

JANUARY 24, 1983 ■ \$1.25

People

weekly

**The hurt and healing
of soulful Marvin Gaye**

**Hugh Downs moves
the South Pole**

**The cut 'n' curl
king of Hollywood**

JAN 1983

HIGH STAKES DIVORCE

**ROXANNE PULTZER
fights back with new
lawyer Marvin
Mitchelson—
plus an inside
look at the
meanness and
methods of
big money
splits**



People

weekly

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Cover photograph by Co Rentmeester

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Controversy



Scientology's headquarters in L.A. was formerly the Cedars of Lebanon Hospital. The church purchased it for \$5 million in 1977.

MINISTRY OF FEAR

Scandal rocks Scientology as the founder's wife goes to prison and his son turns prosecution witness

Last October in San Francisco, some 70 local leaders of the Church of Scientology gathered to hear nine church executives harangue them about their shortcomings. Styling themselves with titles that ranged from the quasi-military ("Commander," "Warrant Officer") to the quasi-lunatic ("International Finance Dictator"), the men announced that they represented the new hierarchy of the organization, and that they were bent on purging deviationists from the ranks. When they spoke of technical impurities in the local missions' dogma and practice, they used a jargon so arcane that outsiders needed a six-page, single-spaced glossary to read minutes of the meeting. When they spoke of what would happen to their enemies, they made themselves frighteningly clear: "That person's future is black," one "Commander" ranted of anyone who might dare defy the church. "It is so black I can't even describe it right now. I can't even find the words to describe how black that person's future is. . . . I mean it is really black."

In Washington, D.C. this month, a federal judge sentenced Mary Sue Hub-

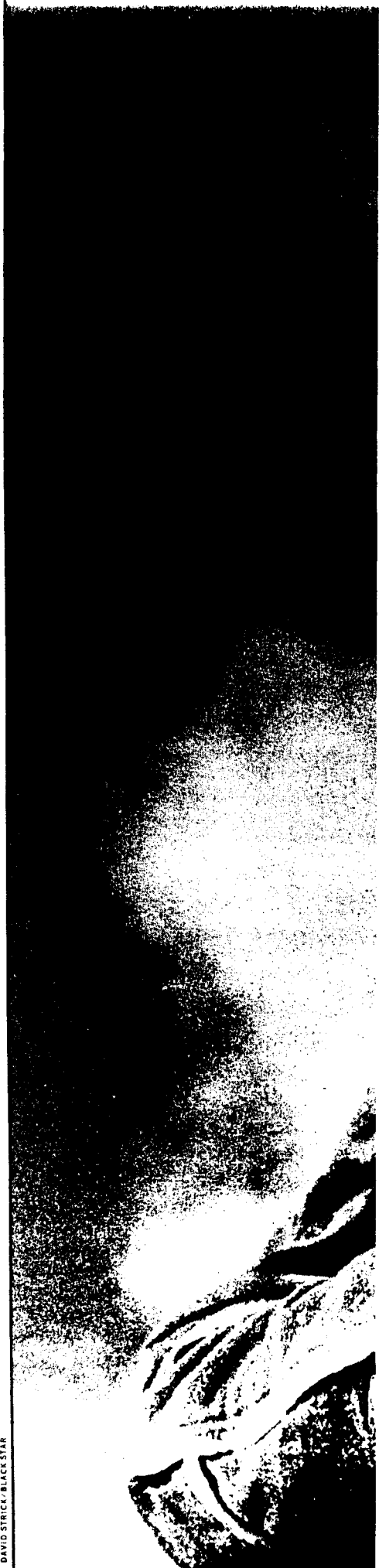
bard to four years in prison and a \$10,000 fine for conspiracy to obstruct justice by covering up Scientology break-ins at federal offices. Hubbard, 51, is the third wife of L. Ron Hubbard, the former writer for *Astounding Science Fiction* magazine who founded Scientology 28 years ago to promulgate Dianetics, the "science" of mental health Hubbard developed in the 1940s. Mary Sue was the last of 11 Scientology leaders to be sentenced for the conspiracy.

In Riverside, Calif., a judge has ordered L. Ron Hubbard himself to appear in court next April. Hubbard, 71, has not been seen in public for nearly three years. His son, who changed his name to Ron DeWolf in 1972, claims that Hubbard Sr. is dead or incapacitated. He wants the court to appoint a trustee, forcing the church to turn over copyrights to his father's books and Scientology techniques worth \$500 million by some estimates.

