

SYSOP'S NOTE: The following file is the complete text of a letter sent by Dr. Michael Aquino to CBS after they aired a made-for-TV movie entitled "Do You Know the Muffin Man?" This movie was a fictional account of a "typical" ritualized child abuse case in a "typical" day-care center, modelled closely after the allegations in the McMartin, Bakersfield, and Akron scandals. Dr. Aquino's letter thoroughly rebuts these charges.

No response from CBS had been received as of 12/18/89.

This letter is reprinted with permission of the author, who asked me to point out that documentation for everything he says in here is available on request to the address shown. -- J. Brad Hicks, Sysop WeirdBase

TEMPLE OF SET

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Michael A. Aquino, Ph.D. High Priest of Set October 25, 1989 CE

Programming Department CBS Television 51 West 52nd Street New York, NY
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Dear Sirs:

Your broadcasting of the television-movie DO YOU KNOW THE MUFFIN MAN? on October 22 displayed extremely shocking bias and disregard for the truth. To the extent that this film is interpreted by audiences to represent the general truth behind the epidemic of day-care "Satanic child abuse" witch-hunts which have convulsed this country for the last several years, you will be responsible for the encouragement of further injustices of the most traumatic kind on innocent people falsely accused of such horrors.

You may shrug this off by citing the fine-print disclaimer at the end of the film that this was a "fictional" drama. Yet the references to real-life incidents ("the Presidio, El Paso, and West Point") in the film as though they were proven examples of the kind of crime depicted, coupled with the TV GUIDE and on-screen announcement that "according to government statistics some 39,000 children were sexually abused last year", made it clear that the film was to be understood as thinly-fictionalized "docu-drama".

From McMartin onward, the epidemic of day-care "child abuse" scares has been characterized by spontaneous and violent attack upon chosen targets the moment they are selected. Presumably child sexual abuse is so heinous a crime, as witchcraft during the middle ages, that it is unthinkable for anyone to be accused of it unless he or she is indeed guilty. Everyone

wants to go on record as denouncing such individuals vigorously, lest one become suspect oneself for not showing sufficient enthusiasm for the hunt. On the other hand, no individual or official wants to take responsibility for stating that the alleged abuse did not occur.

Permit me to itemize the more conspicuous fallacies of Muffin Man:

(1) YOUR TV GUIDE/ON-SCREEN ANNOUNCEMENT THAT "FEDERALLY SPONSORED RESEARCH ESTIMATES THAT APPROXIMATELY 39,000 CHILDREN UNDER THE AGE OF SIX ARE SEXUALLY ABUSED IN THE UNITED STATES EACH YEAR" IS MISLEADING, IMPLYING AS IT DOES THAT "DAY-CARE SATANIC" EVENTS SUCH AS THAT DEPICTED IN THE FILM ARE THE PROBLEM.

What your announcement failed to state is that THE VAST MAJORITY OF SUCH CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE OCCURS IN THE HOME, NOT IN DAY-CARE CENTERS. According to David Finkelhor, Associate Director of the Family Violence Research Program, University of New Hampshire, the primary threat of sexual molestation comes from MEMBERS OF THE CHILD'S FAMILY, NOT FROM PORNOGRAPHERS OR PEDOPHILES WHO ARE STRANGERS. Projection of such crimes upon day-care personnel may be a device to cover up incest, or to destroy women's options for child-care outside the home, thus forcing them away from personal/professional lives of their own and back to the fundamentalist model of "a woman's place". In CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE: NEW THEORY & RESEARCH, Finkelhor writes:

In many respects the moralists were mistaken about the problem, since they portrayed the greatest danger to children as coming from strangers and depraved individuals outside the family, not from within the family, where, as recently documented, the more serious threat is.

(2) USE OF ROLAND SUMMIT AS THE SOLE CONSULTANT TO THE FILM.

Dr. Roland Summit testifies so consistently for any accusation of "child abuse" that he has become nationally known as the "prosecution doctor". (Cf. Paul & Shirley Eberle, THE POLITICS OF CHILD ABUSE, Lyle Stuart 1986.) He now has a distinguished record of participating in several celebrated "child abuse industry" scandals in which scores of innocent people were randomly accused, put through nightmarish ordeals, and professionally ruined.

