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END TIME BABY DIES WITHOUT MEDICAL CARE

Local observers indicate that the controversial End Time Ministries, led by Reverend Charles Meade, intends to continue delivering babies without medical attention in Lake City, Florida, despite mounting press scrutiny of its losses.

Most recent of these was Michael David Boehmer born March 11, 1989 at home. The next day he began bleeding from his nose. On March 14 his parents tried to stop the flow of blood by placing cotton in his nose. About twelve hours later on March 15, Michael died. Gail Boehmer dialed 911 and reported, "We got a brand new baby that I don't think is breathing." She also said, "We were just really coming along" when they discovered he wasn't breathing.

Dr. Bonifacio Floro, the medical examiner, found the baby died of a pulmonary hemorrhage or "blood dyscrasia."

Vitamin K might have saved him

Floro said Michael would have had a 90% chance of survival with a vitamin shot commonly given to newborns. The standard vitamin K shot "probably would have been enough to prevent all the bleeding." Also, had the mother gotten standard prenatal care she would have been given vitamins and the baby would not have had a blood clotting problem.

The autopsy showed that Michael had lost at least a quarter of his blood over his four day life.

Parents cleared

A coroner's inquest was held. Assistant State's Attorney Bob Dekle, however, stated that the parents' conduct did not rise to the level of

culpable negligence. Columbia County Judge Collins ruled that the baby's death was not the result of a criminal act, negligence, or foul play.

The Boehmers said that they believed doctors should be avoided and had relied on prayer to heal their baby. But Kelly Boehmer also testified that he would have sought medical treatment had he realized Michael was dying. "I would have taken action. I wish more than anything that he was here today, whether that be because of a vitamin K injection or because of prayer."

No culpable neglect in babies' deaths

Dekle and Collins both cited a recent Florida Court of Appeals decision overturning a manslaughter conviction. Delores Blok had left her two-year-old son locked in a car while she

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went to a motel with her boyfriend. The temperature in the car reached 108 degrees, and the child died. The appeals court said there was insufficient evidence to support the jury verdict of manslaughter by culpable negligence. Dekle said that failure to give an infant a vitamin K shot could not be culpable negligence if locking a toddler in a car on a hot summer day was not. Whether letting a newborn bleed for three days without medical attention could be construed as culpable negligence, Dekle did not say.

Prosecution of future deaths possible

State's Attorney Jerry Blair said the conviction of Christian Science parents in Sarasota, Florida, may enhance his ability to deal with religiously-based medical neglect in the future. "If the Sarasota case ultimately results in a decision that appears to make it easier to prosecute, we will apply the existing law as vigorously as we can to these activities. I can guarantee you, if we are confronted with a situation where we believe the failure to seek medical attention results in a child's death and rises to the level of culpable negligence, we will prosecute," he said.

"And if [Meade] has told or advised these people not to seek medical attention, there is very likely to be criminal liability on [his] part. . . too," Blair warned.

Earlier deaths not prosecuted

End Time members have lost several other children whose cases authorities have declined to prosecute.

#1 Bethany Bauer On March 25, 1978, Bethany Bauer died in her parents' Baltic, South Dakota, home from a brain hemorrhage. The coroner said medical intervention might not have saved her life.

#2 Libby Cooke On December 22, 1978, Libby Cooke died in Brandon, South Dakota, without medical attention after a four-day struggle with premature lungs.

#3 Infant McDonnell On January 19, 1979, a 9-pound baby girl was born dead in a bathtub in Billings, Montana, after mother Nancy McDonnell had been in labor three days. A coroner's inquest showed that sect members moved McDonnell from her apartment to a

member's home to keep concerned relatives from interfering during her labor. The inquest jury recommended neglect charges be brought against five members of the group. The prosecutor cited laws shielding religious practice as the reason for dropping the case.

#4 Infant Ruzicka Cathy Ruzicka lay in labor for four days at her Brandon, South Dakota, home in February 1981. When she went into convulsions, her husband called 911. Her full term 7 and 1/2 pound baby son died.