At the best of times, the Church of Scientology has been controversial. The "church" has no definable theology beyond an adherence to Hub-

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DAVID STRICK/BLACK STAR





Claiming that Scientology founder L. Ron Hubbard is dead or incapacitated, Hubbard's estranged son Ron DeWolf is suing for his fortune. A 1973 photo (above) showed the "mad genius" to be aging rapidly.



Photographed together in the mid-'70s during the shooting of a recruiting film were Hubbard (behind the upper camera) and his protégé, David Miscavige (directly below).

bard's principle that everybody on earth should be "cleared"—i.e., successfully put through a course of Dianetics training. A spectacular money-maker, the cult has assets estimated at \$1 billion, including a massive estate in Gilman Hot Springs, Calif., a Clearwater, Fla. hotel complex and the former Cedars of Lebanon Hospital in Los Angeles, now its headquarters. At its peak, the sect claimed a membership of 6.5 million in 17 countries, and it has numbered such celebrities as John Travolta and Cathy Lee Crosby among its devotees. Yet critics have long accused Scientologists of harassing opponents with groundless lawsuits and even physical threats; defectors allege that the church's real reason for existence has always been simply to make money.

Now Scientology faces the greatest crisis of its history. Its leader is in hiding, its governance is in disarray, the U.S. Tax Court is reviewing its tax-exempt status based on 1970-72 IRS audits, and it is under sharp legal attack. According to disaffected church members, the church is crumbling from within. Bent Corydon, a former leader

of a Riverside, Calif. "mission"—or local church—which recently broke away from the main body, says, "We've got a very bad image to overcome. Over the last two years we've lost 80 percent of our older members, and recruiting is half what it used to be."

Scientology's troubles have become public knowledge largely through the efforts of Michael Flynn, a Boston lawyer. Flynn started representing ex-Scientologists in suits against the church three years ago and has become Scientology's most vocal critic. "Outrageousness and personal abuse permeate the organization," Flynn claims—and he has filed charges against the church and its officers for 32 clients in 22 cases across the country.

His most explosive case developed two years ago, when he met Ronald DeWolf. Now 48 and working as the manager of a Carson City, Nev. apartment complex, DeWolf is Hubbard's son by his first wife, the late Margaret Louise Grubb. From 1950 until 1959 he was second in command of Hubbard's cult. The father and son gradually became estranged, and the younger Ron

went off with his wife in 1959 to live in obscurity—until now.

Papers Flynn filed to support DeWolf's suit make a startling series of allegations, many subsequently dismissed by the judge as irrelevant. Denouncing his father as a paranoid schizophrenic, DeWolf charges that Hubbard dabbled in black magic and practiced ritual abortion on his wife, Margaret. In addition to these allegations, DeWolf says that his father is "one of the biggest con men of the century" and once ordered him to steal an atomic bomb as part of a plot to take over the world. Hubbard's followers believe that their leader spent 30 years researching the theory of Scientology; DeWolf says that Ron Sr., author of *Dianetics*, the best-selling bible of Scientology, wrote his books "off the top of his head" while tripping on drugs like mescaline and cocaine throughout the 1950s. "One of the most difficult things to deal with," says DeWolf, "is that it sounds like a soap opera, but it's all true."

In DeWolf's account, based on his own experiences and reports from former members, his father is an eccentric who lived in fear of germs and dust and ordered his followers to wash his clothes 13 times in spring water before he would put them on. Long a recluse, Hubbard Sr. dropped entirely from sight in March of 1980—and that disappearance is the basis for DeWolf's attempt to have his father declared dead or incompetent by the court. Scientology officials point to the publication last year of Hubbard's latest science fiction novel, *Battlefield Earth*, and his taped New Year's greeting as proof that he is still alive. But one of Hubbard's former intimates backs up the theory that something is drastically wrong with the aging guru. Gerry Armstrong, a member from 1971 to 1981 who was compiling Hubbard's papers for an official biography and is now suing the church through Flynn, remembers the last time he saw the leader. "In 1980," Armstrong says, "Hubbard was physically weak and deteriorating mentally. He lashed out irrationally at whoever was around him in mad screaming fits. His paranoia grew progressively worse. He traveled incognito in the back of a black panel van. He was obsessed about cleanliness. His messengers preceded him everywhere wearing white gloves to check for dust. He was an embarrassment to me, this person who had been revered as a god."

CONTINUED



Backdropped by a portrait of Hubbard, church president Heber Jentzsch insists Scientology's leader is alive.

