



CONSEIL
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CONFIDENTIAL
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BUREAU OF THE ASSEMBLY

SCIENTOLOGY KIRCHE (HAMBURG)

Petition to the President
of the Parliamentary Assembly

PETITION TO THE PRESIDENT
OF THE PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY

I, Franz Riedl, Vice-President of the Church of Scientology, Hamburg, request the President of the Assembly of the Council of Europe to examine the following violations of the European Convention on Human Rights which are occurring currently in the city of Hamburg, Germany.

It should be noted that the Church of Scientology has throughout the last years gained a number of recognitions as a religious organisation in the courts of Germany where the religious beliefs of the church have been examined and fully authenticated. These are as follows:

1. State Court of Hamburg on 25.02.88
2. Administrative Court of Berlin on 12.10.88
3. State Court of Frankfurt on 07.06.89
4. Administrative Court of Frankfurt on 04.09.90

This has also been the case in many different countries throughout the world.

Recently in Hamburg, there have been a number of violations of Article 9 (freedom of religion) and 10 (freedom of expression) which have been accompanied by a vicious media campaign spreading lies and hate against my religion. It is the opinion of this petitioner that this campaign has very close similarities to the campaign the Nazi regime carried out against the Jewish religion in the 1930s and we are concerned that this trend does not continue which will only discredit the Germany people, should further abuses of the Convention occur.

Specifics on these are as follows:

1. The front window of the Scientology Mission at the city of Kiel was smashed in March 1991.
2. The co-founder of the Rendsburg "Deutscher Kinderschutzbund" was said not to match with the aims of this organisation because of his membership in the Church of Scientology and had to leave this organisation.
3. Two young children were refused the right to choose their school when it was known they were Scientologists.
4. The Office of the Central District of Hamburg has used regulations on performance of business to forbid the church to attract attention to itself in public streets.

5. At Hoisdorf, a small city near Hamburg, a citizen's initiative was founded to counter the project of a confessionally led school. The news they spread was such that the school appeared like the first step of a Scientology invasion and thus the school could not be realised.

6. A Scientologist lost her job when it became known that she was a member of my church.

7. The company of a Scientologist was not allowed to arrange a folk concert in the city's music hall when the fact that it belonged to a church member was learned by the music hall manager. The contract which existed was cancelled.

8. A member of the federal parliament publicly demanded the prohibition of my church because it was making people afraid and dependent intentionally.

9. A businessman was asked to resign from the FDP only for the fact that he was a Scientologist and he was badly attacked by the press.

The above are clearly violations of Articles 9 and 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights which states that:

"Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief and freedom; either alone or in community with others and in public or in private, to manifest his religion or belief, in worship, teaching, practice and observance.

Everyone has the right to freedom of expression. This right shall include freedom to hold opinions and to receive and impart information and ideas without interference by public authority and regardless of frontiers."

The Convention goes on further to say that this shall be "subject only to such limitations as are necessary in a democratic society". The above suppressive actions cannot be justified by this clause, as there is no democratic reason why the practice of the religion of Scientology should be prohibited. There have been no violations by the church of democratic principles and, to the contrary as already shown, higher courts have affirmed the religious nature of the church.

I request the following to be enacted:

A. An investigation is done into the local government body of Hamburg by the Assembly of the Council of Europe, where they are to condemn the violations of religious freedom and freedom of expression and recommend measures to be taken at local level to remedy the abuses found.

B. That the parliament firmly demands that the local decree prohibiting freedom of expression is revoked.

C. That the parliament issues a statement to the effect that political intrusion into religious matters, as has occurred with several parties in Germany, is a violation of religious freedom, and intolerance of the worst kind and a reversion to an unsavoury past which will only result in discrediting the German people if it continues any further.

Franz Riedl
Vice-President