

The News

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Electrometer fight continues Monday

By JUERGEN HABER

The Electrometer is not much bigger than a breadbox but has been the object of an eight-year court battle — to be resumed Monday in U.S. District Court — between the Food and Drug Administration and the Church of Scientology.

Eight years ago U.S. marshals raided the headquarters of the scientologists headquarters here, and the FDA

charged that the device and its accompanying literature made false claims of cures for everything from cancer to radiation burns from atomic explosions.

NO CLAIMS

Nonsense, said the Church of Scientology. "We never made any healing claims for the Electrometer. The E-meter is strictly a counseling aid for use in our spiritual therapy," said Arthur Maren, a minister and public relations for the national church.

The church, with an estimated 3 million "active" and "semi-active" members in the U.S. and with churches and missions in 38 countries, is indeed a church, according to a U.S. Court of Appeals ruling in 1969.

Its doctrines, which say that man is basically good and is seeking to survive, are a mix of Eastern philosophy — primarily Bhuddism — and psychotherapy.

The E-meter is a religious artifact, Mr. Maren said.

"It would have been the same if the FDA had raided a Catholic church and seized the communion wafers and the wine.

"We use the E-meter to determine the status of the soul," he said.

The soul, according to scientologists, is loaded with memories, or Engrams, of painful past experiences and it is these memories — detected by the E-meter — that prevent a person from being able to work and live to the fullest.

Pastoral counseling, by a minister trained in spiritual therapy and in the use of the E-meter, will "clear" the immortal soul, or Thetan, of the Engrams and permit it to come into harmony with the Source of Life.