

The Founding Church of Scientology
Of Washington D.C.
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202-797-3700

25 July 1977

Members of Congress
United States Senate
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C.

Dear Sir,

On Friday, July 8, 1977, approximately 150 agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation simultaneously raided the offices of the Church of Scientology in Los Angeles and Washington, D.C. The purported reason for the break-in was the Justice Department's allegations that certain government agencies had been "eavesdropped" upon and files from their offices copied.

Factually, the FBI raid consisted of agents using sledge hammers, crow bars and buzz saws entering, among other places, sleeping quarters and occupied showers in an attempt to seize approximately 150 documents. The FBI left with over 200,000 documents.

Legal remedies have been commenced by the Church, the most recent being a 7.8 million dollar suit seeking damages from each and every agent taking part in the raid. Many more such suits are being planned.

The raid was characterized by an FBI agent as "the most brutal search and seizure I've ever seen or been involved in." Daniel Sheehan, Jesuit Chairman of the Civil Rights Task Force of the Washington Interreligious Staff Council, points out that the raid "is one more stage of an escalating confrontation which is developing between the American church community and investigative agencies of the Federal Executive Department."

It is the view of many civil rights groups and individuals that the actions taken by the FBI constituted an inexcusable violation of constitutional rights. The raid was as well, merely a culmination of years of illegal actions taken by government intelligence agencies against religious groups and individuals.

Violations of constitutional rights by intelligence and executive branch agencies must cease now. The raid on our Church can mark a turning point in history wherein Congress finally states "We've had enough", and begins effective reform of such agencies.

The Church of Scientology has been active for years in the area of social reform. Our activities have included exposure of psychiatric abuse of mental patients, the returning of care and dignity to the elderly, prevention and handling of drug abuse, reverting the skyrocketing crime rate and engaging in governmental reform. Our work continues in these and other areas despite FBI actions.

Congress has been aware of and sensitive to the "intelligence agency" issues raised over the past few years. The high point publicity-wise was of course Watergate.

It must be confronted by yourself right now that many of the same abuses of Watergate have not decreased at all. The opposite is true. CIA secret druggings and use of psychiatric techniques such as lobotomies and electroconvulsive therapy on unsuspecting citizens is one recent example. Attorney General Bell's recent proposals to extend legal surveillance and taps to persons who have not committed a crime is another. These abuses go way back. Certainly the FBI's treatment of Martin Luther King is one of the most disgraceful incidents in American history. FBI COINTELPRO revelations and internal spying by the CIA and NSA are others. Consider also the "SSS" of the Internal Revenue Service. A person has to be blind, ignorant or downright evil to not perceive the implications.

Through the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), the Church of Scientology has discovered that we, like other socially active churches, have been the victim of mail covers, surveillance, wire taps, agents provocateurs and a variety of false and misleading, but intentionally placed news stories. To remedy this, the Church has filed a \$750 million lawsuit against various governmental agencies, seeking to expose such activities.

Our unprecedented use of FOI has uncovered incredible information and ridiculous false reports about Scientology. There are currently twenty-five lawsuits pending because many agencies will not comply to various requests by the Church to release files on Scientology to us. The Church of Scientology is known well to the Justice Department who have instructed their lawyers in reference to Scientology cases, to "come back with your shield held high, or on your shield."

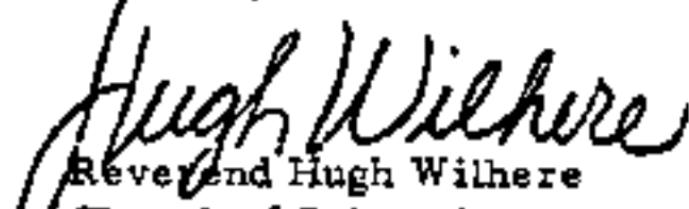
The Justice Department has had U.S. Customs seize our mail correspondence which included legal strategy relative to FOI. This was done under the guise of "looking for pornography." The mail was passed on to the U.S. Attorneys handling our cases.

Recently, a Church-sponsored commission turned over to Congress a report on Bolivian Interpol agents trafficking in cocaine. Names were included. The Justice Department, it was hoped, would investigate and find the various connections within the U.S. Their answer was to raid our church.

Exposures done thus far, of illegal activities by Justice and other agencies has only shown the tip of the iceberg. A very thorough investigation must take place immediately into the Justice Department and FBI harassment of religious groups and abusive FOI practices.

If you should agree that this investigation is necessary or would like more information, please phone or contact the Church immediately.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Hugh Wilhere".

Reverend Hugh Wilhere
Church of Scientology
Washington, D. C.