

Clearwater Sun

Northern Pinellas County's Local Daily

4 JANUARY 1984

Sect member 'ordered' to block taxi

From Sun reports

A 69-year-old Texas man trying to leave the Church of Scientology in a taxicab was kept from doing so by sect members until Clearwater police intervened, according to police records.

Sect member William B. Wilson of Midland, Texas, was trying to leave the sect's headquarters at 210 S. Fort Harrison Ave., at 4 p.m. Monday when a

☐ Sect foe goes on hunger strike, 2B

car and a pickup truck blocked the cab's path, reports state.

Police said the driver of one of the cars—Henry C. Billings, who gave his home address as that of the sect—said he was told to block Wilson's cab and he "merely followed ... orders" in doing so.

Wilson, who police said was "reluctant" to offer any information about himself, declined to file a complaint and left in the cab.

"I think somebody didn't realize he was leaving. I think he's entitled to his privacy—it came down to a misunderstanding."

—Scientology spokesman
Hugh Wilhere



On Tuesday, sect spokesman Hugh Wilhere described the incident as a "misunderstanding," but refused to elaborate.

"I think somebody didn't realize he was leaving,"

Wilhere said of Wilson. "I think he's entitled to his privacy—it came down to a misunderstanding."

The cabbie, Garry Vinyard of Yellow Cab, said, "All I know is that the guy was scared."

Vinyard said that he tried to stick up for his customer and soon found himself confronted with "about five" members of the sect, who wanted Wilson's suitcases from the trunk of the cab.

"I said, 'Sorry buddy, you're not getting anything out of this cab,'" Vinyard said, adding that he then called the police. Vinyard took his fare to Tampa International Airport after the police arrived to investigate the incident.

Wilhere said, "No," when asked whether the incident stemmed from a dispute about a refund or any methods involved in counseling offered by the sect. The sect spokesman also said that Wilson will be returning to Clearwater.

Wilson could not be reached for comment. A woman who answered the telephone at Wilson's Texas residence said he was en route to Midland.

Clearwater Sun

Northern Pinellas County's Local Daily

5 JANUARY 1984

Scientologists owe the public an explanation

Scientology spokesman Hugh Wilhere owes the people of Clearwater an explanation for the apparently strange behavior of members of his sect on Tuesday.

According to a police report, sect members blocked the path of a cab trying to take William B. Wilson of Midland, Texas, from Scientology headquarters at the former Fort Harrison Hotel to Tampa International Airport.

Yellow Cab driver Garry Vinyard said Wilson seemed "scared" and added that about five sect members attempted to get the man's luggage removed from the trunk of the cab. Vinyard called the police, but Wilson declined to file a complaint.

Wilhere attributed the bizarre incident to a "misunderstanding."

Asked whether Wilson was involved in a financial dispute with the sect, Wilhere said "no." But he did not elaborate.

It might be in the sect's best interests to provide a full explanation.

The Church of Scientology has waged a stepped-up public relations campaign in recent months to convince the people of Clearwater that the new leadership is running a legitimate and ethical organization.

But incidents such as the apparent

attempt to hold a "guest" at the Fort Harrison against his will are reminiscent of an earlier era when high-ranking Scientologists were accused—and sometimes convicted—of a variety of unlawful acts.

If the reincarnated Church of Scientology is as squeaky-clean as its leaders insist, then Wilhere should not hesitate to dispel suspicions inevitably prompted by the incident.

Without an acceptable explanation, the incident adds substance to accusations by such former sect members as LaVenda Van Schaick, who has been picketing Scientology headquarters in retaliation for alleged "harassment."

Mrs. Van Schaick announced Tuesday that she would not eat until her four-year-old lawsuit against the sect gets to court.

The case is tentatively scheduled for late February.

Boston attorney Harvey Silverglate, who is defending the Church of Scientology against Mrs. Van Schaick's lawsuit, insisted that the sect will be vindicated at the trial.

But, if the Scientologists are serious about cleaning up their image, they will have to do a better job of explaining the apparently outlandish behavior attributed to their members.

Sect holds conference to debunk kidnap story

By J. H. HANCOCK
Sun staff writer

When 69-year-old Texas multimillionaire William "Willie B." Wilson made headlines after his cab was blocked Jan. 2 while leaving the Church of Scientology's Fort Harrison Hotel, he said he took the incident in stride.

But it bugged him, Wilson told reporters Thursday, when Pinellas County Commissioner Gabriel Cazares sent a letter to U.S. Rep. Michael Bilirakis, R-Pa., Harbor, condemning the sect as a "cult" and handling a senior citizen.

"Anybody who knows me knows I'd never be victimized," Wilson said in a Texas drawl, adding that he got no response when he challenged Cazares to an arm wrestling match.

"I'd rather challenge him to a truth or consequences contest," the 63-year-old Cazares said Thursday. "The Scientologists know that this is the senior citizens capital of the world, and they want them to beat a path to their door with their bank books."

Wilson, whose frontier ways (he says "thar" for "there") belie a personal oil and ranching fortune



WILLIAM B. WILSON

he estimates at \$100 million, said he got involved with Scientology in 1976 after the sect helped one of his five sons conquer a drug problem.

With a Church of Scientology public relations man nearby, the sect held an "open house" for reporters to meet Wilson, hear him debunk the incident earlier this



RICHARD HAWORTH

month as a "misunderstanding," and get a personal glimpse of Scientology.

"This is not Scientology talking—this is Willie B. Wilson talking," he said. The Midland, Texas, oilman/rancher said he was on his way from the Fort Harrison Hotel in downtown Clearwater (Please see "Cabbie," next page)

* Cabbie

(from page 1C)
to Tampa International Airport when other sect members blocked his cab.

"As far as I'm concerned it was a five-minute detention and I didn't agree with them," Wilson said. "I'm a very forthright guy."

The flap stemmed from a misunderstanding about checking out of the hotel, Wilson said.

Cabdriver Garry Vinyard, who later said Wilson appeared "scared," called police. Wilson declined to press charges, but the cabbie sued the sect for \$10 million and settled out of court last week for an undisclosed sum.

"Lady, I play polo," Wilson countered when a reporter asked if he was scared. "Every time you play polo you take your life in your hands."

Previously an Episcopalian, Wilson said Scientology solved his anxieties about life hereafter. Wil-

son said he now realizes the full extent of his "spiritual being" and he has no fear.

For Wilson, the \$100,000 he said he has spent on Scientology courses and counseling has been worth every penny.

"It's like playing polo," Wilson said. "You can spend a million down to six-thousand a year.... It costs a lot of money, but it's all beneficial."

Richard Haworth, assistant public relations director for the local Church of Scientology, compared the payments with tithing in other churches.

A graduate of the University of Texas law school, Wilson said he became a small-time rancher after serving in the U.S. Army Air Corps during World War II. The business blossomed.

Besides oil and gas exploration, Wilson's business card lists such ventures as waste disposal and reclamation, office automation

and the "youngest finest Argus cattle."

Wilson, who said he is active in political groups he founded called the Republican Eagles and the Republican Senatorial Trust, added that he raised \$500,000 on behalf of Ronald Reagan's 1960 presidential campaign.

"I thought Carter was a disaster," Wilson said.

What does Wilson say about allegations of past illegal activity by the Church of Scientology?

"Totally absurd," he said. "It doesn't affect me, but it affects people that could be helped."

Wilson criticized reports on Scientology that have appeared on CBS' news show "60 Minutes," Reader's Digest and other media. Instead, he placed opposition to the sect in a historical perspective.

"Look at the Christians and the lions," Wilson said.

Scientology gets high marks for restoration

BY A WASHINGTON TIMES STAFF WRITER

It was not many months ago that the founder of Scientology, L. Ron Hubbard, was being pressed in court to prove that he is alive. He as much as told the judge that he was so much alive that he didn't have time to trifle with proving it in court.

But he did send, in his own handwriting, and by use of devices that could prove incontrovertibly when he actually wrote it, evidence that he was no phantom, as had been intimated in a legal suit.

There were attempts in that suit, and by other means, to wrest control of assets accrued, or believed to be accrued, by him both in the fostering of Scientology as a religion and in Dianetics, a technique used in Scientology to guide the individual into higher levels of spiritual and mental development.

The court concurred: L. Ron Hubbard lives. He was spared having to make it visibly evident in the courtroom. He since, however, has been unsparing in his praise of the religion which has been generated from his research and observations.

In his analysis of things, after several actions that placed clouds over the integrity of the religious group, he believes great strides have been taken to "clean house" which have let it get on with the serious business it undertakes in the development of individuals and institutions.

