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Florida's Best Newspaper

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## GOODWILL GAMES PROTESTED

### CHURCH OF SCIENTOLOGY AFFILIATION IGNITES DISPUTE

The Goodwill Games, an Olympic-style competition designed to bring people together, is prompting protests because one of its sponsors is affiliated with the Church of Scientology.

Turner Broadcasting System (TBS) has received complaints from people upset that Bridge Publications is one of 12 companies that paid millions to become worldwide sponsors, spokesmen for the games said. The games were founded in 1986 by TBS president Ted Turner and are broadcast by TBS.

Mike Mobley of TBS did not know the number of complaints, but released a statement saying: "We are aware of concerns which have arisen regarding Bridge Publications' sponsorship of the 1990 Goodwill Games and its effort to promote the book Dianetics. We are looking into the situation."

Asked whether that meant the organizers were reconsidering the sponsorship, Mobley said, "I'm not at liberty to say."

Former Scientologist Margery Wakefield of Tampa helped organize the protest with other members of the Coalition of Concerned Citizens, a newly formed Scientology watchdog organization. The group sent letters to 700 former Scientologists and family members of Scientologists, urging them to write to the games' organizers.

This year's games will be July 20-Aug. 5 in the Seattle area, involving more than 2,500 athletes from 50 nations. Besides Bridge Publications, other worldwide sponsors include Anheuser-Busch, Pepsi and Sony, Mobley said.

Bridge Publications publishes the works of L. Ron Hubbard, the science-fiction writer who founded Scientology.

Scientology is called a religion by its followers. Critics call Scientology a cult or a money-making organization. The group maintains its worldwide spiritual headquarters in Clearwater.

Bridge Publications plans to run commercials promoting Hubbard's best-seller Dianetics: The Modern Science of Mental Health. Sharyn Runyon, spokeswoman for Bridge in Los Angeles, said the ads would center on Dianetics, not Scientology. She said Dianetics stands on its own.

People who practice the methods of Dianetics are not necessarily Scientologists, said Mary Story, a member of the board of directors of the Clearwater-based Church of Scientology Flag Service Organization. She said Dianetics deals with the body and mind, while Scientology focuses on the spirit.

But Scientologists have said in court records that getting the public to read Dianetics and other Hubbard books is an effective way of disseminating the religion of Scientology.

KEYWORDS: PROTEST

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## Churches speak out on Scientology

WE write in support of the Courier's recent coverage of matters concerning the cult of Scientology.

We believe it is important that the general public should be kept aware of repeated attempts to present Scientology as something acceptable and beneficial to society. We believe the opposite is true.

The Rev Canon Roger Brown, St Swithun's  
The Rev Kevin Gaskin, St Peter's  
The Rev Gordon Bond,

St Mary's

The Rev Stephen Bowen, St John's Felbridge  
The Rev Donald Gleghorn, Trinity Methodist  
The Rev Michael O'Hara, United Reform Church  
The Rev Eric Pollard, St Luke's  
The Rev Ian Edye, St Barnabas  
The Rev Christopher Breeds, St Swithuns  
The Rev David Dominy, New Life Church

# Cult's complaint against Panorama not upheld

A COMPLAINT by the Church of Scientology about an edition of the BBC programme Panorama has not been upheld by the Broadcasting Complaints Commission.

Scientologists, whose headquarters are at Saint Hill, had complained that the Panorama programme on April 27, 1987 was unjust and unfair both in its presentation and in not giving them opportunity to reply to specific allegations.

But the Commission said that although there were two instances of unfairness in the editing of filmed material, the programme as a whole was neither unjust nor unfair.

In its adjudication, the Commission said the Scientologists' complaint was one of the most heavily documented to come before it. More than 150 documents, including affidavits, policy

letters and press cuttings, were submitted.

At the hearing, counsel for the Scientologists said the church had not been given the opportunity to reply to specific allegations aired in the film, and comprehensive and detailed responses by Scientology spokesmen given on camera had been deliberately excluded from the transmitted programme.

It was alleged that Panorama had been heavily prejudiced against the church before the programme began and the programme makers had approached the church with in-built bias which resulted in an unfair and unjust programme.

The BBC responded by saying that the programme had been made after approaches by members of various cults, including the Church of Scientology.

Rather than generalise about religious cults, Panorama decided to focus on one. The BBC said it soon emerged that hundreds of former members of the church were so incensed by the money spent and the treatment they had

endured that they were clubbing together to sue the church for restitution.

While the programme was not about the action which later failed as such, it provided an opportunity to look at the feud between Scientology and some of its former members, who had organised themselves into a group called Freedom for All in Religion.

The BBC said that from the outset it had given the church every opportunity to participate as fully as it wished in the programme. The organisation had chosen to withhold co-operation until the last possible moment, and having done so, failed to address many of the points put to it.

In spite of this, Panorama made strenuous efforts to be fair and accurate about the organisation and to put to its spokesmen on camera all the substantive allegations made against it.

The Commission found only one instance of unfairness or in-

justice in the programme relating to specific allegations, recorded before an interview with Scientology representatives. In one further respect connected with the editing of the interview, the programme as broadcast was not entirely fair, but these two specific points did not mean that the programme as a whole was unjust or unfair to the Scientologists.

MARCH 20, 1990

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TBS TO AIR 'DIANETICS' ADS

A television network has decided to broadcast commercials from a sponsor that is affiliated with the Church of Scientology.

Turner Broadcasting System (TBS) said Monday that it will allow Bridge Publications to be one of 12 companies sponsoring the 1990 Goodwill Games.

