid tale of neglect and anguish and death, the behavior of Scientology officials in obfuscating the details of her last comatose days in the "custodial" "care" of the "church" would seem like something out of "Plan 9 From Outer Space" — laughable, clumsy and unbelievable.

On Nov. 18, 1995, McPherson, a longtime Scientologist, was involved in a minor fender-bender in Clearwater. Paramedics arriving on the scene discovered the 36-year-old woman wandering nude down the street. She was taken to Morton Plant Hospital for observation.

Hotel Twilight Zone

But no sooner did McPherson arrive at the hospital than she was whisked away by Scientology officials and taken to the clan's Fort Harrison Hotel twilight zone.

The group's officials assured Morton Plant doctors McPherson would be well cared for by her "friends" 24 hours a day. Two and a half weeks later, Lisa McPherson was dead, dehydrated, covered by insect bites, bruised.

And now the Hubbardites are claiming everyone is picking on them. Imagine how Lisa McPherson must have felt in the waning moments of her consciousness? Some friends. Some "church."

Where's Rod Serling when you really need him?

Pinellas-Pasco Medical Examiner Joan Wood has concluded McPherson died of a blood clot induced by severe dehydration, perhaps as long as five to 10 days before her death.

Since the McPherson story became public, thanks to the deft reporting by this paper's own Cheryl Waldrip, the Clearwater Police Department has begun an investigation into the woman's death, which law enforcement officials regard as "suspicious."

Gee, no kidding?

As you can well appreciate, the Scientologists have branded any hint they might be responsible for McPherson's death a tissue of lies, all lies. The media has lied. The medical examiner has lied. The Clearwater cops have lied.

So easily cleared up

Of course, being called a liar by the Scientologists, masters of delusion, deception and dissembling on an order that makes David Copperfield seem like a mere three-card monte artist, is like being lectured to on human rights by Pol Pot.

The death of Lisa McPherson isn't suspicious? Well, fine, let's take the Scientologists at their word. No question, they can easily clear up all the suspicions, such as:

■ Why was a near-death, comatose McPherson schlepped 20 miles away to finally — FINALLY — see a doctor (who just so happened to be a Scientologist) when Morton Plant Hospital was literally blocks and moments away? Hmmmmm?

■ As her weight precipitously dropped and sores appeared on her body and McPherson lapsed into a coma, perhaps as much as 48 hours before she DIED, didn't anyone over there at the Fort Harrison notice McPherson wasn't looking too good? ANYONE?!? ANYONE AT ALL?!? Or was everyone too busy reading "Dianetics" to pay attention to a dying, helpless woman?

■ Oddly enough, three Scientology employees, Suzanne Schnuremberger, Ildiko Cannovas and Laura Arrunda, who had administrative oversight of McPherson during her life and death in the custody of the "church," have oh, so conveniently "left the country." Suspicious? No, not at all, according to the good friars of the Fort Harrison.

There are many, many other questions surrounding McPherson's strange, suspicious death, but perhaps this one lingers most odiously: Just what parts of the Scientologists' evasions is anyone supposed to believe — with a straight face?

Why, it's almost like a plot out of a ... bad, very bad, science fiction story.