In his longest taped message in the 33-year-history of the church, members around the world simultaneously heard him say that in winning the case which challenged whether he indeed is alive, and by drastic reforms within the church makeup, the church was rescued from "greedy and hostile hands" and had begun a new era of expansion.

More than 300 persons heard the message at Washington's Founding Church of Scientology, the denomination's mother church. He said that under "probably . . . the first truly independent management Scientology has ever had," the church was "salvaged (in) grand style."

Mr. Hubbard admitted that he had been "aloof" for many years from the direct activities of Scientology because of a heavy schedule of writing and in that time there had been "people around . . . who sought to take over Scientology churches in a perverted form (to) exploit them for their own profit."

"For a very long while," he said, "I have not been connected with active management of the church or associated organizations." But he told his followers that the expansion of the church membership and structure was so historically significant that it warranted his direct public recognition.

In the last year since the independent management took charge, he said there have been several highlights, among them:

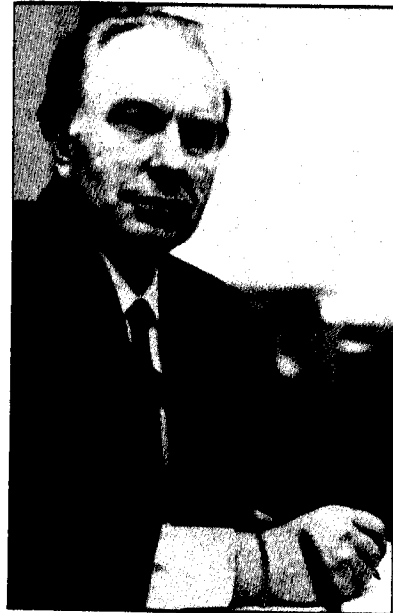
- An increase in number of churches to 144 and in the number of missions to 168, complemented by more than 300 city groups.

- An increase of nearly 420,000 parishioners — or more than 8,000 members per week. (Membership is not generally on the same basis as in many other religions Americans are familiar with, but as a minimum does include those who have taken any kind of course offered through the church centers.)

- The sale of the 6 millionth copy of "Dianetics: The Modern Science of Mental Health," which touched off a continuing controversy with the psychiatric profession around the world within a month after it was published.

- Recognition by Australia's court of its bona fides as a religion after years of harassment in several Australian states, particularly West Australia. A public apology was offered to the religionists by some West Australian legislators.

The group also has won a series of other legal victories in its fight against harassment and suppression. All litigation in the United Kingdom, perhaps the scene of heaviest opposition, has come to an end.



L. Ron Hubbard, founder of Scientology

In addition, Mr. Hubbard said, Narconon, an independent organization which applies his drug rehabilitation techniques, now is utilized in 26 locations, including work in industry, education, sports and the entertainment field.

Scientology study techniques also have been put into use by two major American computer firms and by major auto manufacturers in the United States France and West Germany.

Clearwater Sun

Northern Pinellas County's Local Daily

22 JANUARY 1984

Feds eye alleged sect plot to corrupt U.S. judge

By GEORGE-WAYNE SHEOR
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The U.S. Attorney's Office in Tampa is investigating a suspected 1982 extortion plot by the Church of Scientology to entrap and compromise a Tampa federal judge who presided over a suit against the Clearwater-based sect, a *Clearwater Sun* investigation has revealed.

The purported plot, which in-

involved an attempt to lure U.S. District Judge Ben Krentzman aboard a boat off the Pinellas Suncoast where prostitutes and drugs were to be used to put the judge in a compromising position, was authorized personally by exclusive Scientology founder L. Ron Hubbard, confidential sources have told the Sun.

Although U.S. Attorney Robert Mertle would neither confirm nor deny his office is involved in the

investigation, Clearwater Police Chief Sid Klein acknowledged Saturday his department has been investigating the activities of the controversial sect.

"The Clearwater Police Department has been conducting an ongoing criminal investigation involving the Church of Scientology," Klein said. "Pertinent information related to this case has been turned over to a federal agency." Klein would not, howev-

er, discuss the specific nature of his department's investigation.

Pinellas County Sheriff Gerald Coleman said his department, too, is involved in a criminal investigation of the sect's activities.

"(but) I'm not at liberty to discuss any of the details," he said. John G. Peterson, a Beverly Hills, Calif., attorney for the Church of Scientology, dismissed the substance of the story when reached late Saturday.

"Ben Krentzman is a respected judge," Peterson said. "There is no way we would ever in our wildest imagination dream that Ben Krentzman would get on a boat with drugs and prostitutes."

And although no law enforcement agencies contacted within the past three weeks would confirm a federal investigation, confidential sources have told the Sun that federal investigators have been in contact in recent weeks

with a former high-ranking Scientology, a witness whose identity is a tightly guarded secret.

The witness, a former officer in Scientology's "Guardian Office/Walchdog Committee," became "disenchanted" with the church in recent months and is believed to have details of the plot to entrap Krentzman, according to sources.

The witness reportedly was or-
(Please see "SECT, next page)

(from page 1A)

dered by Hubbard—through other sect official—to use \$250,000 to execute the plan to compromise Krentzman because Scientology officials anticipated an unfavorable ruling in the trial, according to sources.

Prosecutors have reportedly guaranteed the witness protection and immunity from prosecution in exchange for testimony which may implicate a number of Church of Scientology officials and others in the reported plot, the Sun has learned.

Although specifics of the plot have not been disclosed, the Sun has confirmed through several sources that it involved the attempt to lure the judge aboard a large boat equipped with drugs, prostitutes and hidden cameras and microphones.

Although the alleged operation was reportedly implemented to a degree, the conspirators were unsuccessful in getting Krentzman aboard the boat, sources said. Krentzman, however, was unaware of the 1982 plot until recently.

Curiously, such a plot was referred to in an edition of a weekly newsletter which circulated publicly in Southern California in December. The newsletter, a copy of which the Sun has obtained, carries no disclaimer as to whom or what organization is responsible for its publication. But the contents of it are decidedly anti-Scientology, revealing many facets of the sect's operation which, if factual, appear to come from former church insiders.

Contacted at his Clearwater home Saturday, Judge Krentzman said federal authorities have recently briefed him of impending

newspaper stories about "some wild story," but he declined to elaborate further.

"I was given notice two or three days ago that something may be in the newspapers" about the alleged plot, Krentzman said. "I never heard anything about it until just recently."

Krentzman said he had no "feelings at all" about the developing investigation, and he was reluctant to comment further on a matter on which he is not fully versed.

Although Merkle and other law enforcement officials refused to confirm details of the case, the Sun has learned and confidential sources have confirmed:

Krentzman was the chief judge of Florida's 32-county Middle District, at the time of his semi-retirement in late 1982. (Federal judges are appointed for life and never actually retire. Upon stepping down, they still draw full salary and may preside over some cases.)

One of Krentzman's more controversial cases was *Tonia C. Burden vs. the Church of Scientology*, a long and complicated trial which began in July 1980.

Miss Burden, then 20, filed a \$16 million suit against the sect to compensate her for alleged mental abuse, brainwashing, imprisonment and fraud, according to public records. Miss Burden said she entered the Church of Scientology with her parents at age 13 and was for a time a "personal slave" to former pulp science fiction writer and Scientology founder L. Ron Hubbard.

Miss Burden's seven years in the sect ended when she fled from the garage of the former Fort Harrison Hotel in Clearwater, the



BEN KRENTZMAN

church's international headquarters.

The church, which has affiliated outlets throughout the world, has headquarters in Clearwater, Los Angeles and Suffolk, England. It claims a worldwide membership of 6 million. A former church official recently estimated the church's assets at \$300 million, a figure investigators have labeled "conservative."

During the trial, Krentzman ordered the sect to reveal the whereabouts of the reclusive Hubbard, who had not been seen in a number of years. Church officials told Krentzman that Hubbard, who founded the sect in 1954, retired from the organization in 1966 and had no hand in its everyday affairs. They said they did not know where he lived and thereby could not reveal information they did not have.

The Scientologists' attorneys countered Krentzman's offer by



ROBERT MERKLE

demanding that Krentzman remove himself from the case because the judge's son, John, had at one time worked for the Pinellas-Pasco State Attorney's Office on a Scientology investigation, and Krentzman was thereby prejudiced.

However, sect attorney Peterson said Saturday the church never once sought to have Krentzman removed from the case. "I think somebody is using your paper to get a story going," he said.