#5 Sarah Handy Sarah Handy was born premature with bacterial pneumonia. She died at her Valley Springs, South Dakota, home on July 1, 1981. Investigators said she had turned blue and had severe breathing problems, but parents Mike and Maxine Handy continued to pray over her. Minnehaha State's Attorney Jack Hanson said he was prevented from prosecuting the case by the South Dakota religious immunity law.

Joni Cooke's decision

The death of Libby Cooke has become well known because her mother Joni made a heart-wrenching decision last fall to go public with her experience.

Cooke was ill with toxemia through much of her pregnancy, but hesitated to voice her concerns. Illness was viewed as the work of Satan. It evidenced a member's lack of faith or an unconfessed sin. Those who believed the words of Reverend Meade were supposed to be protected from sickness. "They took it to the point that, if you even thought you were sick or dying, you would be sick or dying," she recalled.

Libby Marie was born breech in the eighth month of pregnancy. Over four days, she quit breathing several times. Joni could tell her daughter was in pain. Frantically, she called Mrs. Meade for advice. "Gary's mother said we needed oxygen, an incubator. Gary said that was the wrong kind of help. And I remember Mrs. Meade said, 'Just pray for her lungs. Put your hands on them and pray.'" But Libby gasped one last time, spit up, and died.

Later Mrs. Meade told Joni that seeking medical help would have caused members to doubt the faith of her husband, who was just beginning his ministry.

"For the sake of saving face. . ."

"For the sake of saving face, they allowed her to die," Joni said bitterly. "It was then I saw how little they valued life, staying here and watching her die. . . . I was not even allowed to have a funeral."

For all that, Charles Meade later told a membership meeting that the Cookes' lack of faith had caused their baby's death. "The underlying statement with all the deaths, not just ours, was that there is sin in your life," Joni said.

Parents' Reactions

Years after their daughters died, Gary Cooke went to a Sioux Falls doctor to have cysts removed from his head, and Brad Bauer was hospitalized for diabetes and his appendix.

Joni left the End Times Ministries in 1986 and divorced Gary, who followed Meade to Florida. Many others have also followed Meade in the last few years. From Billings, Montana, 80-85 members have come to live in Lake City; 150 have come from Sioux Falls, South Dakota; 20-25 from Muncie, Indiana; and 125-150 from Evanston, Illinois.

Links to Freeman

Meade began his ministry in Muncie after attending several Glory Barn services conducted by Rev. Hobart Freeman. The two share the belief that medicine is an instrument of Satan, that holidays are pagan, that the secular world itself should be avoided and rejected as much as possible, etc.

Meade has told the press that he interprets the Bible to say that going to a physician is a curse, but also said he does not forbid members to seek medical help. As a lay member explained, "We don't say to do things one way or the other. We just preach what the Bible says. We don't tell people what to do."

Former members say, however, that the guilt associated with going to doctors is immense.

Isolation of members

Meade preaches that a drought will soon cause a massive famine and that only members of his ministry will be saved. He claims he is second

only to Jesus. He once said, "I don't have opinions. What I say is thus saith the Lord," Joni Cooke recalled.

The number of home schooled children has jumped from 11 to 150 in the two years since the End Timers have arrived in Lake City. School officials say their only way of checking on the children's progress is by annual testing and they must wait two years before they can force failing students back into the system.

None of the children are immunized. The children are told not to talk to or listen to those outside of the group.

End Timer places foster children

Many End Timers have applied to take in foster children. Before they moved to Lake City, the area had an acute shortage of people willing to take foster children, but now there is a surplus. Cynthia Sutter, a member of End Time ministries, is in charge of processing and making decisions on foster care applications.

Local editor pleads for necessary medical care

End Time Ministries has had a heavy impact on the 10,000 people of Lake City. It has pitted an eloquent, impassioned newspaper editor, Don Caldwell, against the mayor, Gerald Witt. One editorial gave this message to End Timers: "We hope the death of Michael will shake you into reality. . . . Your moral duty as humans who bring new life into the world is to protect your helpless children with all the power at your disposal. That means prayer. And that means doctors. To do less for your children is immoral and should be unacceptable to civilized people."