EXCLUSIVE

JON BENET: COPS' SHOCKING SECRET FILES

Star

Murder was a diabolical cover-up

Tom Cruise & Nicole's sizzling love life

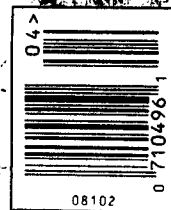


Sex marathons... kinky pool parties ...& much more

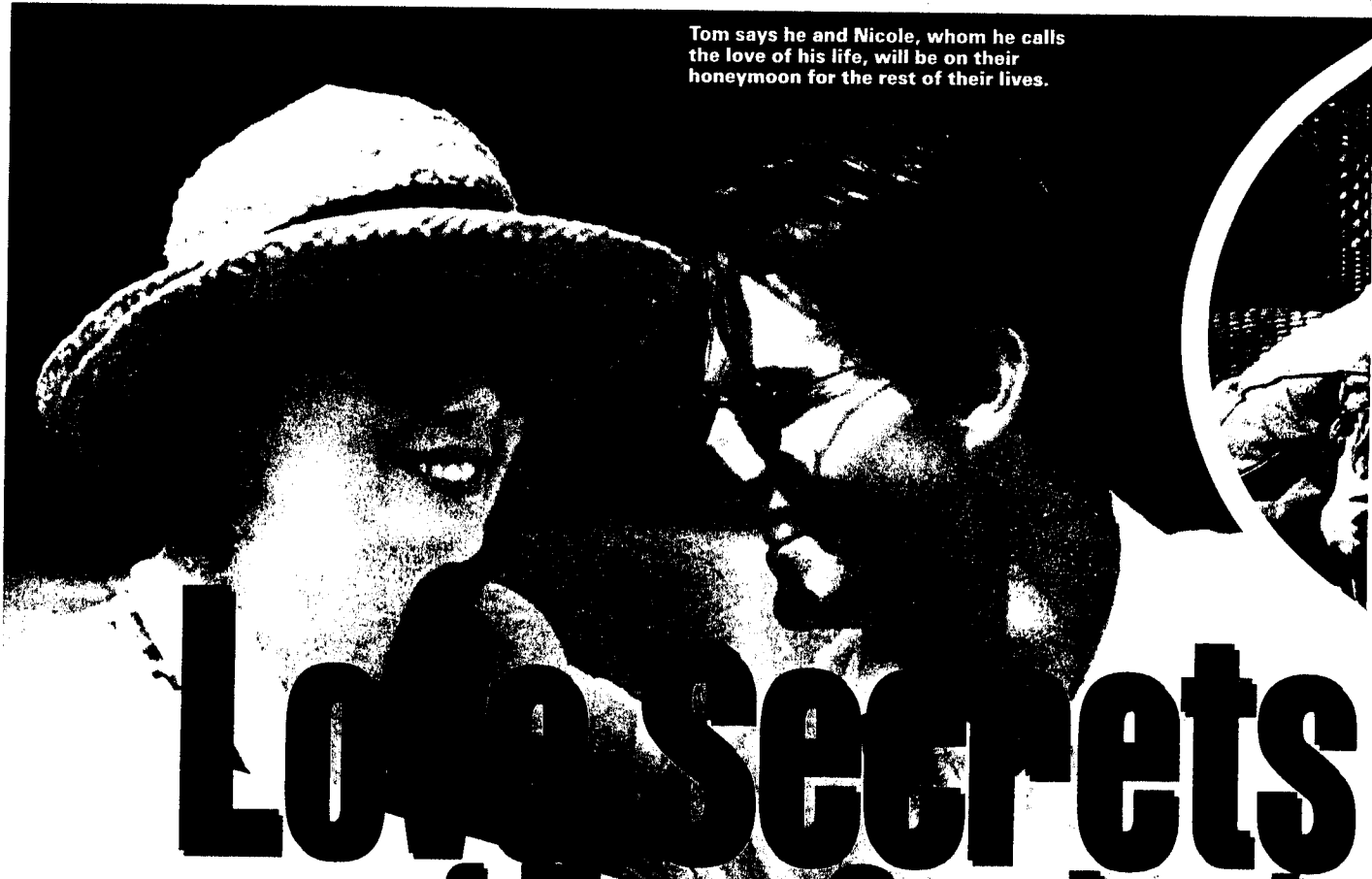


ICE QUEEN TRAGEDY

Unfold heartache that led to Oksana's boozy car wreck



Tom says he and Nicole, whom he calls the love of his life, will be on their honeymoon for the rest of their lives.



Low secrets of Tom Cruise's sexy marriage

By Steve Tinney

ROMANTIC midnight skinny-dips ... lusty love poems ... aromatherapy ... candlelit baths for two ... weekend sex marathons.

All this is part of the secret life of Hollywood's most private yet passionate couple — Tom Cruise and Nicole Kidman.

Sources close to the *Jerry Maguire* hunk — who once considered becoming a priest — giggle that the big-screen heartthrob and his Australian-born actress wife still can't keep their hands off each other six years after tying the knot.