Krentzman refused to step down from the case. And although he went into semi-retirement in November 1982, Krentzman retained jurisdiction over the Burden trial until November 1983. At that time, U.S. District Judge Elizabeth Kovachevich assumed jurisdiction, according to Tony Cunningham, a Pinellas County attorney representing Miss Burden. The case is unresolved but "is at issue and ready for trial," Cunningham



SID KLEIN

said.

Also during early 1982, the Clearwater City Commission held a series of public hearings, producing witnesses attesting to the sect's purported criminal activities not only in Clearwater but in other areas of the United States.

A number of ex-Scientologists called the church's Fort Harrison headquarters in downtown Clearwater "a horror" and told of the sect's "Fair-Game Doctrine," which states that an enemy "may be tricked, sued, lied to or destroyed."

Also, since 1975, when the Scientologists made Clearwater their international headquarters, dozens of lawsuits have been filed against the sect. Allegations of the sect's involvement in fraud, enslavement, entrapment, theft and harassment have filled the court system.

Eleven church leaders, including Hubbard's wife, Mary Sue,



L. RON HUBBARD

were found guilty four years ago of a massive criminal conspiracy to steal thousands of government files and to conduct burglaries, wiretapping and spying on more than 120 public agencies, including the FBI, the Internal Revenue Service and the CIA.

The sect, claimed the Justice Department, was "involved in a widespread conspiracy to subvert not only the government but the judiciary as well."

While the city of Clearwater was holding the hearings, Scientology officials were issuing press releases saying that any transgressions were in the past, and the sect was no longer, if ever, involved in any subversive activities.

But it was at this time, from February to May 1982, that the alleged plot was being constructed, according to informed and reliable sources and the California newsletter.

Clearwater Sun

23 JANUARY 1984

Editorials of the Sun

How do Scientologists continue to evade law?

The conventional wisdom is that swallows never change their flight nor leopards their spots.

Another sage saying warns that "where there's smoke there's fire."

Both seem to apply to the Church of Scientology.

For many months, the self-styled church has campaigned vigorously to convince the public that skulduggery attributed to it in the past would not be condoned by today's squeaky-clean administration.

But the Machiavellian face of L. Ron Hubbard still looms behind the toothy smiles and sanctimonious utterances of the new administrators.

And forming a phalanx of protection for him is the infamous "Guardian Office/Watchdog Committee," an organization dedicated to the destruction of Hubbard's enemies by any means, fair or foul.

For the umpteenth time in recent years, a black pall of smoke is billowing from Hubbard's direction, and it stinks to high heaven.

Several sources have told the *Clearwater Sun* that Hubbard masterminded a plot to compromise U.S. District Judge Ben Krentzman. The sources said \$250,000 was allocated to a plan to lure the judge into the company of prostitutes then blackmail him into giving a

ruling favorable to the Scientologists.

The plot misfired. But the mere attempt—if proven—would constitute a serious crime.

The story should be unbelievable. But, as Clearwater Mayor Kathy Kelly points out, it's not even shocking. It's no more than the community has come to expect from the Scientologists.

Clearwater police and the Pinellas County Sheriff's Department confirm they are conducting "criminal investigations" into the activities of the Clearwater-based cult.

And the U.S. Attorney's Office in Tampa is reliably reported to be preparing a grand jury probe.

That's reassuring. But the question remains: Why is it taking so long for the law to catch up with the Scientologists?

There seems to be no lack of evidence against the multimillion-dollar organization.

In the 1982 hearings organized by the city of Clearwater, a flood of condemnation gushed from former cult members who appeared eager to testify. Newsletters have been circulated and lawsuits filed by disenchanted Scientologists alleging any number of criminal acts, including enslavement, fraud, entrapment, theft and harassment.

U.S. reportedly probing alleged extortion plot by Scientology sect

Santa Ana Register Jan 23, 1984

Associated Press

CLEARWATER, Fla. — The U.S. Attorney's office in Tampa is investigating a suspected 1982 extortion plot by the Church of Scientology to entrap and compromise a federal judge who presided over a suit against the sect, the Clearwater Sun reported Sunday in a copyright story.

The purported plot involved an attempt to lure U.S. District Judge Ben Krentzman aboard a boat off the Pinellas County coast where prostitutes and drugs were to be used, the newspaper reported.

U.S. Attorney Robert Merkle would not comment on whether his office is investigating the Clearwater-based sect.

But Clearwater Police Chief Sid Klein said Saturday that his office has been conducting a criminal probe of the church.

"Pertinent information related to this case has been turned over to a federal agency," Klein said. But he declined to discuss the specific nature of the probe.

John Peterson, a Beverly Hills attor-

ney for the Church of Scientology, dismissed the story when reached by telephone.

"Ben Krentzman is a respected judge," Peterson told the newspaper. "There is no way we would ever in our wildest imagination dream that Ben Krentzman would get on a boat with drugs and prostitutes."

The newspaper quoted anonymous sources as saying federal investigators have been in contact recently with a former high-ranking Scientologist who has been granted immunity to testify in the case.

Sources told the newspaper that the witness was ordered by sect officials to use \$250,000 to execute the plan to compromise Krentzman because Scientology officials anticipated an unfavorable ruling in the trial.

But officials were unable to get Krentzman aboard the boat, sources told the newspaper.

Krentzman presided over a \$16 million lawsuit filed against the church by Tonja Burden, who claimed she had been a victim of mental abuse, brainwashing, imprisonment and fraud.

Clearwater Sun

Monday, January 23, 1984

Clearwater

Officials 'not surprised' by investigation into sect

By GEORGE WAYNE SHELOR
Sun staff writer

An investigation by federal authorities into the Church of Scientology for complicity in a suspected scheme to entrap a Tampa federal judge "came as no surprise, and that's unfortunate," several Clearwater officials, Pinellas County politicians and others involved in legal action with the Clearwater-based sect said Sunday.

Responding to a copyright story in Sunday's edition of the *Clearwater Sun*, which detailed the suspected 1982 plot and subsequent investigation by the U.S. Attorney's Office, Pinellas County Commissioner Gabe Cazares said he was "appalled, but not at all surprised," by the details of the suspected plot because "this is the kind of thing I've been doing for years."

According to a month-long investigation by the *Sun*, the U.S. Attorney's Office in Tampa is investigating the purported sect plot, which involved an attempt to lure U.S. District Judge Ben Krentzman aboard a boat equipped with drugs, prostitutes and hidden cameras and microphones. At the time, Krentzman was presiding over a \$16 million lawsuit filed against the sect by Tonja Burden, who asked for compensation for alleged mental abuse, brainwashing, imprisonment and fraud, according to public documents. Sources told the *Sun* that Scientology officials anticipated an unfavorable ruling in the case and the elaborate extortion operation was implemented to compromise Krentzman.

Although U.S. Attorney Robert Merkle declined to confirm or deny his office is conducting the investigation, details of the suspected scheme and federal investigation were confirmed by confidential informed sources.

Sandy Block, a sect spokesman in Los Angeles, denied the allegations.

"After reading the article," Block said, "our position is that it's based on manufactured documents and unverified. We're not particularly interested in talking ..."

Block said the *Sun* "made the article up."

"There's no basis for fact in the story. There's no investigation," he said, refusing to elaborate.

Contacted Saturday night, prior to publication of the report, Church of Scientology attorney John G. Peterson dismissed the substance of the story.

The alleged plot was constructed during February through May 1982, and was implemented to a degree, sources said. But Krentzman, now semiretired from the bench and no longer presiding over the Burden trial, never boarded the boat and was unaware of the operation until briefed recently by authorities.

Contacted at his Clearwater home Sunday, Krentzman said, "I thought (Sunday's report) was a very fair article. ... It was a balanced presentation. But I really have no other comment."

Others, however, were less reserved in their statements.

"I think that the city of Clearwater is very concerned about the allegations (in Sunday's paper and in the past) about the Church of Scientology," Clearwater Mayor Kathy Kelly said Sunday afternoon. "We also are very concerned on behalf of the people of Clearwater who are very concerned about such allegations."

"The type of allegations we see and hear are, unfortunately, not shocking. There have been many similar allegations in the past, and that is unfortunate. And although no finding of guilt has yet been handed down in a court, the fact does remain that we constantly hear such allegations."

Speaking as the representative for Clearwater's 100,000 residents, Mrs. Kelly said, "We are also very unhappy that such an organization, continually surrounded by controversy, is in the midst of our city."

She said that in the future, as in the past, city officials in every department "will cooperate wherever they can when asked for assistance by other law enforcement agencies."

"What they (Scientologists) have apparently done to try to intimidate and compromise a federal judge is just beyond belief," said County Commissioner Cazares, who himself was the target of a Scientology plot several years ago, according to seized sect documents.