The best evidence that Hubbard is at least incapacitated is the rapid decay of his organization. DeWolf's court petition suggests a fierce struggle for control of the cult between old-line Scientologists and a handful of members in their early 20s who were brought up in the sect. With Hubbard absent, and his wife sentenced and other Scientology leaders serving prison terms, these people have apparently moved into a power vacuum. The offspring of Scientologists, they are members of the "Sea Organization"—youngsters who served as personal attendants aboard Hubbard's yacht, *Apollo*, during the 1970s, when Hubbard used the converted English Channel steamer as a floating mansion-headquarters. Like the prisoners in Plato's cave, the Sea Org staff has never really known the outside world. They speak an ear-jarring mixture of computerese and *Star Trek* terminology, rambling on about such things as being "on Source"—following Hubbard doctrine—and "squirreling tech"—using unapproved versions of Dianetics.

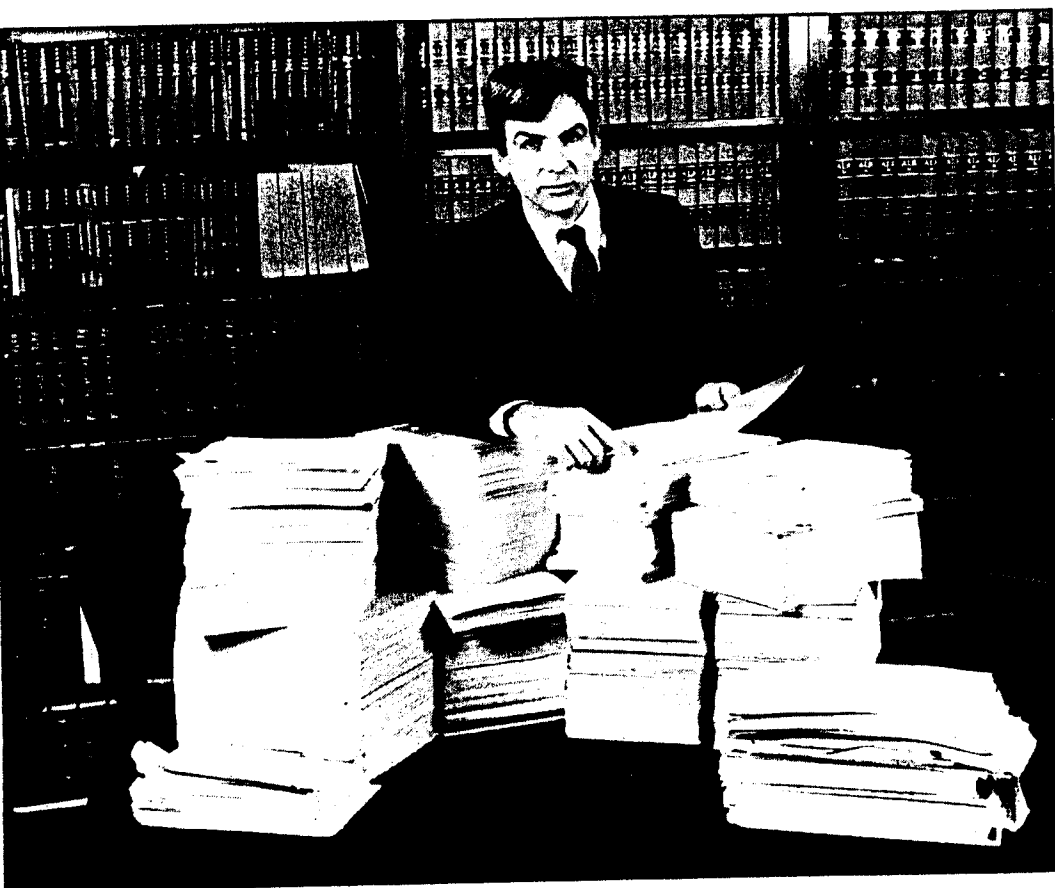
Chief among these hierarchs may be David Miscavige, 22, a "Commander" who presided at the San Francisco conference with local church leaders.

"The 'anything goes' days are over," he railed at them. Warned a Miscavige cohort: "You have a new breed of management in the church. They're tough, they're ruthless, they are on Source."

Larry Heller, a church attorney, announced at the meeting that the Religious Technology Center, a private corporation of which Miscavige was an incorporator and initial trustee, now owns all of Hubbard's copyrights. Flynn and DeWolf charge that the copyright assignment is a scheme to milk hundreds of millions of dollars which belong to the Hubbard estate. Already, says Flynn, Scientology officials have made more than \$100 million from the copyrights. According to DeWolf's affidavit, there was an attempt last June to withdraw \$2 million with a forged check from an account in Hubbard's name that contained copyright proceeds. "If you have control of the copyrights, you have control of everything," Flynn observes. At Scientology's world headquarters in L.A., Heber Jentzsch, the cult's titular president—who claims that Miscavige is merely an employee—says the copyright move was just a matter of reorganization: "We wanted to show that Scientology technology will be preserved in its pure state forever and the church will be preserved for the next 5,000 years," he says.

