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Cult's private detective fires at journalists

A PRIVATE detective, employed by representatives of the Church of Scientology cult to investigate one of its opponents, shot at a Sunday Times reporter and photographer and threatened to kill them last week.

The detective, Jarl Grieve Einar Cynewulf, fired a pistol at the journalists after saying: "You'd better go now unless you want to end up in a wooden box. Do you want to be another Hungerford martyr?"

Although the gun was fired from close range, the journalists escaped unharmed after a chase through the streets near Cynewulf's home in Oldland Common, Bristol, on Thursday night.

Earlier, the private detective had said that the Church of Scientology had paid him \$2,500 for attempting to smear the author of a critical new book on the late L Ron Hubbard. Cynewulf said he had been told he could name his price if he could produce evidence that Russell Miller, the author, was an agent of the CIA.

Miller's book, *Bare-Faced Messiah: The True Story of L Ron Hubbard*, is currently being serialised in *The Sunday Times* despite protests and harassment from representatives of the church's 6m members worldwide. The book challenges the authorised church version of Hubbard's life and implies that he was a liar and a cheat.

The scientologists, who have been criticised by judges in Britain, Australia and the United States for breaking up

by Richard Palmer

families and brainwashing devotees, have employed numerous lawyers and private detectives in an attempt to discredit Miller and prevent the book being published.

Cynewulf is one of several private detectives who have been asked to find a link between the CIA and Miller, a former Sunday Times journalist. The church wants to represent Miller as someone acting on instructions from the secret service because it believes the CIA is behind investigations into its tax affairs in the US.

It also fears the secret service is attempting to get the church banned, and any hint that Miller has links with the intelligence services would enable scientologists to discredit the book.

Although Cynewulf is clearly eccentric, to say the least, it is clear from his detailed knowledge of Miller's private life that he has been briefed and done work on the case. He repeated virtually all the charges, many never published, that have been levelled against Miller by other private detectives.

Cynewulf said he had been employed by Virginia Snyder, a private detective in Delray Beach, Florida, who had been paid by the Church of Scientology. Snyder, who admitted that she had employed Cynewulf on another case and had recommended him to other clients, refused either to confirm or deny that she had worked with him on the scientology case on the

grounds that she would be in breach of her client's confidence.

While she confirmed that she is a friend of L Fletcher Prouty, Hubbard's authorised biographer who has been part of the campaign to discredit Miller, she said he had not asked her to investigate Miller.

During a three-hour conversation last Wednesday afternoon, Cynewulf told a Sunday Times reporter that Miller's phone calls and mail were being intercepted and his house in Buckinghamshire was under close surveillance.

He said that although there was no evidence that Miller had any links with the intelligence community, some investigators would stop at nothing to frame him. "I think Miller is at risk," he said. "People acting for the church are willing to pay large sums for men to discredit him. These bastards will stop at nothing."

He said he was so disgusted with what was happening that he had told Snyder, his boss in Florida, that he no longer wished to work on the case. He said Snyder had also stopped working for the cult.

But following a telephone conversation with her on Thursday morning, Cynewulf said he had been instructed to say nothing about the case.

● Experts at the Royal Ordnance factory at Enfield, north London, have provisionally identified the weapon used by Cynewulf as an Israeli 0.357 magnum Desert Eagle pistol.

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