

Author Critical of Scientology Harassed

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By Ron Shaffer

Washington Post Staff Writer

"In the fall of 1971 author Paulette Cooper wrote a book called "The Scandal of Scientology" and then, according to her publisher, friends, family and lawyers, the following things happened to her:

She received repeated telephone calls from anonymous persons who threatened to kill her.

Letters were posted on her neighbors' doors telling them she had venereal disease and should be evicted.

Her publisher was sued and harassed to the point that he withdrew the book from circulation.

Officials of the Church of Scientology in New York City claimed they

had received a bomb threat and the federal government subsequently indicted her for sending it. Then the government charged her with perjury for denying it.

Cooper's friends, family, lawyers and publisher have alleged in interviews and in a court suit that it was the Scientologists who mounted this campaign, an allegation the church vehemently denies.

According to informed sources, FBI agents have found in church records evidence that the Scientologists framed Cooper by stealing her stationery and sending the bomb threat to themselves.

The Scientologists deny they were involved in any such scheme. "It's totally ridiculous and typical of outrageous false statements that some

people feel they need to pass on regarding the church," Greg Layton, a Church of Scientology spokesman, said.

Federal agents, according to informed sources, have rushed the newly discovered evidence on the bomb threat to the FBI offices in New York City, and a new investigation has been started.

The harassment, the criminal charges, the numerous court suits brought against her here and abroad by the Scientologists, left Cooper "severely depressed," according to one of her lawyers. She could no longer concentrate on her free-lance writing, and fell back on her family to support her. A
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THE WASHINGTON POST

Seized Scientology Data Seen To Indicate Author Was Framed

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family member said she needed psychiatric treatment.

"They did a lot to destroy this girl's life," said Virgil Roberts, her attorney in Los Angeles.

"Paulette was an unusual person in that the harassment nearly destroyed her, but rather than stop, it made her fight back with her limited means," Paul D. Rheingold, her lawyer in New York, said.

"She lost earnings and became too distraught to do much of anything else. She devoted herself full time to fighting back. I would have given up and I consider myself a strong person," said Rheingold.

Cooper, a graduate of Brandeis University and now in her early 30s, was reportedly traveling in Europe yesterday and could not be reached for comment.

The evidence discovered by federal investigators is contained in 46 boxes of Scientology documents

seized by the FBI in raids last summer on church offices here and in Los Angeles.

Scientologists claimed the raids were illegal and sued for return of the materials. But earlier this month the last in a series of court decisions against them enabled federal agents to begin examining the files.

Scientology is the product of L. Ron Hubbard, a one-time science fiction writer who founded the Church of Scientology in 1955. The church claims that man is a free and immortal spirit, and needs to shed emotional encumbrances and negative thoughts. The church provides such a cleansing, through counseling, for a fee.

Church critics have maintained Scientology is not a religion, but rather a business and should not enjoy tax-exempt status. The Supreme Court of Missouri, in a recent decision, denied the church tax-exemption, ruling that it was more a philosophy than a religion.

Many of Cooper's suits with the Scientologists have been settled out of court, according to her lawyers, but a \$15.4 million damage suit she brought against the Scientologists in New York is pending. She plans to press that suit in light of the new evidence received by the FBI, according to Rheingold.

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The pending suit, filed in New York State Supreme Court in 1972, accused the Church of Scientology of "intentional interference" with her constitutional freedom of speech and press. Cooper alleged that the organization had intimidated prospective publishers of her book and had subjected her to obscene telephone calls, threats and electronic surveillance.

The charges that she had made the bomb threat and had committed perjury eventually were dismissed after she discussed details of the situation under the effects of a truth serum administered by prosecutors.

Scientology Bid for Papers Denied

By Timothy S. Robinson
Washington Post Staff Writer

A federal judge ruled here yesterday that a Washington Post reporter could not be forced to turn over to the court materials relating to a Post article published yesterday concerning the Church of Scientology.

U.S. District Judge John H. Pratt said the request, made by attorney Phillip J. Hirshkop for the church, was a "clear violation" of the First Amendment and that a subpoena for the reporter's material would not be enforced.

The reporter, Ron Shaffer, wrote in yesterday's Post that documents seized by the FBI in a raid on the church's headquarters revealed an elaborate campaign by the church to attack and discredit its enemies.

Hirshkop argued that the documents were improperly leaked to The Post by government agents who have been reviewing them. He said he did not want Shaffer to be forced to reveal his sources, and did not seek to enjoin The Post from writing future articles. He said that he merely was asking that any seized documents in The Post's possession or notes relating to such documents be turned in to the court and be destroyed.

John B. Kuhns, representing The Post, said the request by Hirshkop amounted to an "indirect way of gagging the press." Pratt agreed with Kuhns that a "qualified" reporter's privilege could be invoked by Shaffer in connection with questions about the documents, should

he be forced to testify about them.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Raymond Banoun said the U.S. attorney's office would conduct an investigation in an attempt to determine the source of The Post story. But he also contended that the Scientologists themselves may have leaked the materials to make an issue in a hearing in progress before U.S. District Chief Judge William B. Bryant.

Bryant is conducting lengthy proceedings to determine whether FBI agents who carried out the search of the church's headquarters here last July 8 acted properly. To do so, he is asking the agents, document by document, how they determined whether certain material should be seized.