

# Los Angeles Times

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★ Friday, May 25, 1984/Part II

## Feared Being Church Target, Hubbard Aide Testifies

By MYRNA OLIVER, *Times Staff Writer*

A former personal assistant to Church of Scientology founder L. Ron Hubbard testified Thursday that she feared that discovery of documents discrediting Hubbard's background would make her a target of the organization.

Laurel Sullivan, 34, who left Scientology in 1981 after 14 years of working directly for Hubbard in a public relations role, described her fears during the fourth week of trial of the church's civil suit against its former archivist, Gerald Armstrong. The church is asking Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Paul G. Breckenridge Jr. to return about five boxes of personal documents of Hubbard and his third wife, Mary Sue, obtained by Armstrong.

Armstrong claims he had Hubbard's permission to gather the materials for an authorized biography by author Omar Garrison, that he saved them from a shredding operation when the church feared an FBI raid in 1980, and that he took about 2% of them—the five boxes now in court custody—to defend himself against church charges that he was a rumormonger unfairly discrediting Hubbard. In a settlement with the church last summer, Garrison agreed to abandon the biography.

### Job Became Difficult

Sullivan said that, as head of the biography project and Armstrong's superior reviewing the documents, she gradually became aware, as Armstrong did, that Hubbard had lied about his authorship of a movie called "Dive Bomber," his payment of \$10,000 for the work, which he used for a Caribbean cruise after World War II, and his heroic war record.

"Our job of creating a biography that was positive was getting increasingly difficult, although that was still our intention," said the woman whose father had led her into Scientology when she was 17.

"In my opinion, within the organization a lot of people were not concerned with the facts. They were concerned with the fiction. I felt it was important to tell the truth. Obviously he (Hubbard) was colorful, charismatic, a leader. There was more than enough to put in a book. We didn't have to put in the gory details.

"But I was very concerned that if anyone did hear

about the gory details," she said, "we would become the target and I think that was what happened."

Asked by Armstrong's lawyer, Michael Flynn, a longtime Scientology adversary, if she became fearful of becoming a target, Sullivan replied: "I knew I would. I knew far too much."

Sullivan also testified that Hubbard

remained firmly in control of the Church of Scientology at least until he went in "seclusion" in 1980, despite a "public relations line" for government officials that he had resigned all positions of authority in 1966 and served only as a consultant. She said he also received lucrative payments from church-related activities.