"And if this revelation does not put to rest (Scientology) apologists' claims that 'We're just a poor, mistreated, misunderstood religion,' then I don't understand

what will."

Cazares, a former Clearwater mayor presently involved in litigation with the sect, said he hoped recent charges and allegations of Scientology wrongdoings "will alert the people of this city to what is really going on."

"I hope this puts to an end forever to people saying, 'I don't want to get involved.' They don't have to get involved, they already are involved," he said. "They live in this city which has, going on eight years now, been occupied by a paramilitary organization."

"Are they blind? What more do they need to know?"

Charles LeCher, also a former mayor of Clearwater, said he was "glad they've been exposed."

"It looks like they have not, contrary to what they've said, changed their spots," LeCher said. "They're just worse than ever. And thank God that Judge Krentzman is not corruptible."

LeCher said that, in light of Sunday's revelations, "I'm sorry that the (present Clearwater City) Commission did not vote unanimously on both readings of the ordinance."

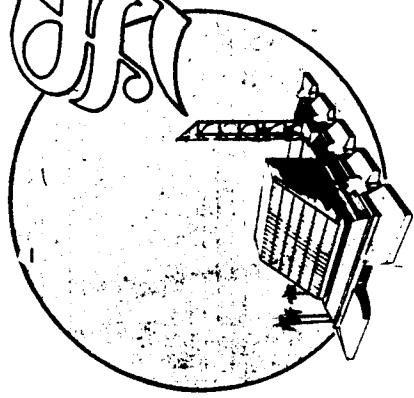
LeCher was referring to the recently adopted charitable-solicitation ordinance, aimed at the Church of Scientology, which calls for registration of all groups that raise more than \$10,000 a year from the general public in Clearwater. The city has been sued by a number of religious groups who oppose the ordinance.

The City Commission adopted the ordinance late last year by a 4-1 vote, with Commissioner James Berfield casting the dissenting vote.

"Now I hope those who voted 'no' will change their vote because of this latest development," LeCher added.

Clearwater City Commissioner Jim Calderbank, who sat on the board in 1982 when the city held a series of hearings into the activities of the controversial sect, said the details of the *Sun* story are "very much like what we heard throughout the hearings. And I would hope that the U.S. Attorney goes forward and prosecutes those involved."

"Whether or not you claim to be a religion, this type of alleged offense should be investigated and prosecuted. Claiming to be a religion does not put you above the law."



St. Petersburg Times Clearwater times

EDITION

Belleair, Dunedin, Largo, Palm Harbor, Tarpon Springs, Safety Harbor, Oldsmar and all Upper Pinellas.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 24, 1984

Scientists sue Clearwater over ordinance

By TIM JOHNSON
Clearwater Times Staff Writer

CLEARWATER — Clearwater's City Commission passed a law to drive the Church of Scientology out of town, the church contends in a federal lawsuit filed Monday in Tampa.

The ordinance, which was adopted in October to regulate the way nonprofit groups raise money in the city, is unconstitutionally tailored to single out the church, the suit charges.

The suit is the second federal court challenge to the ordinance within four days. Four religious groups — including the National Council of Churches — sued the city Friday, contending the ordinance unfairly requires them to keep voluminous records.

City officials weren't surprised by the church's suit. "They've said all along they were going to file it," City

The suit is the second court challenge to the ordinance within four days. Four religious groups — including the National Council of Churches — sued the city Friday.

Manager Tony Shoemaker said.

EVER SINCE the Church of Scientology moved its headquarters to the former Fort Harrison Hotel in Clearwater nine years ago, the city government has tried to rid the city of the group, the suit alleges.

The church was founded in the 1950s by science fiction writer L. Ron Hubbard and now claims a worldwide

membership of 6-million.

Church members undergo counseling using a device similar to a machine employed for lie-detector tests. The counseling helps members relieve painful emotional memories, adherents say.

Critics constantly have lambasted the church for locating in Clearwater. The 50-page suit includes a veritable scrapbook of times that public officials and newspaper editorials have called for the group's removal.

ONE CITY commissioner once called the sect "a cancer," the suit notes, and vowed to work for its removal. Over the years the City Commission has passed at least four resolutions seeking action against the church, the suit adds, and one newspaper editorial called on the church

Please see SUIT, Page 5

Clearwater Sun

TUESDAY, January 24, 1984

Prior sect try at judge reported

By GEORGE-WAYNE SHELOR
Sun staff writer

A current probe into a suspected 1982 extortion plot by the Church of Scientology to corrupt a Tampa federal judge might not be the first time law enforcement officials have investigated the sect's efforts to compromise a U.S. magistrate presiding over a Scientology trial.

In an article titled "Scientology's War Against Judges," which appeared in the December 1980 issue of *The American Lawyer*, author James B. Stewart Jr. details the sect's efforts to complicate, delay and quash the trial of 11 Scientology defendants charged with spying, wiretapping and breaking into government offices.

The U.S. Attorney's Office in Tampa currently is investigating a purported plot involving an attempt to lure U.S. District Judge Ben Krentzman aboard a boat off the Pinellas Suncoast where prostitutes and drugs were to be used to put the judge in a compromising position.

At that time, Krentzman, chief judge of Florida's 32-county Mid-

□ Church of Scientology
to join suit against city of
Clearwater, 1D

dle District, was presiding over the Tonja C. Burden vs. the Church of Scientology case in which Miss Burden was seeking \$16 million from the sect, claiming mental abuse, brainwashing, imprisonment and fraud, according to public records. The trial is, to date, unresolved, and Judge Krentzman has retired.

Through several confidential sources, the *Clearwater Sun* has verified the current federal probe, although as of Monday, U.S. Attorney Robert Merkle would neither confirm nor deny it.

But four years ago in Washington, D.C., a U.S. District Court judge stepped down from a federal criminal conspiracy trial involving the controversial sect.

Stewart, presently a staff writer with the *Wall Street Journal*, was for three years a practicing attorney and, at the time he wrote the (Please see * SECT, next page)

Clearwater Sun

Northern Pinellas County's Local Daily

24 JAN 1984

* Sect

(from page 1A)

article about the trial, a senior editor at The American Lawyer.

In his report, Stewart described the intensive campaign by Scientology attorneys to discredit and cause to resign from the case three judges over the duration of the trial.

The trial of the 11 defendants began Aug. 15, 1978. The group of Scientologists was indicted on a number of federal charges, including obstruction of justice. The first two judges assigned to the case—D.C. District Court Judge George Hart Jr. and Judge Louis Oberdorfer—stepped down during the course of the protracted proceedings, bowing to defense motions for dismissal.

Shortly after Feb. 5, 1979, when Oberdorfer stepped down, the case fell to Judge Charles Richey, a jurist with a respected national reputation. The Scientologists initially were pleased with Richey's appointment, saying as much in

in-house documents, according to Stewart.

But during the next two years—when the trial moved back and forth from Washington, D.C., to Los Angeles to accommodate witness's testimony—they apparently became displeased with several of Richey's rulings, Stewart said, adding that at one point, attorneys for the sect filed a motion asking the judge to disqualify himself from the case. Richey dismissed the motion.

By June 1980, according to Stewart's report, defense counsel were ready with another dismissal motion, one which was damaging and threatening to Judge Richey. The groundwork for that motion, Stewart wrote, had been laid nearly a year before, shortly after the hearings in Los Angeles. According to Stewart's published report:

During the summer of 1979, a Scientology lawyer paid a private detective named Richard Bast

\$321,000 plus expenses to investigate Judge Richey's security precautions. One of the detective's first steps was to infiltrate Richey's inner circle at the courthouse.

Several of Bast's employee's befriended Richey's court reporter and tape-recorded several conversations which were the basis of the most recent dismissal motion. Some Scientology lawyers, however, thought the strategy had "gone too far" and withdrew as counsel.

Although the motion noted a number of reasons defense lawyers believed Richey was prejudiced—including Richey suspecting the sect was spreading rumors about him as part of a "plot" to discredit him—it failed to detail the alleged rumors about the judge, citing "respect for the court as an institution."

Bast, the detective, had secured damning information about Richey's personal habits, and when it

was not included as part of the motion, he gave it to political columnist Jack Anderson.

Bast showed to one of Anderson's reporters a video recording, during which the prostitute recited "in titillating detail" her encounter with Judge Richey and his procurement of her services. Bast also provided a lie detector test indicating the prostitute was telling the truth, and a statement from a U.S. marshal who had guarded the judge claiming Richey said, "Let's go get a woman."