Why did you not also consult some of the many distinguished physicians who expose and deplore the "child abuse industry", such as Dr. Lee Coleman,

Director of the Center for the Study of Psychiatric Testimony in Berkeley, California? Were you afraid that you might discover "inconvenient" facts which invalidate the pre-determined theme of the film?

(3) SCARRING IN RECTUM AS EVIDENCE OF CHILD-RAPE.

This was presented in the film as "conclusive proof" that one of the children had been raped. In the case of at least one real-life witch-hunt - that at the Presidio of San Francisco - it was also used in the case of the child whose parents originally instigated the scare. Later on the physician who originally diagnosed the child's rectum as injured retracted that diagnosis on a television news documentary. By that time, of course, the witch-hunt was in full swing and no one paid attention to this inconvenient development.

Dr. John McCann, Associate Clinical Professor of Pediatrics at the University of California, San Francisco, has produced a study that reveals far more normal variations in the vaginal and rectal areas of children than most physicians are aware of. He and his assistants examined the vaginal and rectal areas of some 250 prepubertal children with no history of sexual molestation and found that "private parts - particularly girls' genitals - can be as variable from person to person as noses or breasts". Responsible physicians are accordingly becoming more cautious about diagnosing "rape" from such variations. See the article in MS magazine, March 1989.

(4) PARENTS' AND INTERROGATORS' REFUSAL TO ACCEPT DENIALS OF ATTACK BY CHILDREN.

As your film showed, this is a staple of "day-care child abuse" witch-hunts. Once their minds are made up, zealots simply keep working the children over, again and again, for months or years if necessary, until the children are ready to say anything expected of them. Moreover any statement at all from such children which can be "interpreted" by parents or "therapists" into sexual context is construed as "evidence". MUFFIN MAN presented this as a perfectly normal and acceptable practice.

As the MEMPHIS COMMERCIAL APPEAL noted on January 20, 1988 as part of its 6-part series on the "child-abuse" epidemic:

Investigators in El Paso sometimes refused to accept denials, retractions, or silence from children. They attributed those actions to stress-related "avoidance" behavior or to the "child sexual abuse accommodation syndrome", a controversial doctrine that says abuse victims inevitably recant allegations.

The COMMERCIAL APPEAL further observed that:

Luiz Natalicio, an El Paso psychologist who evaluated tapes of interviews in the abuse case there, compares the questioning techniques to those used by Communist Chinese forces on American soldiers captured during the Korean War. Like the POWs, children in the El Paso case were isolated in unfamiliar and usually barren surroundings. They believed their release from questioning, and satisfying such needs as drinking water and going to the bathroom, depended upon whether they provided information, Natalicio said. "If we can do it with adults, you can imagine how effective it can be with children, who are dependent on us totally for their conception of reality," said Natalicio, a former University of Texas professor who taught courses on the psychological aspects of interrogation.

(5) TRANSPORT OF CHILDREN FROM DAY-CARE CENTERS TO REMOTE SITES FOR MOLESTING.

This invention was created by accusers to explain away the inconvenient fact that day-care centers are generally open places with lots of observation and access, parents and children coming and going, and no opportunities for molesting, much less elaborate "Satanic rituals".

Merely proposing such an idiotic "explanation" does not validate it, no matter how often it is tried. Not one "witch-hunt" has validated this absurd allegation. So why did your movie present it as an "accepted" practice?

(6) INTEREST OF SATANISTS IN CHILD-MOLESTING, PARTICULARLY AT DAY-CARE CENTERS.