Caldwell concluded: "We are saddened at the death of Michael. And we dread the death of the next child--a death that is sure to come."

Mayor "It may be necessary for some babies to die. . . everything has a price."

Mayor Witt responded: "It may be necessary for some babies to die to maintain our religious freedoms. It may be the price we have to pay; everything has a price."

Lake City CHILD member Ann Connor has organized an informal group to educate residents about End Time practices. Meade had her car

blocked in and got trespassing charges filed against her when she tried to show media where End Time leaders lived. She warns that it will "start hitting home here when people from our community are drawn into the group, and someone from here loses a grandbaby."

Impact of Public Policy

The impact of public policy on End Time Ministries remains an open question. Rev. Geri Smith, an United Church of Christ pastor who counsels exmembers and their parents, warns that the lack of prosecution only vindicates Meade and his followers. "They will see these inquests as a way of triumphing over the government, triumphing over the system and their own persecution," she says.

She may be right. Since the death of Michael Boehmer, three more End Time babies have been born at home. In each case, the parents refused vitamin K injections along with any sort of medical checkup or intervention, the Columbia County Public Health Department reports.

Taken in part from the *Sioux Falls Argus Leader*, May 21-23; *Lake City Reporter*, November 20-23; *Sarasota Herald Tribune*, April 11 and *St. Petersburg Times*, April 12.

CHRISTIAN SCIENTISTS LET MINNESOTA BOY DIE OF DIABETES

On May 9, Ian Lundman, 11, died of juvenile-onset diabetes in suburban Minneapolis. His mother, Kathleen McKown, and stepfather William are Christian Scientists and had the boy treated by a church practitioner instead of a medical doctor.

Mrs. McKown was working toward becoming a church-accredited practitioner. She had an office and was listed in the phone book as a Christian Science practitioner. Ian's paternal grandmother, Doris Lundman, is a Christian Science teacher and practitioner in Minneapolis.

Father's inquiry thwarted

Ian's father, Doug Lundman, left Christian Science several years ago. The past two years, he has been a professor of architecture at Kansas State University in Manhattan. Doug called his

exwife around 8:30 p.m. on May 8 and asked to speak to Ian. She told him that Ian was fine, but had had a touch of flu and was sleeping. Around 2:30 a.m. May 9, Ian died in a diabetic coma.

His death was a profound shock to the private Metropolitan Open School to which Ian had transferred after Easter. At first the school community thought he had died of blood poisoning for they remembered he had missed school because of a bicycle accident and had had sores that did not heal. Boys remembered seeing red streaks on his arm May 5, the last day he was in school. (Sores that will not heal can be an indicator for diabetes.)

Doug Lundman has moved back to Minneapolis and is fighting for custody of his thirteen-year-old daughter, Whitney.

Death ruled a homicide

The coroner has ruled Ian's death a homicide, and the Hennepin County Attorney's office is investigating it.

Taken in part from the *Minneapolis Star-Tribune*, June 3.

ANOTHER FAITH DEATH IN INDIANA

The death of a 20-month-old child whose parents refused to seek medical treatment for his pneumonia is under investigation by Whitley County Prosecutor John Whiteleather in Columbia City, Indiana.

Joel Romine died March 27 of empyema, a complication of pneumonia. His parents, Daniel and Diana Romine, told the coroner they do not believe in seeking medical treatment and instead prayed at home for their child's recovery. The Romines are former members of Faith Assembly, which has lost more than 100 people because of its beliefs against medical care. They now go to another church in Fort Wayne.

The prosecutor's office said that they "have to prove the negligent point--whether any prudent parent would have sought medical aid in a similar situation."

Actions on previous deaths

Last year Whiteleather declined to file charges when Faith Assembly members Steve and Linda

Keys of Columbia City withheld lifesaving medical care from their baby. Juliana Keys, 9 months, died March 26, 1988, of an untreated abdominal infection caused by a twisted bowel. She was in severe pain for many days.

Child Protective Services got an agreement from the Keys to allow regular monitoring of the health of their surviving children. After that agreement was obtained, Whiteleather decided against prosecuting them.

