

Clearwater Sun

65th Year—No. 185 Clearwater, Florida, Sunday, November 4, 1979

Scientologists: Sect wanted to make mayor a 'friend'

By RICHARD LEIBY
Sun Staff Writer

WASHINGTON—Believe it or not, the Church of Scientology once wanted to be friends with Gabe Cazares.

The former Clearwater mayor finds that amusing today, having endured years of legal battles with the sect and waged bitter campaigns against its presence in Clearwater.

In December 1975, when Scientology was establishing itself in the city under the guise of the United Churches of Florida, top sect officers thought Cazares would be a good man to have on their side.

Thus, according to documents made public by a federal judge in Washington last week, they concocted a scheme to "make a friend of the mayor" by destroying the reputation of one of his alleged "enemies."

Cazares is not mentioned by name in the policy memo dated Dec. 5, 1975, that outlines the United Churches plan to "take control" of Clearwater by making "allies of religious and local government opinion leaders by assisting them in the attack of their enemies."

Nor is a specific enemy identified, except as an apparently hypothetical "Mr. Shutz," whom Cazares says he never heard of. But the way the sect intended to discredit this hypothetical "Mr. Shutz" is clearly outlined in the following example, based on information taken from the documents:

"(The Scientology officer) finds the Clearwater mayor as an opinion leader and Mr. Shutz as his enemy. Overt and suitable guise investigation of Shutz shows him to like little girls and that he walks in the bank every Sunday (and)

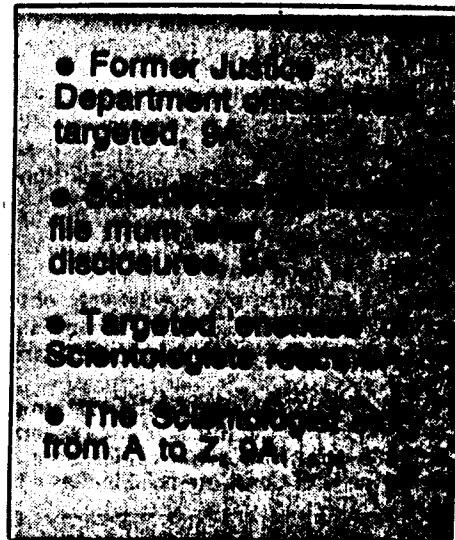
attempts to drag little girls into the bushes.

"(The Scientology officer) turns this data over to UC (United Churches). UC goes to the mayor and gets his OK to look into what can be done to beautify Clearwater City Park."

"Shortly after the mayor gives his OK to look into the park, UC 'discovers' that there are undesirables in the park and turns the data over to the mayor.

"Several days later, UC 'discovers' that Mr. Shutz molests little girls in the park and turns that over to the mayor, managing to get press (coverage) on the whole park campaign and to make a friend out of the mayor.

"Now if Shutz is also a potential enemy of ours—and he might be after the above is done—and the mayor or newspaper
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hasn't removed him from a position of power, then Ops (church operations) does."

The memo goes on to say, "There are of course many variations to this procedure, but this will depend on the data found."

The Scientology officials who would carry out such a campaign are not identified in the memo except as "B1," a branch of the church under the "Guardian Office," which issued the directive. "Ops," or church operations, is apparently under "B1."

Asked if the above incident ever transpired, Cazares said Saturday, "That's crazy. I would never get involved in stuff like that. I would never accept anything from any Scientologists."

But Cazares said that later, when he became an enemy of the church, "they did use people against me. People were feeding them information to damage me."

In February 1976, the Scientologists sued Cazares for \$1 million, charging he had libeled and slandered them in statements to the media. Cazares countered with an \$8 million lawsuit. (A decision dismissing the Scientologists' suit is still under appeal; Cazares dropped his lawsuit.)

The former mayor says that "intimidation and harassment of public officials" is standard policy of the Scientologists and that it continues today.

Church officials in Washington and Clearwater had no comment on the actions of the United Churches officials or on whether such policies are still in effect.