

# East Grinstead OBSERVER

4 East Grinstead Observer, Wednesday, August 3, 1994

## *Press watchdog backs Observer*

# SEX PERVERT WAS A CULT TEACHER

BRITAIN'S newspaper industry watchdog, The Press Complaints Commission has dismissed a complaint by the Scientology movement against the East Grinstead Observer.

The cult tried to stop us telling our huge following of readers that an evil sex pervert who preyed on schoolboys at the cult-backed Green fields school was a Scientology teacher.

The cult accused us of inaccurate and misleading reporting following a court case earlier this year, when cultist Mark Kent was jailed for five years for serious sex offences. The Saint Hill-based cult attempted to stop us from disclosing that Kent was linked to

their organisation.

The Scientologists complained to the Commission that the Observer's coverage had breached the newspaper industry's strict Code of Practice.

But the Press Complaints Commission found no substance in those claims whatsoever.

On hearing of the Commission's ruling Observer Editor Ron Parsons said: "We have been totally vindicated, and I never had any reason to think otherwise. As I have said before this newspaper has always printed the truth and will continue to do so. The public has a right to know the truth".

### ADJUDICATION

MS SHEILA CHALEFF, Public Affairs Director of the Church of Scientology, Saint Hill Manor, East Grinstead, West Sussex, complains to the Press Complaints Commission that a headline "Evil sex pervert sent to prison — Scientology teacher molested schoolboys" which appeared in the East Grinstead Observer on January 26, 1994, inaccurately referred to the defendant as a "Scientology teacher" in breach of Clause One of the Code of Practice.

The school where the convicted man taught is managed by Scientologists. In these circumstances the description "Scientology teacher" in the headline is not unreasonable, and in the view of the Commission would not mislead readers.

The complaint is rejected.