Whiteleather was the first Indiana prosecutor to charge Faith Assembly parents. He obtained the convictions of Gary and Margaret Hall in the death of their son Joel to pneumonia in 1984.

Taken in part from *The Indianapolis Star*, May 19, 1989, and *USA Today*, May 19, 1989.

MOTHER BOOKED IN SON'S DEATH

Anneta Williamson, of Loranger, Louisiana, was booked with negligent homicide after her 5-year-old son, Loren, died of leukemia June 2. Williamson belongs to the Church of God and prayed for divine healing instead of taking him to a doctor.

Dr. Vincent Cefalu, the Tangipahoa Parish coroner, said Loren died of congestive heart failure resulting from untreated leukemia. Cefalu said, "Leukemia is a cancer, but it can be treated with chemotherapy and blood transfusions. The lymphocytic leukemia is more treatable than other kinds of leukemia." Anneta was booked four days after his death but was freed on \$25,000 bond.

Neighbors told the investigators that Loren had been looking bad for several weeks and that red splotches, indicative of the leukemia, had covered his body for several weeks.

The church pastor Rev. Ed Wilson said, "Divine healing is a doctrine that the church believes and teaches. Whenever the need arises, anyone can be prayed for for healing."

Taken from the *Shreveport Times*, June 10.

SICK GIRL DISAPPEARS: TWO JAILED

A six-year-old girl's disappearance has placed her father and brother in jail and the Church of the First Born squarely in opposition to state law.

Melinda Sue James of Banks, Oregon, has been missing since May 5 when a judge awarded temporary custody to the Children's Services Division.

At a home visit a Washington County public health nurse determined that Melinda could be seriously ill and needed medical attention. The nurse told the court that Melinda's stomach was distended because of fluid retention that also was causing swelling in her extremities and there could be kidney failure. Melinda, her siblings, Jason and Angie; and her mother Judith are believed to be in hiding outside of Oregon, the sheriff's office said.

Jailed for contempt of court

On June 16, Daniel James, his son Daniel Jr., and First Born Bishop Richard Hays were jailed for contempt because of their repeated refusal to tell where the girl is. Judge Gayle Nachtigal said they should stay in jail until they disclosed Melinda's location or brought her to a state Children's Services Division caseworker.

James and Hays told the court they would obey their church's beliefs against medical care. The church believes in the laying on of hands, anointing with oil and the power of prayer in healing. Hays said the church healing practices were based on James 5:14 in the Bible. Daniel James has said that in hiding his daughter Melinda, he is honoring his belief in God.

Son, Luke, died without medical care

Our fall 1987 newsletter had an article on the James family whose 3-year-old boy, Luke, was killed in an accident August 2, 1987. The parents did not summon medical aid because they believe in exclusive reliance on prayer. However, an autopsy on Luke revealed that emergency medical help probably could not have saved his life, and authorities did not file charges.

Melinda was also injured in the accident. Surgery was done by court order. The parents then sought a court order for her release; a judge ruled that the family could keep her at home unless she was in danger of dying. A county health nurse was ordered to monitor her condition. She was the one who discovered the girl's illness this spring.

Authorities still do not know the girl's whereabouts or condition.

Taken in part from *The Oregonian*, June 7, 17, 22, and *Hillsboro Argus*, May 30 and June 20.

HERMANSON SENTENCING

On June 30 Christine and William Hermanson were sentenced in Sarasota, Florida, for felony child-abuse and third-degree murder in the death of their 7-year-old daughter Amy to diabetes. As Christian Scientists, they had withheld medical treatment from her.

Judge Stephen Dakan said there were three purposes of sentencing. First was punishment on which he said that the Hermansons had already suffered the worst punishment in losing their daughter. Second was protection, and he said that the Hermansons were no threat to society. Third was deterrence, which he declared was the focus of his decision.

Protecting siblings

Dakan declared them guilty of the crimes charged and sentenced them to four years in prison, but promptly suspended the prison term. He also sentenced them to fifteen years probation under several conditions. They must have a doctor trained in children's diseases examine their surviving children, Eric, 12, and Paul, 1, within thirty days. They must have such a doctor examine their children at regular intervals thereafter until the children reach 18 or get married. They are forbidden to interfere with any medical treatment that a doctor or probation officer believes necessary.