"I've never met anyone in Hollywood as much in lust as Tom and Nicole," claims a Los Angeles socialite and an old friend of the actor's. "It's as though you could cut the sexual energy between them with a knife."

Adds one Hollywood producer: "They are closer than Siamese twins!"

According to another insider, Nicole, 29, once confided that she and her irresistible, 34-year-old hubby love to unwind with a nude swim in the pool at their lush Pacific Palisades, Calif., estate.

"The pool is hidden from view by an enormous hedge," the source says. "And Nicole says that after the children are tucked in, they turn all the lights off around the pool so they can get silly and paddle around in the moonlight."

"She says that she and Tom

like to share a chilled bottle of champagne during those romantic nude dips.

Tom, who still carries around the first photo he ever saw of his wife, and Nicole — currently starring in the flick, *The Portrait of a Lady* — have two adopted children: Isabella, 4, and 2-year-old Connor. They married in 1990 in a

fairy-tale, super-secret ceremony in Telluride, Colo.

"Before I met Nic my life was work, work, work. And then I met her and it was like, 'Oh, my God.'"

When he was sure the red-haired beauty was "the one," Tom quietly slipped a \$200,000 diamond engagement ring on her finger while she was sleep-

ing. When his future Mrs. awoke, she also discovered a \$40,000 pair of matching earrings under her pillow, and a note that read: "My darling, Nicole, I chased you and chased you until you finally caught me. Now, will you marry me?"

Adds another friend: "Tom once told me that since their

marriage, he and Nic, as he affectionately calls her, have never spent more than two weeks apart.

"When he was filming *Mission Impossible*, and Nicole was away working on another film, he complained that he had trouble sleeping because she wasn't next to him in bed.

"I remember how sad he looked when he said: 'God, I miss Nic. I can't sleep and I have no appetite.'" The source



Lusty Nicole and Tom keep a section of their house off-limits to everyone else, including their two children. She has boasted to others: "I wish everyone had as great a lover and husband as I do."

also recalls how the superstar's face "would light up" when Nicole telephoned him on the *Mission* set. For his part, Tom says he and his loving wife will "be on our honeymoon for the rest of our lives."

Another close friend tells STAR that Tom once admitted he would scrawl love notes for Nicole and leave them on his pillow next to his sleeping wife when he had to leave their bed for an early film shoot.

"But I never dared ask Tom to recite the poems," says the source. "He's so private that all he said was: 'I write them for the love of my life.'"

Sources also reveal how extravagant and totally unpredictable the dark, handsome hunk can be when it comes to pleasing the love of his life.

"One time he took over an entire restaurant in London just so they could have a totally private candlelit dinner for two," the pal says.

"Another time he and Nicole discovered a bumper-car pavilion that was closed. Somehow he got a hold of the operator and had him open it up just so he and Nicole could drive the cars around alone.

"Then she hopped out of her car and jumped into his, where she sat on his lap and kissed him all over while he blindly bumped into all the other vacant cars."

Those close to the good-looking couple scoff at tired old rumors that the screen star

is gay.

"Believe me Tom is as heterosexual as they come," says one insider.

"In fact, Nicole once confided: 'I wish everyone had as great a lover and husband as I do. I'm so lucky.'" Adds the insider: "There are many weekends when Tom and Nicole are home that they'll tell you in no uncertain terms that the house is off limits to all visitors.

Visitors to their mansion marvel at the gigantic whirlpool tub in the master suite complete with gold-plated water jets and surrounded by more than a dozen aromathera-

py candles and jars filled with perfumed soaps.

"The tub fits two," Nicole tells friends with a sly wink. "And I'm not talking about our kids. This part of the house is off limits to everyone but Tom and me."

Says their pal: "Tom and Nicole are lusty people but they're also very attentive parents. They have two nannies, but when they take their kids

out to visit friends the nannies are left at home.

"One time when Tom planted a sneaky kiss on the back of Nicole's neck, little Isabella squealed with delight: 'I saw you Daddy.' Tom turned beet red and then Nicole giggled: 'Bella, that's what makes Mommy happy.'"