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Scientology hearings end

The Clearwater City Commission's Scientology hearings ended Monday with searing criticism from the church and a vow from commissioners that their efforts to regulate Scientology have only begun.

Church lawyer Paul B. Johnson told commissioners they had conducted a biased "Roman circus" that has unjustly

"embarrassed and scandalized" Scientology across the country.

Though the city had offered the church four days to rebut witnesses and documents presented by Boston lawyer Michael J. Flynn, Johnson announced that the church would present no witnesses. "I don't intend to be a part of these proceedings because I don't be-

lieve it would be a fair hearing," Johnson said.

Flynn responded with a closing statement promising commissioners that the attempt to curb alleged Scientology abuses will not be futile. "There can be something done," he said.

While praising Flynn's work in presenting evidence, commissioners were mindful of the legal battles they face if

they pass ordinances he has recommended concerning charitable solicitation and consumer protection.

"This is only the beginning," said Commissioner Rita Garvey. "We've got a long ways to go."

Details on all of these developments are in a story on Page 1-B.