Bridge Publications publishes books by L. Ron Hubbard, a science fiction writer who founded Scientology.

"As an advertiser and sponsor, Bridge Publications is entitled to all the rights of our other sponsors," said Mike Mobley, a spokesman for TBS in Atlanta. "At this point, we are standing behind them."

The network said it had received complaints about the sponsorship, which was opposed in a campaign led by the Coalition of Concerned Citizens. The group was formed by Marjorie Wakefield of Tampa, a former Scientologist who has tried to discredit the organization. She said her group has sent letters to 700 people urging them to protest the sponsorship.

Bridge Publications plans to air commercials that promote Hubbard's book *Dianetics: The Modern Science of Mental Health*. Sharyn Runyon, a spokeswoman for the company, said last week that the ads would center on Dianetics, not Scientology.

Runyon said Monday, "We have worked with Turner Broadcasting and we will continue to do so to make Dianetics the No. 1 self-improvement best-seller."

The followers of Scientology say it is a religion, but critics say it is a cult or a money-making organization. The group has its worldwide spiritual headquarters in Clearwater.

KEYWORDS: TELEVISION

## Ex-Employees Describe Abuse In Suit Against est's Erhard

By Don Lattin  
Chronicle Religion Writer

Former employees of est founder Werner Erhard say they were forced to obey the pop psychology guru in a manner "akin to God" and to submit themselves to "numerous instances of verbally and physically abusive behavior."

In sworn statements, the ex-employees also charge that they were required to worship Erhard as "the Source" and were controlled with exhausting work schedules, loyalty oaths, threats and emotional abuse.

The allegations — by five former staff members of est, of the Forum and of Werner Erhard and Associates — were filed last week in San Francisco Superior Court in support of a wrongful termination lawsuit against Erhard by Charlene Afremow, a longtime associate of the human potential movement czar.

Vincent Drucker of San Anselmo, the former chief financial officer of est, said in one of the affidavits that a program begun in the late 1970s "put great pressure on the executives, including myself, to surrender to 'Source.'"

Erhard often compared the relationship between himself and his trainers "to the bond between a samurai lord and the samurai vassals," Drucker said. "Mr. Erhard threatened me with death on two occasions," he said, by citing "certain people in the Mafia."

### Allegations Denied

In a statement released yesterday, Erhard denied all the allegations, calling them "ridiculous fabrications from a few disgruntled former employees."

"Responding publicly to these unsupported accusations point by point would only further the malicious intent of the individuals in question," he said.

Erhard's weekend est trainings — launched in 1971 and repackaged as the Forum in 1984 for a more corporate clientele — are among the most financially successful human potential movement seminars. Nearly half a million people took the est training, and 500,000

have participated in the Forum, an Erhard spokesman said.

Werner Erhard and Associates, which runs the Forum and several other consulting businesses, last year took in \$45 million in U.S. revenues, the spokesman said.

Born in 1935 as Jack Rosenberg, Erhard created his "personal transformation" empire by combining ideas from Zen Buddhism, Scientology and some of the alternative psychotherapy and self-motivation techniques developed in the 1950s and 1960s.

Today, initiates to the Forum pay \$595 for two consecutive weekends designed to inspire "a breakthrough in personal effectiveness" and produce "a new experience of vitality and aliveness" through a "challenging, rigorous inquiry ... into the profound possibility of being." Groups of 100 to 250 people participate in the workshops.

### Range of Opinions

Opinions vary as to whether Erhard is a leading-edge thinker or slick purveyor of meaningless psychobabble, but the accusations in the court documents paint one of the darkest pictures yet of his San Francisco-based organization.

Former est trainer Irving Bernstein of Mill Valley, who quit in 1985, said in one affidavit that "the Source" was understood "to mean that Erhard was akin to God."

"Leaving WEA (Werner Erhard and Associates) was looked upon as an act of heresy," stated Bernstein, who said employees "essentially committed their souls forever to do the Work and do what Erhard asked."

Michael Breard of Corte Madera said in his court declaration that his "interview process" for becoming a personal aide to Erhard involved spending two days "cleaning the bilge of the boat on which Mr. Erhard was living with a tooth-

brush and Q-tip."

Breard, who said he was hired on Erhard's staff in 1984, stated that he was told by Erhard's brother, Harry Rosenberg, that he would be harmed if confidential information about Erhard's posh lifestyle were ever revealed.

Breard said he was told that "Mr. Erhard had a friend in the Mafia" who would "take care" of anyone who leaked information.

### Wake-Up Massage

He said one of his duties was to wake Erhard up every morning by "kneeling at the foot of the bed, putting my hands under the covers and massaging his feet and calves in a particular manner."

Breard also was supposed to make sure that Erhard's toiletries were lined up in an exact row each morning.

"Mr. Erhard was an incredible perfectionist and was extremely verbally abusive if tasks were not performed according to his exact specifications," he said.

Breard said that he was physically struck on one occasion but that Erhard's usual way to "berate me would be to scream obscenities at me in a voice which is louder than I can describe."

At the request of Erhard's attorneys, the affidavits were put under court seal last week by Superior Court Judge Ira Brown. For a short time, however, they were open for public viewing and photocopying. The suit is set for trial April 16.

In previously filed court documents, Erhard's attorneys have denied Afremow's allegations of age discrimination, sex discrimination, defamation and the intentional infliction of emotional distress.

Based in San Francisco, the Forum is offered through 35 Werner Erhard and Associates offices in the United States and 14 other offices around the world. Erhard has also expanded into the corporate consulting and personnel management business in recent years through a network of franchise businesses sold under the name Transformational Technologies, Inc.

More Bay Area News  
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