

## Covert action claim made in testimony

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A former national pocket-billiards champion told a Portland jury Tuesday about serving in a secret intelligence branch of the Church of Scientology to help wage a "small war" against critics of the church.

Edward Walters testified in a fraud trial in Multnomah County Circuit Court that he was recruited into the secret intelligence arm of the church in 1971 and that he engaged in covert operations designed to embarrass and discredit people who spoke against or sued the church founded by L. Ron Hubbard.

One of his drills in training for his secret work was to learn to distinguish Scientologists from non-Scientologists in groups of strangers, Walters testified. "We needed people who did not look and act like programmed Scientologists," he said.

Walters testified that covert operations against opponents of Scientology were designed so they could not be traced to Hubbard if the operations were exposed. "If we were discovered, we would be disavowed by Scientology," he said of the intelligence agents.

Walters said he once posed as a patient in order to collect on a hidden tape recorder statements from a psychiatrist who had criticized Scientology, and he said he and another agent placed a hidden recorder to tape board meetings of the Southern Nevada Health Association.

He also said he fabricated documents that were placed among Better Business Bureau records so the documents would look as if they had been made by the BBB.

"As I recall, I believe it was stuff concerning L. Ron Hubbard's past history we wanted in their files when people asked them about Scientology," Walters testified.

Walters said a policy letter issued under Hubbard's name in March 1975 ordered the "guardians' office," of which the intelligence-gathering branch was a part, to clear the guardians' files of all material indicating any involvement in illegal activity.

Walters, who will resume testifying Wednesday, was called as a witness on behalf of Julie Christofferson Titchbourne, a Portland woman who alleges that she was defrauded by the church during a nine-month involvement with Scientology ending in 1976.

Among many allegations of misrepresentations made to her, she has alleged that church officials told her in 1975 that "auditing" sessions between her and a trained Scientology questioner about personal aspects of her life were confidential and would not be revealed to anyone other than the auditor.

"I'm embarrassed to say," he testified. "For the most part their folders were not confidential at all. The guardians' office always had access to them." He said the guardians' office could ask for the files on anyone. "I personally have done so," he added.