Scientology technology is simple. Basically, it is the use of a crude, lie-detector-type device called an "E-Meter" to diagnose an individual's emotional state, followed by lengthy and expensive Dianetics counseling sessions to deal with "problems" the meter detects—and it is the basis of the church's wealth. DeWolf and Flynn stand to profit greatly if they win the copyrights. But both claim that they have suffered greatly as well. DeWolf says that he, his wife, Henrietta, and their five children have been harassed by Scientologists under his father's 1967 "Fair Game" doctrine, which holds that any enemy of the church is open to harassment and attack. DeWolf alleges that he was assaulted once in his own home, and that the wheel nuts on his car were twice loosened in an attempt to cause an accident. "You don't say goodbye to L. Ron Hubbard," he says.

Flynn and DeWolf see themselves as locked in mortal struggle with Scientology—and Hubbard, if he is alive. Claiming that his father has an IQ of 200, DeWolf says, "It was a deadly



Lawyer Flynn displays documents he says Scientologists had stolen from him. "I don't like legal terrorism or bullying," he says. "We're not giving in to criminals."

Controversy

combination, paranoia and that IQ." In DeWolf's telling, Hubbard is a mad genius who, among other deceits, fabricated his war record; he claimed that he had twice been declared dead but brought himself back to life through Dianetics. DeWolf asserts that records indicate he merely suffered from ulcers. DeWolf says Hubbard also passed himself off as an expert on nuclear physics and psychology—though according to DeWolf his father had no training in either. Gerry Armstrong supports this by stating that Hubbard once attempted to buy himself a Nobel Prize.

In an affidavit submitted in connection with his suits, Flynn has detailed a church operation (which he says was codenamed "Juggernaut") aimed at putting an end to Flynn's lawsuits—and perhaps to the lawyer himself. Partially substantiated by some of the defectors from the cult whom he represents, Flynn says that Juggernaut included hundreds of abusive phone calls, a mailed murder threat, theft of documents from his office, nine complaints against him filed with the Massachusetts Bar Association—all dismissed—and even a telephone call to a friend of Flynn's in which the lawyer was falsely accused of murdering a client's husband. What may have been Juggernaut's most sinister operation may never be proved, however. In October 1979, while Flynn was piloting his private plane on a trip to South Bend, Ind., the engine failed. According to his affidavit, Flynn made an emergency landing, and mechanics discovered that both fuel tanks had been contaminated with water. Flynn cannot prove who sabotaged the plane, but he has his suspicions.

The revolver that Michael Flynn now keeps in his desk drawer shows that he is not unscarred by his brush with Scientology. Withal, he remains confident of ultimate vindication. California Superior Court Judge J. David Hennigan has openly challenged Hubbard to appear in his courtroom—and has indicated that he may turn the copyrights over to an independent trustee if Hubbard does not. "The only way they can defeat us is by producing Hubbard—and they can't," Flynn says. "If he's not dead, he's old, sick and degenerate. His appearance would puncture forever the church myth about his being the perfect man."

Written by JOHN SAAR
Reported by PATRICIA GOLDSTONE

An Org-speak sampler

The argot used by Scientology's new young leaders is so obscure that no one outside the cult can understand it. The following are a few examples of their virtually incomprehensible speech, taken from the minutes of the October Mission-holders' meeting in San Francisco:

By association if no other reason you have allowed the missions to go squirrel and I mean *squirrel*... Now right now you guys are CI on my lines... because you guys are sitting on public, you're ripping off the orgs.

—International Finance Dictator Wendell Reynolds

Kingsley Wimbush's "dinging process" is completely squirrel. You won't find it in any tech.

—Commander David Miscavige

There's a little technique of make wrong when someone tries to put in ethics. It's actually a suppressive make wrong. It goes "If you put in ethics, we're going to crash our stats to show you that you can't put our ethics in and that is a wrong indication."

—Miscavige

Those of you who see to it, for some reason or another to fall by the wayside and get caught up in squirrel—ling get into a thing of trying to tip-off pcs from orgs or downgrade tech or join up with squirrels.

—Commander Ray Mithoff

As a commanding officer for many years, one of the main things I've been dealing with is people not wearing their hat.

—Captain Guillaume Lesevre



Staffers working the phones at the cult's California center wear the naval uniform of Scientology's elite Sea Organization.