This must rank with the survival of Elvis Presley as one of the most asinine myths of the 1980s. It is in COMPLETE CONTRADICTION to the official, published doctrines of the Satanic religion, as contained in Anton LaVey's SATANIC BIBLE of the old Church of Satan (1966-1975) and in the CRYSTAL TABLET of the contemporary Temple of Set (1975-present):

Under no circumstances would a Satanist sacrifice any animal or baby. There are sound and logical reasons why Satanists would not perform such sacrifices. Mankind is the godhead to the Satanist. The purest form of existence reposes in the bodies of animals and human children who have not grown old enough to deny themselves their natural desires. They can perceive things that the average human being can never hope to. Therefore the Satanist holds these beings in a sacred regard, knowing that he can learn much from these natural magicians of the world. The Satanist is aware of conventional religions' universal custom of killing their gods. The Satanist, however, does not hate himself nor his gods, and has no desire to

destroy himself or anything for which he stands. It is for this reason that he would never willfully harm an animal or child. The Satanist would not intentionally hurt others by violating their sexual rights. If you attempt to impose your sexual desires upon others who do not welcome your advances, you are infringing upon their sexual freedom. Therefore Satanism does not advocate rape, child molesting, sexual defilement of animals, or any other form of sexual activity which entails the participation of those who are unwilling or whose innocence or naivete would allow them to be intimidated or misguided into doing something against their wishes. - SATANIC BIBLE

Children should not be allowed to attend any Black Magical ritual. They will not understand it, may be frightened by it, and may wrongly represent it to others. Pets may be present only if they may be depended upon to enhance, not to disrupt the atmosphere. Under no circumstances is any life-form ever sacrificed or injured in a Black Magical ritual of the Temple of Set. Violation of this rule will result in the offender's immediate expulsion and referral to law-enforcement or animal protection authorities. - CRYSTAL TABLET OF SET

The senior Supervisory Special Agent of the FBI in charge of "Satanic abuse" investigations is Kenneth Lanning, FBI Academy, Quantico, Virginia. As the MEMPHIS COMMERCIAL APPEAL reported on January 18, 1988:

Lanning said he was perplexed by the growth of such stories with no evidence to support them. "Some people believe there is large-scale abduction of children," Lanning said, "that individuals are going around snatching little children, keeping them captive, transporting them to other locations where they're being murdered in Satanic rituals. Is that possible? I guess it's possible. Is it probable? I don't see any evidence of it."

While Lanning has patiently repeated this authoritative statement any number of times since then, it seems that anti-Satanism fanatics are determined not to hear it. I understand that some of them, furious over this "inconvenience", have simply labeled Lanning a Satanist himself (which he is not) and continued their campaigns. This is in keeping with medieval practice, in which anyone daring to defend an accused witch was simply accused in turn.

The theme of "sexual abuse of children" has been loosely used as hate-propaganda by Christianity for centuries against any other religion it wished to slander. Along with "child sacrifice", it was a theme used aggressively against the Jews up to World War II, after which time Nazi violence against that religion made it unfashionable for Christians to openly attack it. The Satanic religion, on the other hand, appears still to be considered an appropriate target for such slander.

The effect of such hate-propaganda, of course, is to create a social atmosphere in which Satanists must fear any association with children whatever, whether their own or someone else's. While Christians may indoctrinate their children with Christian ideology - including at the many day-care centers run by Christian churches - any hint that Satanists might even be DISCUSSING their religion with their children, much less teaching it to them, is guaranteed to provoke social and, to the extent it can be effected, official persecution.

As it happens, neither the old Church of Satan nor the current Temple of Set ever operated any programs for minors, nor accepted them as members. Nevertheless it is outrageous that Christians should expect us to accept a social climate in which ONLY they, not anyone else, can discuss religion with children.

Also as it happens, the religion with a PROVEN RECORD of child sexual abuse by its officials is CHRISTIANITY, not Satanism. I am talking not about mere allegations, but about PROSECUTIONS and CONVICTIONS - and also about official policies to cover up such crimes when they have occurred. To take just the Catholic Church as an example: In the December 30/31, 1988 SAN JOSE MERCURY NEWS, court records and sworn testimony in civil and criminal cases involving 35 priests in dioceses across the U.S. over the past five years - most since 1985 - show that in one or more cases Catholic Church officials have:

- * Ignored parental complaints that a child has been molested.
- * Failed to inform authorities, even though most states have laws requiring that such complaints be passed along to police or child welfare agencies.
- * Transferred the offending priest to another parish or other church-owned facility, such as a hospital or school, without warning parents in the new location of the trouble in the old parish, and often without even requiring the priest to stay away from children.
- * Refused to help priests who have asked for psychological help.
- * Attempted to discredit parents who complained, even when parish officials knew of earlier complaints against the priest in question.
- * Fought, usually with success, to make sure that the files in civil lawsuits against the church are sealed and that settlements remain secret even after the payment of millions of dollars in claims
- * Failed to seek out probable victims and declined to turn over files containing information about accusations of other molestations to attorneys suing the church.