Also made available to Anderson's reporter was a tape recording of Richey's court reporter purportedly saying the judge "was always picking up girls."

After Anderson's syndicated column detailing Richey's alleged procurement of a prostitute was sent to newspapers July 11 (for July 18 publication) the court reporter denied the remarks attributed to him. The Sun was unable to contact the U.S. marshal in-

volved.

On July 16, Richey issued his opinion on the case. Apparently referring to the upcoming column (which he knew about from reporters' calls), Richey called the dismissal motion "the latest effort in the escalating attack on the court" and said the motion was based on "hearsay, rumor and gossip."

Richey continued, admonishing the defendants and their counsel for their "groundless" attacks on his character, by saying that the proceedings had been turned "into a trial of this judge."

In a state of exhaustion and near-collapse, the 58-year-old judge withdrew from the case. On July 18, Anderson's column appeared in newspapers nationwide and five days later, Judge Richey was hospitalized for treatment of two pulmonary embolisms.

His ordeal may not be over, Stewart's report states. Scientology attorneys said the prostitute

affair "is only the tip of the iceberg," and if necessary, would expose additional damaging testimony.

Ultimately, all of the defendants, including Scientology founder L. Ron Hubbard's wife, Mary Sue, were convicted of the federal charges.

Stewart, contacted at his New York office, said he developed his story from "court records ... and my own interviews."

"I spoke with the prosecutors (of the case), and I did a lot of legwork" on the story, which he says is completely factual.

Judge Richey has recovered and is still on the bench of the Washington, D.C., district. Contacted at his chambers, the judge declined to comment for the record on the allegations, the Jack Anderson column or the substance of the story.

Clearwater Sun Managing Editor Sam Fenton contributed to this report.

Clearwater Sun

Sunday, January 29, 1984

Clearwater Sun

7A

Sect keeps high profile in Boston

By GEORGE J. FLYNN
Sun staff writer

BOSTON—The Church of Scientology keeps a high profile in this seaside city of 600,000.

Radio advertising entices listeners to buy Scientology founder L. Ron Hubbard's book, "Dianetics, The Modern Science of Mental Health." Television ads have touted the same literature as well as the sect's "Purification Process."

Scientology, Dianetics and Purification posters are displayed citywide. Smartly dressed, articulate Scientologists hawk sect-related books on street corners and down in the "T," Boston's subway system.

And Bostonians, by and large,

seem to be well aware of—if not generally apathetic to—the sect's presence.

In the Back Bay district, which borders the Charles River, the Church of Scientology has established its headquarters at 448 Beacon St., in a massive five-story brownstone which formerly housed the Chandler School for Women.

A sign out front offers a "Free Personality and IQ Test" to anyone interested in taking the tests. Another sign, hand-printed with a felt-tip marker, tells passers-by that "Jobs for 1984" are available inside.

The lobby, surrounded by shelves filled with volumes about Scientology, is a testament to L.

Ron Hubbard, a pulp science fiction author who founded the sect in 1954. Hubbard's picture is prominently displayed. Circulars and reprints of newspaper interviews with the reclusive man are given to visitors.

And near the front door, sitting on a small wooden table, is a small black box with a sign on it which reads, "You can communicate with Ron. Any message left here he will answer personally." This despite the fact that Hubbard has reportedly not been seen for more than three years and courts throughout the United States have been unable to locate him.

A 20-minute film about Hubbard, Dianetics and the sect is available for viewing. A clerk

named Nick politely shows visitors around the lobby, explaining how buying and reading Hubbard's books can "change your life" and offers a tour of the facilities. But even though Nick assured a visitor that Hubbard does, indeed, personally answer all messages left in the box, he said he had no idea where the man is.

At one time there were several "sect missions" in the urban neighborhoods surrounding Boston. They are now closed. Boston attorney Michael Flynn, who is engaged in about 36 lawsuits against the sect, said the other missions folded due to a drop in local membership and subsequent financial problems. However, a sect employee declined to confirm

or deny Flynn's statements.

Nonetheless, the sect has come very visible in the area through community programs aimed at helping others.

Throughout New England, the Church of Scientology has been active in working for mental health reforms, according to newspaper clippings, and at one time set up an organization to lobby for more benefits for the elderly. Such programs are similar to attempts by the sect's Clearwater organization, which created "New Clearwater for the '80s," an effort to revitalize the downtown district, and the Gerus Society, intended to promote equitable treatment of the elderly.

Both Clearwater programs met

with community indifference and have had little impact.

In Boston, a federally funded agency adopted some of Hubbard's teachings in 1978 to tutor candidates for the city's three select academic high schools.

But there has been a somewhat darker side to the sect's presence.

In 1974, Scientologists stole documents from a Boston law firm representing *The Boston Globe* as part of a sect plan to monitor the newspaper's preparation of an article on the sect, according to affidavits and sworn testimony.

A Scientologist was reportedly at one time planted inside the state Attorney General's Office to intercept consumer complaints about the sect.

Clearwater Sun

29 JANUARY 1984

Lawyer sees smear campaign, slams sect

By GEORGE-WAYNE SHERRILL
Sun staff writer

BOSTON—The attorney who coordinated Clearwater's 1982 hearings into purported criminal activities by the Church of Scientology this week sent letters to the U.S. District Attorney's Office and other officials charging the sect with promoting a smear campaign directed at him.

The letters, attorney Michael Flynn said, were a response to a full-page advertisement Monday in *The Boston Globe* offering a \$100,000 reward for information about a purported \$2.1 million check which, according to sources, was drawn on an ac-

☐ Sect keeps high profile in Boston, 7A

count belonging to Scientology founder L. Ron Hubbard.

Eugene Ingram, a California private investigator retained by a law firm representing Church of Scientology, placed the ad asking for information leading to the arrest and conviction of the person or persons who forged and attempted to pass the check drawn on a cash reserve account at the Bank of New England on June 7, 1982.

On that date, a man who identified himself as Mr. Abdulamir tried to open an account with the check at the Middle East Bank of New York City. Questions were raised about the check and it was not honored. The account did not lose any money and Abdulamir was not seen again.

Flynn, who last week filed statements in federal court here detailing his knowledge of a purported Church of Scientology scheme to entrap a Tampa federal judge, has told investigators that at least 10 persons who have contacted Ingram in response to the ad were told that Flynn and his brother, Kevin, are "prime suspects" in the case.

Ingram, who placed the \$14,000 ad, confirmed to a reporter with *The Boston Herald* that Flynn is indeed a "suspect" in his investigation.

However when contacted Saturday, Ingram told the *Clearwater Sun* that he "never, ever has given Michael Flynn's name as a suspect."

"(Boston newspaper reporters) said they had spoken to Michael Flynn ... (and they) said Michael Flynn told them that he was the suspect," Ingram said. He said he only verified that Flynn "has not been ruled out" as a suspect.

(Please see • SECT, page 7A)

Pinellas County's fastest growing newspaper

* Sect

(from page 1A)

Flynn denies having had any involvement in the attempt to pass the counterfeit check. And sources close to federal and Massachusetts investigations into the check-writing scam have said Flynn is not a suspect in their probes.

Flynn contends the Clearwater-based sect is trying to discredit him because of his involvement in a number of suits against the sect and Hubbard. "This is an example of their counterattack measures—attack the attacker," Flynn said Friday. "Whenever any adverse publicity comes out about them they go on a real publicity campaign of their own. They're trying to counteract the facts that are coming out." Specifically, Flynn said, the ad is part of "a classic Scientology operation" to damn him for his cooperation with federal authorities involved in an investigation of an alleged 1982 sect plot to entrap then-U.S. District Judge Ben Krentzman.

A Sun investigation has disclosed a U.S. Attorney's Office probe into the purported plot to get Krentzman aboard a 77-foot yacht off Clearwater where drugs, prostitutes and hidden cameras and microphones were to be used to compromise the judge. According to documents and affidavits filed in District Court in Boston by Flynn and several former high-ranking Scientologists, the purported scheme relates to the payment of \$250,000 to a private investigator to lure Krentzman aboard the yacht on the pretext of a fishing trip and then to distribute photographs and the recordings for the purpose of destroying his (Krentzman's) reputation and removing him from a case in District Court in Tampa. At the time, Krentzman, now retired, was presiding over a suit against the sect brought by Tonja C. Burden. Miss Burden filed the \$16 million suit against the Church of Scientology in 1980 to compensate her for alleged abuse, brainwashing, imprisonment and fraud during her seven years in

the sect, according to court documents.

Her affiliation with the sect—which included a time when she was Hubbard's "personal slave"—ended when she fled from the former Fort Harrison Hotel in Clearwater, the sect's international headquarters, according to court testimony.

