

Scientologists lose 'Mind Benders' case

By Our High Court Reporter

MR Justice O'CONNOR dismissed two applications by the Church of Scientology yesterday for the editor of a provincial newspaper and the author of "The Mind Benders," a book on the cult, to be sent to prison for contempt of court.

The judge said on the third day of the hearing that he would give his reasons today.

In the applications, the Church of Scientology had sought to commit to prison Mr CYRIL VOSPER, the author, and Mr KEITH WHETSTONE, editor of the *Coventry Evening Telegraph*, which published an editorial commenting on the Foster Report on Scientology, last December.

The Scientologists claimed in court that Mr Vosper, a former Scientologist, and Mr Whetstone were in contempt of court because the book and the article in the newspaper might prejudice forthcoming libel actions in which the Church of Scientology is involved.

Mr EDWARD GARDNEY, Q.C., representing both the church and Mr PETER DALTON GINEVER, a public relations officer, said his clients were defendants in a libel action, which was being brought by Mr Kenneth Robinson, former Health Minister.

The church also sought committal orders "or other punishment" against NEVILLE SPEARMAN LTD., publishers of the book, and COVENTRY NEWSPAPERS LTD., owners of the newspaper.

"Unreality" claim

Mr LEON BRITAN, for Mr Whetstone and the paper's publishers, said the church's application had "an air of grotesque unreality about it."

The libel actions would be heard in London next year and it was most unlikely that anyone from Coventry would serve on the jury.

There was not a scintilla of evidence to suggest it was seriously likely that the article could in any way impede the Dis of justice.

containing the applications for told by the judge yesterday Whetstone, Vosper and Mr court for who had been in need not appearing, that they court today.