Catholic Father Thomas Doyle, a Washington, D.C. priest and canon lawyer who has looked into the issue of pedophilic priests, told the MERCURY NEWS he knows of about 200 Catholic priests who have molested children in the past 4-5 years. He said that as many as 3,000 priests could be

pedophiles.

F. Ray Mouton, a lawyer working with Doyle, added:

I have consulted with dioceses and Catholic religious orders from every part of this country, and it is my impression that there is not one single, solitary bishop or vicar in this country who has not dealt with the problem of a pedophile priest under his supervision. Conservatively I would estimate that in the last several years, hundreds of priests and other clerics have been discovered as pedophiles, leaving a trail of thousands of Catholic child victims.

The SAN JOSE MERCURY NEWS provided the following examples [among others]:

* In 1987 priest Roger Trott, Diocese of Greensburg, Pennsylvania pleaded guilty to one count of corrupting a minor, a 13-year-old altar boy, in a plea arrangement providing for no jail time. Afterward the district attorney discovered that Trott may have molested as many as 15 boys. A year before, the diocese reportedly paid \$375,000 to two families on behalf of children alleged to have been molested by another priest, Father Dennis Dellamalva, who was never charged. Neither the families who sued nor the diocese would discuss the settlement. * In 1987 priest Richard Galdon, Archdiocese of Newark, New Jersey, was sentenced to 25 years in prison after pleading guilty to one count of first-degree aggravated assault and two counts of second degree aggravated assault against three boys. Galdon, 57, admitted engaging in oral and anal sex with boys for 17 years. DA investigator George McGrath said that he talked to 18 boys at a school who said they were molested by Galdon. * In 1985 priest Carmelo Baltazar, Diocese of Boise, Idaho was sentenced to 7 years in prison for luring two teenage boys to his house, fondling them, and giving them liquor, drugs, and pornography. He had been kicked out of the U.S. Navy (where he had been a chaplain) as well as transferred from three previous dioceses for similar conduct. An attorney who sued the diocese said that Baltazar's previous job was at a hospital in Napa, where he fondled a boy on a dialysis machine. Despite being told about this, a Catholic hospital in Boise hired him and then took no action after an Episcopalian minister reported to the bishop that Baltazar had fondled a boy in double leg traction. * In 1987 priest John Salazar, Archdiocese of Los Angeles, was sentenced to 6 years in prison for engaging in oral copulation with two altar boys. He had been left in his position despite one mother's report that her son had been molested in 1985. * In 1985 priest Alvin Campbell, Diocese of Springfield, Illinois was sentenced to 14 years in prison after pleading guilty to sexually abusing 7 boys. Campbell later admitted that he had molested boys for more than 20 years. * In 1987 priest Walter Weerts, Diocese of Springfield, Illinois was sentenced to 6 years in prison for performing

oral sex on three teenage boys. The diocese paid \$2.5 million, one source told the MERCURY NEWS, to three families who sued when a pattern of transferring him from parish to parish was uncovered. The diocese refused to discuss the case. * In 1986 priest Ronald Fontenot, Diocese of Spokane, Washington was sentenced to 1 year in jail and 2 years in a treatment program after teen-age boys complained that he had engaged in oral copulation with one and fondled four others. * In 1986 priest Andrew Christian, Diocese of Orange, California received 5 years' probation on condition he go to a treatment facility after being found guilty of 26 counts of child molestation. The church never told authorities of abuse reported 3 years earlier, when it sent Christian to counseling and did not remove him from supervising boys. When the counseling stopped, molestings began. * In 1986 priest William O'Connell, Diocese of Providence, Rhode Island was sentenced to 1 year in prison and 2 years in a treatment center after pleading no contest to 26 counts of sexually abusing 12 boys. * In 1985 priest Paul Leech, Diocese of Providence, Rhode Island was sentenced to 3 years in prison for molesting 3 boys. * In 1986 priest Timothy Slevin, Archdiocese of Washington, D.C. was sentenced to 3-12 years after pleading guilty to four counts of sodomizing a boy at Sacred Heart Catholic School. Slevin told police he sexually abused 6 other boys aged 10-16.