Court documents state that Scientology officials "feared he" (Krentzman) was about to render a decision (in the Burden trial) that would directly and adversely affect Hubbard.

As a result of that concern, the purported plot was implemented. However, Krentzman, was never lured aboard the boat. Krentzman said he did not know of the purported plot until recently.

Although U.S. Attorney Robert Mertle has neither confirmed nor denied that his office is investigating the matter, court documents filed in Boston and confidential sources have detailed the alleged plot and subsequent investigation.

The Sun has also learned that the former chairman of the Watchdog Committee, an arm of the sect's Guardian Office, received orders from Hubbard through another sect officer to implement the suspected scheme to "set up" Krentzman.

Now disenchanted with the sect, the former chairman has sought protection and immunity from the federal government in exchange for his testimony about his knowledge of the alleged plan, according to court documents.

A number of other former sect officials also have contacted authorities to discuss what they know about purported sect wrongdoings.

Flynn said the suspected campaign to discredit him is not the first time the sect has tried to "harass and discourage" him by using "a black P.R. campaign to destroy" his reputation and to discredit him so thoroughly he "will be ostracized."

According to an affidavit filed in District Court, "Hubbard and his agents" have sto-

len thousands of documents, "most of an attorney/client character," from Flynn's office, have contacted his clients "for the purpose of separating them from me as clients," and have "engaged in a wholesale pattern of 'operations' to dissuade (Flynn) from representing" plaintiffs suing the sect.

Richard Haworth, a spokesman for the sect in Clearwater, said Saturday he had seen an ad in the *Wall Street Journal* identical to the one in *The Boston Globe*, but was unaware of Flynn's allegations.

"I don't know that any of this stuff is true... I just don't have any information on what he said," Haworth said.

A young man at the sect's Boston mission, citing church policy, said he could not discuss Flynn's allegations.

"Normally there's like, you know, a department of officials here to handle this type of thing," he said. "But they're not here and I can't talk about something like that."

Flynn was hired by the city of Clearwater to coordinate May 1982 hearings into the sect's alleged criminal activities.

Last fall, the city enacted a charitable-solicitation ordinance, a product of those hearings, requiring organizations that raise more than \$10,000 annually from the public to register with the city clerk. If the city receives 10 legitimate complaints against an organization, the ordinance says, the city attorney may be empowered to demand the offending organization's financial records.

Last week, two lawsuits challenging the measure were filed, one by the Church of Scientology, the other by the Americans United for Separation of Church and State, the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S., the American Jewish Committee and the Seacoast American Baptist Church of Clearwater. The city has decided not to enforce the ordinance, pending the outcome of the suits.

Clearwater Sun

1 FEBRUARY 1984

Sect reveals undercover probe of civic leaders

By GEORGE-WAYNE SHELOR
Sun staff writer

A private detective was hired by Scientologists in 1982 to investigate Clearwater "businessmen ... influential citizens ... and people concerned with real estate" who the sect believed were involved in a "conspiracy" to violate the organization's constitutional rights, according to documents filed Tuesday in U.S. District Court.

According to the affidavits and sworn

statements, sect officials paid Richard Bast, a Virginia private detective, to investigate a suspected conspiracy against the Clearwater-based organization. Documents state the sect did not ask Bast to entrap and compromise a Tampa federal judge as part of his investigation, a suspected operation under federal investigation which was reported in a copyright story in the Jan. 27 edition of the Clearwater Sun.

(Please see • PROBE, next page)



JUDGE BEN KRENTZMAN

Clearwater Sun

1 FEBRUARY 1984

* Probe

(from page 1A)

The Sun reported a U.S. Attorney's Office probe into a purported 1982 plot by the sect to lure U.S. District Court Judge Ben Krentzman aboard a yacht where prostitutes, drugs and hidden cameras were to be used to compromise him.

Krentzman, now retired, was presiding over the Tonja C. Burden vs. the Church of Scientology case, in which Miss Burden was seeking \$16 million for alleged sect crimes against her. The case is, to date, unresolved and Judge Krentzman has retired.

However, confidential sources told the Sun that sect officials, fearing a ruling against them in the trial, paid \$250,000 to have Krentzman corrupted.

"I categorically deny these allegations," Bast said, labeling them "completely false," according to a sworn statement. "(No one) ever received any direction by anyone to 'entrap' Judge Krentzman ... none of these things occurred or were attempted."

Bast acknowledged, however, that Krentzman's name was discussed prior to the Clearwater operation, "(but) we were specifically instructed not to contact or communicate with Judge Krentzman."

Bast said his use of a "cover story" was customary. And the motion filed by the sect states the use of a cover story

by Bast was not "unique," adding that Clearwater City Attorney Tom Bustin used a "cover story" of attending a land-use seminar when he met with Boston attorney Michael Flynn to discuss legal action involving the sect. The motion also states that City Manager Tony Shoemaker "concealed the city had retained Flynn "by using the deceptive technique" of paying Flynn in increments of less than \$5,000. (Any city expenditure over that amount requires public disclosure, according to the Clearwater City Charter.)

The documents filed Tuesday were a legal response to strike a motion filed last week by Miss Burden's counsel, Flynn. In the sect's Tuesday motion, sect attorneys state that Flynn's motion and several Sun newspaper articles "were not made on personal knowledge, but, rather, on unverified, inadmissible hearsay."

In a sworn statement, Robert S. Keefer said he was party to the sect inquiry into the suspected "conspiracy" and that he used the "cover identity" of a "representative of European investors wishing to invest large sums of money" in the Clearwater area for the purpose of acquainting himself with some of the city's more influential persons.

"Under this identity I interviewed businessmen and people concerned with real estate development in Clearwater," Keefer said, but he added that "to my

knowledge Judge Krentzman's name was never mentioned in the investigation on the ship and there never was a plan to approach, entrap or corrupt him in any manner."

The Sun has learned that a yacht called the Trianon, reportedly out of Fort Lauderdale, docked at Clearwater Marina on March 26, 1982. The owner of the 81-foot Trianon was listed as Robert Keefer, according to the harbor master's log sheet. Keefer paid \$683.39 ship rental, in cash, before leaving April 21.

However Sun inquiries with the Coast Guard Documentation Office and Headquarters have revealed the only boat longer than 40 feet registered as the Trianon is a 77-foot yacht, registered in 1982 to James F. Keenan of Washington, D.C. Efforts by the Sun and the Coast Guard to contact Keenan or locate the Trianon have been unsuccessful.

Two of six Clearwater businessmen interviewed by the yacht owner identifying himself as Keefer contacted the Sun last week after reading of the current federal investigation.

"We were approached (by Keefer) because of our standing in the community and our affiliation with the (Clearwater) Chamber of Commerce," said one of the businessmen, who asked that his name not be used.

He said Keefer and an associate identifying himself as Rollin F. Perry, invited the businessmen aboard the Trianon to

discuss investment of "old European money" in the city's downtown area. The boat's crew was dressed in white "navy-type" uniforms and acted "politely," one of the businessmen said.

"I asked them if they were Scientologists or if they had dealings with the Scientologists, and they said, 'No,'" the man recalled of the April 14 excursion into the Gulf of Mexico. The man said he felt "somewhat leery" about the men and their trip into the Gulf. "What they were trying to achieve was so strange we were extremely cautious ... but we were treated very well."

The day after the boat trip, one of the Clearwater businessmen had lunch with the man identifying himself as Keefer. Over lunch, the businessman was told that because of his reluctance to embrace the investor's offer and due to questions about Scientology, the "old European money" people no longer were interested.

The Clearwater businessman, still interested in helping "Keefer" invest in the city, invited him to continue discussions at an April 24 breakfast talk featuring Flynn, the Boston attorney.

The businessman said a woman called him the next day confirming the appointment for "Mr. Keefer." However, Keefer failed to make the breakfast and that was the last time any of the businessmen saw or heard from Perry or Keefer again.

Scientologists' inquiry draws angry reaction

By TIM JOHNSON
and PEGGY ROGERS
Clearwater Times Staff Writers

CLEARWATER — As the local business community simmered Wednesday, new developments emerged following the revelation that the Church of Scientology had hired undercover detectives in 1982 to investigate the city of Clearwater:

Pinellas-Pasco State Attorney James T. Russell said the church's undercover inquiry "is being looked into." He said his office is involved in an investigation of the Clearwater-based church, but he wouldn't provide details.

A Clearwater lawyer also said he told federal prosecutors last week of his suspicions about the church's inquiry.

