

Woman reveals Scientology secrets

By STEPHEN KOFF
Times Staff Writer

Margery Wakefield got \$200,000 for settling a lawsuit against the Church of Scientology in 1986. In return, Scientology thought it had bought Ms. Wakefield's perpetual silence.

She wasn't supposed to disclose the \$200,000 figure. She wasn't supposed to talk about Scientology's top-secret training techniques. And she wasn't supposed to make claims about alleged hypnosis and Satanism in the church.

But Ms. Wakefield's been talking, going on Tampa Bay radio twice recently to discuss just these things. In so doing, she's testing not only the wrath of Scientology, but also the will of a federal judge.

Her freedom of speech is at odds with Scientology's demands of silence and U.S. District Judge Elizabeth A. Kovachevich's order to stop talking. Ms. Wakefield, 41, knows she could be found in contempt of court, and friends have warned she could be jailed.

She says she doesn't care.

"I feel that everybody else in the country is afraid to speak out" about Scientology, she said Monday. "I feel that I don't have anything to lose."

Said Bill Daugherty, a Scientology spokesman in the church's Clearwater headquarters: "We'd prefer that she not break the law."

When she settled her lawsuit in U.S. District Court in Tampa, Ms. Wakefield agreed in writing to put her old complaints behind her. She was a follower of Scientology, which she now considers a "cult," from 1969 until 1980. She sued the church in 1982, claiming breach of contract, fraud, false imprisonment and practicing medicine without a license.

After four years of a legal standoff, the church offered to pay Ms. Wakefield the previously secret sum of \$200,000. Scientology lawyers then asked Judge Kovachevich to seal the

court files, as well as files in three similar lawsuits.

Ms. Wakefield says she never wanted to be silenced, and she and others involved in the suits — including former Clearwater Mayor Gabe Cazares — have unsuccessfully urged Kovachevich to unseal the files. The *St. Petersburg Times* also wants the files unsealed, and is awaiting a decision on a motion it filed late last year. *Times* lawyer Patricia Fields Anderson argued in court last month that the files may contain newsworthy documents.

Few outsiders actually know what is in the files, but there have been hints. For instance, public docket sheets show that since the church settled, Scientology has tried to stop Cazares, Ms. Wakefield and another former member, Nancy McLean, from criticizing it. Docket sheets, similar to diaries, show dates and brief notations but don't give full details of court actions.

Cazares won his efforts to speak about matters outside his lawsuit, and Ms. McLean's case is unfinished, the docket sheets show.

But as for Ms. Wakefield, who wrote a letter in a newspaper and spoke on a Boston television station about Scientology, Kovachevich in May ordered her not to talk.

Ms. Wakefield considers the order unfair and unconstitutional.

"Everyone's afraid to talk, and I just don't care anymore what the consequences are," she said. "I just need to let people know what they're getting into if they get into it (Scientology)."

She first went on the air July 5, when WUSF-FM broadcast a news story about the sealed Scientology files. The next day, she followed up with an hour-long, call-in show on WMNF-FM.

She disclosed the secret \$200,000 settlement. And, she talked about the secret "O.T." levels of Scientology training, short for "operat-



U.S. District Judge Elizabeth A. Kovachevich, above, in May ordered Margery Wakefield not to talk to reporters.

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— Margery Wakefield

ing thetan." A "thetan" is a spirit or a being that controls behavior, church documents say.

The O.T. levels are based on the story of "Xenu," ruler of the 90-planet Galactic Confederation about 75-million years ago. According to closely guarded Scientology materials, Xenu trapped selected beings in volcanoes on Earth, then dropped powerful H-bombs. The beings were destroyed, but their thetans were not. Xenu created electronic implants out of the thetans, so they would produce abnormal conduct in humans. According to the story, only Scientology can remove the thetans and end aberrant behavior.

The O.T. levels were introduced by Scientology's founder, the late L. Ron Hubbard. Hubbard wrote the best-selling *Dianetics* — which introduces readers to the elementary principles of Scientology but not the secret O.T. levels.

Details of Xenu have surfaced in the press before, but Ms. Wakefield is nevertheless forbidden to discuss them.

"It's our position that she has violated several things," said Michael Lee Hertzberg, a New York lawyer representing the church. He would not say what those "things" were. To even discuss them, he said, would violate the settlement agreement.

The church has not decided what action it will ask Kovachevich to take, Daugherty said. "I think in the next few days, we'll get a better idea of what could happen," he said. Ms. Wakefield "said on the air that she might go to jail. I don't know if that's a possibility, but she certainly has broken the injunction."