

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510

January 8, 1980

Mrs. Maggie Cazares  
Post Office Box 1196  
Clearwater, Florida 33517

Dear Maggie:

Thank you for contacting me to share your thoughts. I appreciate hearing from you and having the benefit of your views.

The growth and activities of the numerous cults which have emerged in recent years have caused a great deal of concern on the part of most Americans. We are all aware of the grave potential of these groups as witnessed by the Jonestown suicides or, on a more personal scale, by the anguish of a family when one of its members becomes ensnared in cult activities. The revelations in the Scientology case also underscore that some of these groups are quite willing to break the law in order to achieve their goals.

In the case of the so-called Church of Scientology, two House Committees have recently indicated plans to look into the activities of that organization. The House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, which has oversight responsibility for activities of the FBI, CIA, and other organizations involved in national security, has requested the FBI to report to the Committee on activities of the Church. As you know, a number of the ranking leaders of the Church have been sentenced to prison terms of up to five years each for their roles in conspiring to obstruct justice and burglarizing government offices.

In addition, an oversight subcommittee of the House Ways and Means Committee is investigating the cult and the actions of the Internal Revenue Service which has challenged the tax exempt status of the Church. When the investigation is completed, the Committee will determine what action, if any, is appropriate.

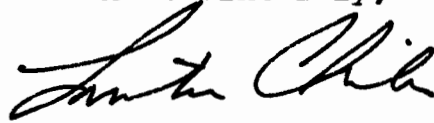
I think it is important that the Congress get a complete understanding of the activities of the Scientologists and insure that any illegal actions are curbed.

I want to thank you again for taking the time and trouble to contact me as you have done.

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Thanks again for writing and with kind regards, I am

Most sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lawton Chiles". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "L".

LAWTON CHILES

LC/rk