The church-hired private investigators, posing as agents of a wealthy European, chartered an 81-foot yacht and invited at least five business leaders aboard.

THE "AGENTS" said their financial backer wanted to pour millions into buying land and reviving

'It's like kids playing a game of cops and robbers. And I don't know what they gained from it except that when it comes out publicly, it makes them look worse.'

— Jack Russell,
chamber member

downtown Clearwater. The church on Tuesday disclosed this in court documents, with supporting affidavits.

Church officials said they had been seeking evidence that Clearwater was conspiring to run the Church of Scientology out of town. It is not unusual or illegal for detectives to adopt a pose for an investigation, church officials said.

But community members on Wednesday said they were angry —

yet not necessarily surprised — that the church would conduct such a ruse.

"I think it sounds like one of their typical schemes," said realtor Jim Parker, one of those approached by the detectives hired by the church.

Lawyer Timothy A. Johnson Jr. was retained in spring 1982 by the detectives, then using false identities and the yacht. The German investor's name they gave him checked out but, Johnson said, "I had a real suspicious feeling about those people from the time I met them."

JOHNSON'S doubts were fueled last month by news reports about claims of a purported church plot to use a luxury yacht as the setting to compromise a federal judge, he said.

Johnson said he called U.S. Attorney Robert Merkle's Tampa office about 10 days ago and told a prosecutor he suspected his former clients were linked to the Church of Scientology. He related their actions to the prosecutor.

Please see REACTION, Page 14

Reaction from Page 1

"If, in fact, these people were agents of the Church of Scientology, then I feel like I've had my right of privacy violated, and I don't like it," Johnson said.

"I think it's dirty pool."

Jack Russell, a Greater Clearwater Chamber of Commerce member, called the church's 1982 action "totally unethical. It's fraudulent, really." Russell wasn't approached, but at least one chamber executive, J. Ed Robbins, was.

CHURCH spokesman Richard Haworth said the church did not want to comment on its investigation and community reaction because the evidence uncovered will be used in a court case.

Paul B. Johnson, a Tampa attor-

ney for the church, has declined to give details of the church's investigation. Virginia-based Richard Bast, the chief private investigator for the church inquiry, was in charge of gathering information on a possible city conspiracy, Johnson said.

"Under the circumstances, Bast felt that this was the only way he could get to the truth about what was going on in Clearwater," Johnson said.

The community leaders who figured in the church's inquiry offered various reactions Wednesday, after learning the "investor's" agents were really church-hired detectives. Most said they had been suspicious of the supposed agents.

Downtown Development Board chairman Alan Bomstein said the discussions "seemed pie-in-the sky" because the agents' couldn't offer specifics about their proposals. The church also came up in discussion.

After Bomstein and another businessman had climbed off the luxury yacht *Trianon*, "almost simultaneously, we turned to each other and said, 'They're Scientologists,'" Bomstein recalled.

And now that suspicions about the link to the church are confirmed, city and civic leaders have criticized the church's actions.

"IT WOULD be the same thing as me trying to hire a private investigator to go over and investigate one of them," City Manager Tony Shoemaker said.

Added chamber member Russell: "It's like kids playing a game of cops and robbers. And I don't know what they gained from it except that when it comes out publicly, it makes them look worse."

— Staff writer Tim Nickens contributed to this report.

Private detective outlines undercover church probe

Associated Press

A private detective says he deliberately masqueraded as an agent for nonexistent European investors so he could meet influential Clearwater businessmen as part of a covert investigation for the Church of Scientology.

The ruse was outlined briefly in court documents that a church attorney says were filed to blunt allegations of a plot to entrap and compromise a federal judge hearing a case against the church.

The motions and countermotions are part of a lawsuit filed in Tampa against the church by former Scientologist Tonja Burden, who alleges she was enslaved by the church.

Last week Burden's attorney, Michael Flynn of Boston, and a former high-ranking church member contended in sworn statements that the church tried in 1982 to compromise U.S. District Judge Ben Krentzman who was then hearing the Burden case.

Private investigators for the church wanted to lure Krentzman onto an 81-foot yacht, then offer him prostitutes and drugs while secretly recording and filming the events, according to sworn statements. The plot was never carried out, Flynn said. Krentzman later said he was never aware of any such scheme.

In motions filed Tuesday, church attorney Paul Johnson included affidavits from private detectives Richard Bast, who ran the covert operation and Robert Keefer, who was recruited by Bast. Both flatly denied attempts to "set up" the judge.

Johnson said Wednesday it was his "hope to put at rest the outlandish charges" of a plot against Krentzman. "The whole purpose of filing the motions was to show that the attorney for the plaintiff was very reckless with hearsay allegations and in fact they were not true."

Johnson said he knew nothing of the undercover church probe by church-paid detectives until after the entrapment allegations surfaced in a copywrite story Jan. 22 by the Clearwater Sun newspaper. There was a yacht, he said, but no drugs or prostitutes were aboard.

The Church of Scientology has its international headquarters in Clearwater.

At least five prominent Clearwater business leaders have said they thought they were holding discussions with representatives for wealthy foreign investors ready to dump millions into downtown development when they were aboard the yacht "Trianon," in 1982.

The Church of Scientology filed court documents to contradict accusations of a plot to entrap a federal judge.

Johnson refused to comment on whether there were hidden cameras or recording equipment aboard when the boat was docked at a Clearwater marina in early 1982.

"Bast was in charge period. He determined the use of this technique. I'm not expressing my opinion of the propriety of it," said Johnson.

In his affidavit, Bast said he personally supervised an investigation "designed to establish contact with local realty, banking and business interests ... for the purpose of gaining information concerning any possible conspiracy against the church ... I used the customary investigatory technique of developing a cover story ... the cover story of my investigators was that they were representatives of wealthy foreign investors interested in real estate in Florida."

Bast admits Krentzman's name came up but never explains why. "In preparing for the investigation, Judge Krentzman's name as well as the names of other public figures, were mentioned. I was specifically instructed with respect to Judge Krentzman that there was to be no effort made to make contact with him, and that instruction was followed."

Local business leaders — including prominent attorney Timothy Johnson Jr., real estate agent Jim Parker and Lee Arnold, David Carley, a bank president and Chamber of Commerce officer Jay Ed Robbins — told the St. Petersburg Times they were approached by Keefer, from Los Angeles, and taken aboard the yacht to discuss estate investments. Some were on separate trips.

Timothy Johnson and Carley said at times the conversation was steered to the church, with Keefer saying that his unnamed wealthy German investor was concerned about adverse publicity regarding the church in Clearwater.

At one point, according to Johnson, Keefer offered a "subtle but clear request" that some of the businessmen try to get a postponement of an imminent city hearing into allegations of illegal church activities. Johnson said he shrugged off the request.

4 FEBRUARY 1984

FBI expands probe of alleged sect plot

By GEORGE-WAYNE SHELOR
Sun staff writer

The FBI, apparently acting on documents filed in U.S. District Court this week, has expanded a federal investigation into an alleged 1982 Scientology operation to entrap a Tampa federal judge.

Initially, the federal probe was aimed at uncovering the circumstances surrounding a purported Scientology plot to lure U.S. District Judge Ben Krentzman aboard a boat where drugs, prostitutes and hidden cameras were to be used to compromise him.

However, the investigation was expanded after the Clearwater-based sect filed documents Tuesday detailing its own involvement in a 1982 "undercover" probe of prominent local businessmen the sect believed were involved in a "conspiracy" to violate the organization's constitutional rights.

Although FBI Special Agent in Charge Robert Butler declined Friday to confirm or deny the investigations, at least one of the businessmen targeted by the sect's operation said he has been contacted by the officials.

Clearwater lawyer Timothy Johnson Jr., one of six local men invited aboard the boat Trianon by sect representatives, said the FBI called him after newspaper reports appeared about the sect's undercover operation.

"(The FBI) called and basically asked me about what appeared in the paper," Johnson said. He recalled speaking with the U.S. Attorney's Office late last month, "and they said the FBI would probably do a follow-up (investigation)."

According to documents filed Tuesday in U.S. District Court in Tampa, the sect retained a Virginia private detective to investigate Clearwater "businessmen ... influential citizens ... and people concerned with real estate," who sect officials believed were conspiring against the sect.

Attached to the documents was a sworn statement by the detective, Richard Bast, who said he was hired by an attorney for the sect "to conduct a gen-

eral information gathering investigation into a possible conspiracy against the Church by influential citizens in Clearwater."

