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YOUR LOCAL NEWSPAPER

Clearwater Sun

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The boom lowers!

IT WAS with a sense of justice long deferred that Clearwater witnessed Circuit Judge John S. Andrews socking it to Milt Wolfe last week.

Judge Andrews, apparently fed up with the endless legal mickey-mouse that the Church of Scientology specializes in, sent cult spokesman Wolfe to the slammer for 45 days for his refusal to answer bona fide questions by the Pinellas-Pasco state attorney's office.

Not only did Andrews jail Wolfe, he also refused him bail during the time that Wolfe's lawyers are appealing the contempt of court sentence.

It is possible that bail will be granted this week and that Wolfe may see the dawn of freedom again.

But the fact remains that in Andrews Scientology met a judge who believes the law should not be a toy.

WOLFE AND another Scientologist almost were sentenced for contempt a few days earlier when they refused to respond to a subpoena.

They finally showed up, and another judge forgave them.

Then, on Thursday, Wolfe refused to furnish the name of the cult official in charge of the Guardian Office Information Bureau, which is reputed to be the cult's dirty tricks section.

This was too much for Andrews, and he lowered the boom.

Wolfe is an old face on the Clearwater Scientology scene. He has spent most of five years here, during which time his chief function seems to have been to deny knowing anything that he might be reasonably expected to know.

Last week he may have finally worn that act out.

By finding Wolfe in contempt, Andrews served notice to the Scientologists that local courts believe the state attorney has strong legal grounds for asking pointed questions about the cult's operations.

If the Scientologists can be persuaded that they must either testify or go to jail, perhaps they will be persuaded to testify.

And once they start talking, the facts about the cult's goings-on in Clearwater may begin to fall out of the tree of truth like so many pieces of overripe fruit.