In contrast to this shameful record, there has never been a SINGLE charge against or conviction of ANY Satanist for child sexual abuse, anywhere, any time. The reason is quite simple: WE DON'T DO IT. Ours is a religion in which sex is NOT treated as a religious fetish, nor restricted between consenting adults. It is regarded simply as one more bodily function with pleasurable and romantic aspects.

(7) PORTRAYAL OF SATANISTS KILLING RABBITS AND FAMILY PETS.

Animal sacrifice is strictly forbidden by this nation's Satanic churches, per the above quotes from the Satanic Bible and the Crystal Tablet.

(8) THE FILM'S DISMISSAL OF THE SIGNIFICANCE OF PRESCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN SUDDENLY USING COMPLEX SEXUAL WORDS LIKE "VAGINA".

In fact this is one of the MOST conspicuous indices that the child in question has been coached by zealots. As such it is an important indicator impeaching the testimony of such children and should not be minimized.

(9) AN OLDER CHILD INSISTING ON THE WITNESS STAND THAT HE HAD "PASSED A POLYGRAPH" CONCERNING HIS ALLEGATIONS.

While the film showed the defense lawyer objecting and the objection sustained, this scene was clearly added to "substantiate" the older child's

statements. The reason that polygraph results are not allowed in court, of course, is that they are NOT reliable. There are many reasons why they may give false readings. The history of their use in child-abuse witch-hunts is that they are ignored by prosecutors if they support the accused person's innocence and are treated as "proof overwhelming all other evidence" if the accused is judged to have flunked.

As Washington columnist James Kilpatrick recently reported in his column:

A witness for the American Medical Association testified that the results of such examinations are "only somewhat better than chance". Another estimated that polygraph machines wrongfully hang a label of "liar" on at least 400,000 honest persons every year. A Senate report described the problems. A standard polygraph records changes in blood pressure, respiration patterns, and sweat. By analyzing a chart of these changes, the operator reaches conclusions on the honesty of the person being examined. The physiological data may be quite accurate, "but there is no evidence that these recorded changes are unique to deception". Such factors as "anger, fear, anxiety, surprise, shame, embarrassment, and resentment can cause identical changes".

(10) PORTRAYAL OF A "SATANIC CEREMONY" IN A DAY-CARE CENTER, WITH VIOLENCE ATTEMPTED TO PREVENT POLICE FROM SEEING IT.

No Satanic religious ceremony has EVER been held in a day-care facility, nor have implements or persons involved in such a ceremony EVER been found in the way your film implied. No law-enforcement official curious about any activity of the Church of Satan or Temple of Set has EVER been resisted with violence.

To further highlight the film's ignorance of authentic Satanism, a ritual knife was referred to as an "athame", and the "Satanists" were shown in red robes. An athame is a device used by the Wicca pagan religion, not by Satanists. And Satanists do not wear red robes for rituals. [Perhaps you confused us with Catholic cardinals?]

Even more preposterous was the film's use of "Satanic names" such as Isis, Medea, Triton, and Pegasus. Obviously you - or Roland Summit, or whoever else your "expert" on Satanism happened to be - knows as little about mythology as about athames. In Egyptian mythology Isis is the wife of Osiris, OPPONENT of the "Satanic" god Set. Medea is a figure from Greek mythology having nothing to do with Satanic symbolism. Triton is a fish, and Pegasus is a horse. Genuine magical names are chosen carefully, with precise attention to the mythology in question. Or perhaps you intended

your "conspiracy of Satanists" to include a frogman and a jockey?

(11) ACTOR JOHN SHEA'S CITING OF "THE PRESIDIO, WEST POINT, AND EL PASO" AS PROVEN INCIDENTS OF SUCH ABUSE AS PORTRAYED IN THE FILM.