The Clearwater Sun has learned that Bast, with at least one other man, used the 77-foot Trianon to entertain the six businessmen while leading them to believe he represented clients—"old European money"—who wanted to invest in downtown Clearwater. Bast acknowledged in his statement that there was no "old European money" and that, indeed, the entire scheme was an intelligence-gathering operation.

Bast denied any involvement in the purported scheme to corrupt Krentzman, although he acknowledged the judge's name had been mentioned prior to initiating the undercover operation.

Paul Johnson, a Tampa lawyer who represents the sect, was out of the country and unavailable for comment Friday. Sect spokesman Richard Haworth said he knew "nothing more than what is in the documents" and only Johnson could elaborate on the undercover operation and why Scientology officials thought there was a conspiracy against the sect.

Bast's statement and accompanying affidavits and motions were a response to a motion filed in late January by Boston lawyer Michael Flynn, who represents Tonja Burden in her \$16 million suit against the sect.

In Flynn's motion filed in that case, he and a former high-ranking Scientologist outlined the alleged plot to corrupt Judge Krentzman. The sect, in denying Flynn's allegations, outlined the undercover operation aimed at the businessmen.

The ruse the sect initiated in Clearwater in 1982 is not unique. Sect documents—seized during FBI raids in Los Angeles and Washington, D.C., and entered as government exhibits in several trials—detail a number of sect activities using covert methods to gather information.

(Please see *, SECT, next page)

* Sect

(from page 1A)

On one occasion, when the sect was moving into Clearwater and searching for a safe, secret location for Scientology founder L. Ron Hubbard to live, a person named "Ron" outlined the ease in moving about the city.

"Probably my best layout is to get very well known in the CW (Clearwater) area with a camera in my hand and my Universal News press card taking pictures of "beautiful CW," states a seized Nov. 26, 1975, document stamped "SECRET."

FBI expands probe of alleged sect plot

By GEORGE WAYNE SHELOR
Sun staff writer

The FBI, apparently acting on documents filed in U.S. District Court this week, has expanded a federal investigation into an alleged 1982 Scientology operation to entrap a Tampa federal judge.

Initially, the federal probe was aimed at uncovering the circumstances surrounding a purported Scientology plot to lure U.S. District Judge Bea Krentzman aboard a boat where drugs, prostitutes and hidden cameras were to be used to compromise him.

However, the investigation was expanded after the Clearwater-based sect filed documents Tuesday detailing its own involvement in a 1982 "undercover" probe of prominent local businessmen the sect believed were involved in a "conspiracy" to violate the organization's constitutional rights.

Although FBI Special Agent in Charge Robert Butler declined Friday to confirm or deny the investigations, at least one of the businessmen targeted by the sect's operation said he has been contacted by the officials.

Clearwater lawyer Timothy Johnson Jr., one of six local men invited aboard the boat Trianon by sect representatives, said the FBI called him after newspaper reports appeared about the sect's undercover operation.

"(The FBI) called and basically asked me about what appeared in the paper," Johnson said. He recalled speaking with the U.S. Attorney's Office late last month, "and they said the FBI would probably do a follow-up (investigation)."

According to documents filed Tuesday in U.S. District Court in Tampa, the sect retained a Virginia private detective to investigate Clearwater "businessmen ... influential citizens ... and people concerned with real estate," who sect officials believed were conspiring against the sect.

Attached to the documents was a sworn statement by the detective, Richard Bast, who said he was hired by an attorney for the sect "to conduct a gen-

eral information gathering investigation into a possible conspiracy against the Church by influential citizens in Clearwater."

The *Clearwater Sun* has learned that Bast, with at least one other man, used the 77-foot Trianon to entertain the six businessmen while leading them to believe he represented clients—"old European money"—who wanted to invest in downtown Clearwater. Bast acknowledged in his statement that there was no "old European money" and that, indeed, the entire scheme was an intelligence-gathering operation.

Bast denied any involvement in the purported scheme to corrupt Krentzman, although he acknowledged the judge's name had been mentioned prior to initiating the undercover operation.

Paul Johnson, a Tampa lawyer who represents the sect, was out of the country and unavailable for comment Friday. Sect spokesman Richard Haworth said he knew "nothing more than what is in the documents" and only Johnson could elaborate on the undercover operation and why Scientology officials thought there was a conspiracy against the sect.

Bast's statement and accompanying affidavits and motions were a response to a motion filed in late January by Boston lawyer Michael Flynn, who represents Tonja Burden in her \$16 million suit against the sect.

In Flynn's motion filed in that case, he and a former high-ranking Scientologist outlined the alleged plot to corrupt Judge Krentzman. The sect, in denying Flynn's allegations, outlined the undercover operation aimed at the businessmen.

The ruse the sect initiated in Clearwater in 1982 is not unique. Sect documents—seized during FBI raids in Los Angeles and Washington, D.C., and entered as government exhibits in several trials—detail a number of sect activities using covert methods to gather information.

(Please see * SECT, next page)

* Sect

(from page 1A)

On one occasion, when the sect was moving into Clearwater and searching for a safe, secret location for Scientology founder L. Ron Hubbard to live, a person named "Ron" outlined the ease in moving about the city.

"Probably my best layout is to get very well known in the CW (Clearwater) area with a camera in my hand and my Universal News press card taking pictures of 'beautiful CW,'" states a seized Nov. 28, 1975, document stamped "SECRET."

Clearwater Sun

9 FEBRUARY 1984

Sect president denies wrongdoing in probe

By JEFF MANGUM
Sun staff writer

Recent reports about the Church of Scientology hiring de-

pose as businessmen to elicit views about the sect from Clearwater civic leaders are "much ado about nothing," sect President Heber Jentzsch said Wednesday.

"The issues all will come out in court," the 48-year-old Jentzsch told reporters during an "open house" at the sect-owned Fort Harrison Hotel in downtown Clearwater.

Jentzsch would not discuss specifics, but hinted the Scientology inquiry was tied into concerns about real estate speculation downtown and its potential effect on the sect.

The sect filed papers in U.S. District Court in Tampa Jan. 31 acknowledging an investigation was undertaken by detectives hired by the sect.

That investigation entailed a harbor cruise with a bank president, an attorney and a local Realtor to discuss downtown development. The Church of Scientology and the city's then-upcoming hearings on the sect also were discussed.

The court filing came about a week after Boston attorney and chief sect nemesis Michael Flynn alleged a Scientology plot to embarrass U.S. District Judge Ben Krentzman.

Jentzsch dismissed newspaper reports about a plot against Krentzman as "third-hand hearsay" engineered by Flynn to "try a case in the newspapers."

The sect leader compared Flynn and other Scientology critics to Japanese soldiers on remote Pacific islands who refused to be-



HEBER JENTZSCH

lieve World War II had ended, spending their time "crawling around and eating cockroaches."

"The war is over," Jentzsch declared. "And we've won the war over religious freedom."

Flynn could not be reached for comment.

A resident of Los Angeles, Jentzsch said he will be in Clearwater until Friday to spread the word about a ruling in October by the Australian Supreme Court recognizing Scientology as a religion.

"Oh heavens, no," Jentzsch responded when asked if his "open house" and appearance on a radio call-in show in Tampa were prompted by the recent spate of articles about the sect. "I'm going to address our public and our staff."

Complete with stories about life (Please see * SECT, next page)

* Sect

(from page 1B)

as a farm boy in Utah, Jentzsch said he joined the sect in 1967 after a career as a singer and actor. His resume lists acting credits in television shows such as "Mod Squad" and "Combat."

Originally from a Mormon family, Jentzsch said his interest in Scientology began after reading founder L. Ron Hubbard's 1950s bestseller, "Dianetics: The Modern Science of Mental Health."

As president of Church of Scientology International, Jentzsch said, the sect's governing board pays him \$24 a week—with occasional bonuses bringing his in-

come to \$40.

Hubbard's whereabouts have been the source of speculation since 1979. His estranged son failed last year to convince a California judge that the 72-year-old Hubbard is dead or mentally impaired and shielded by the sect.

"Mr. Hubbard doesn't have to come and appear," Jentzsch said, acknowledging he has not seen Hubbard in recent years. "You gotta understand that the man, he's a writer. ... We the people set up the church."

Handwriting analyses submitted during the California trial confirmed that Hubbard is alive and

well, Jentzsch said.

Like another Church of Scientology member who held an "open house" last month, Jentzsch said the paid courses and counseling offered by the sect are worth the financial price.

"I paid that kind of money when I was going to college and I didn't get the same results," Jentzsch said.

Texas millionaire and sect member William "Willie B." Wilson held a similar conference Jan. 20 to debunk claims that he was held against his will as he tried to leave the Fort Harrison in a cab Jan. 2.