PRESIDIO OF SAN FRANCISCO: This 1986-87 scandal was simply one more scam in the "McMartin copycat" series. Neither prosecutions nor convictions of anyone resulted. A Baptist minister by the name of Gary Hambright was initially targeted in that witch-hunt; later on an Army chaplain decided to attack my wife and myself as well. All charges against Hambright were ultimately thrown out by the court or withdrawn by the prosecution, and thus he is entitled to the presumption of his innocence. More than that, the U.S. Federal Public Defenders in his case state that the evidence quite clearly exonerates him of any such crimes. Ask them yourself: Ms. Nanci Clarence & Mr. Jeff Hansen, Federal Building, San Francisco - (415) 556-7712. No charges were ever brought against me or Mrs. Aquino, because the evidence conclusively proves not only that we could not have committed crimes as alleged, but also that they never occurred at all. On the other hand, I preferred court-martial charges against that Army chaplain, Lawrence Adams-Thompson, for making knowingly false and malicious accusations against us. I am still at this time insisting that the U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Division follow through with investigation of these charges which I preferred, and of Adams-Thompson's attempt to defraud the U.S. Government of several million dollars in fraudulent monetary claims based on his fake allegations. [Following the West Point pattern as noted below, parents in the Presidio witch-hunt filed over \$66 million in claims against the government in an attempt to make a little money from what they had put their children through.]

WEST POINT: This July 1984 scandal began after a girl came home bleeding in the vaginal area. In the usual pattern allegations then mushroomed to include several children, animal sacrifice, pornography, and "rituals involving people wearing bloody, Dracula-type masks". Ultimately 950 people were interviewed including hundreds of children aged 2-6. No charges were ever brought against anyone because of lack of evidence. Nevertheless a Captain Grote refused a promotion to Major and proceeded to accuse Army officials of covering up "the presence of ritualized/Satanic child abuse at West Point". [There were no Satanists at West Point at the time.] Perhaps as disappointing to the accusers under the circumstances was the fact that 8 families had filed claims against the government totalling \$110 million, easy wealth which was unlikely to be realized if the scam would not be officially endorsed.

EL PASO: In June 1985 this McMartin-copycat got under way after parents questioned their 3-1/2-year-old daughter about a word she had used. Two

YMCA female teachers were eventually accused as the feeding-frenzy grew. Nine children talked about monsters, being kissed and fondled, and "having pennies put in their pee-pees". This case was prosecuted, and both women were found guilty. One conviction was later overturned, and [as of the most recent account I read] the other is on appeal. Again it is interesting to consider the role that monetary claims played in this affair. Insurers for the YMCA reached a \$600,000-plus settlement with parents after an appellate court overturned the conviction of one of the two female workers accused. Parents had originally sued for more than \$24 million.

If there is any "pattern" to be demonstrated by these cases, it would seem to be one of parental greed rather than of "Satanic child molesting".

The United States has now been through several years of such disgraceful witch-hunts, which films such as MUFFIN MAN purport to excuse and justify. To the extent that audiences accept its theme, you have acted to stimulate and encourage further outrages of this sort. This is genuine child abuse, as it is always the children, along with the targeted adults, who are the sufferers from these orgies of greed and hatred.

It is ironic that, at the same time these ferocious witch-hunts are being promoted, the country is bewailing its lack of adequate child day-care services. Under these circumstances only a lunatic would have anything to do with operating or working in a day-care service, no matter WHAT salaries are offered. Nor does one have to be male to be targeted; such witch-hunts have victimized young and old, male and female alike.

If this is the situation you sought to endorse by your broadcast of MUFFIN MAN, then I expect you are quite pleased with yourselves. If after considering the facts cited in this letter you have second thoughts about what you did, then perhaps CBS should make a statement to that effect and remove this disgraceful film from further circulation. It belongs in a trash-bin along with Nazi Germany's THE ETERNAL JEW and similar hate-propaganda filth.

Sincerely,

(signed) Michael A. Aquino

"conspiracy of Satanists" to include a frogman and a jockey?

(11) ACTOR JOHN SHEA'S CITING OF "THE PRESIDIO, WEST POINT, AN