Parents contend they were healing her

The Hermansons then addressed the judge. Neither said they were sorry. "To find that the way we have conducted our lives for 20 years is suddenly criminal, we can't understand that. . . . It is almost incomprehensible that we could be found guilty of killing our child when exactly the opposite is what was going on," Bill said. Chris said, "Our family and our children are the absolute center of our activities" and also declared the verdict incomprehensible.

Stay asked to prevent medical care

The Hermansons' attorneys asked for a stay in the probation terms until appeals are resolved on the grounds that they interfere with the Hermansons' practice of their religious beliefs and that of their children.

The Hermansons have moved to St. Louis, site of the Principia schools for Christian Scientists from nursery school through college. Their attorneys cited the loss of their jobs in Florida as the reason for leaving.

On July 28 notice of appeal was formally filed by the Hermansons' attorneys. Assistant State's Attorney Deno Economou stated his confidence that no errors were made and that the convictions would stand. He pointed out that an appellate ruling would clarify the law and would be welcome.

Taken in part from the *Bradenton Herald*, July 1.

WHY DID THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE EXPERTS CALL AN AMBULANCE? PART II

In our last issue we asserted that the ambulance called by the Christian Science nurse and consented to by Frederick Hillier and Nathan Talbot, both church healers and lobbyists, was the main factor in the Hermansons' conviction. If these Christian Science "experts" could call for medical help (when Amy vomited after being comatose for hours), then the parents themselves could have gotten medical help much earlier, the prosecutor argued.

We speculated that Nathan Talbot, the international manager of the church's lobbying and public relations activities, perhaps agreed to have the ambulance called because a court hearing was in process to order medical intervention for Amy.

Medical help never intended?

Although Talbot declined to explain his intentions in court, he has since told the press that Hillier called to ask him the legally proper procedure for carrying away the body of a girl who was already dead. Talbot advised him to

call an ambulance instead of an undertaker. There was no intention to call for medical help, Talbot said.

It should be noted that the Christian Science nurse, Mary Jane Sellers, who was alone with Amy during the last hours of her life, testified that she requested the ambulance because she wanted medical help for Amy.

Hillier insists that he has no use for medicine. Although he says he felt "terrible" when Amy died, her death simply "renewed" his determination to use spiritual healing if he gets other patients with diabetes. He remains convinced that spiritual healing is the only cure for diabetes, and that insulin would interfere with the cure. If a diabetic patient on insulin came to him for prayer treatment, he would ask them to give up their insulin.

Following up on "medically diagnosed" cases

Insulin may control symptoms of diabetes, he said, "but in the last 15 years, we've had published examples of medically diagnosed cases of diabetes that have been completely healed."

David Olinger, a *St. Petersburg Times* reporter, checked the two testimonies on diabetes that the church gave him to prove their claims. One was an 8-year-old letter from Estie Allen, a woman from Republic, Kansas, who believed Christian Science had healed her mother of diabetes. A man at the local feed store said Estie herself died several years ago. The other came from Clifford Kelly, a British Columbia man whose healing took place more than fifty years ago. The reporter could not find him either.

Doctors say there is a mild form of diabetes that can be treated with proper diet and exercise.

Taken from the *St. Petersburg Times*, June 4.

ECCLESIA OFFICIALS SENTENCED IN BEATING DEATH

On June 22, Constance Jackson along with Willie K. Chambers, Brian J. Brinson and Frederick P. Doolittle were sentenced to the maximum 20 years in prison for first-degree manslaughter in the beating death of 8-year-old Dayna Broussard near Oregon City, Oregon. Jackson was also convicted June 5 of nine counts

each of second-degree assault and first-degree criminal mistreatment for beating nine Ecclesia children with a braided electrical cord. A fifth defendant in the case, Josie Faust, will be tried August 1.

Dayna was one of 54 children residing in a farmhouse operated by Ecclesia Atheletic Association. Dayna's father, Eldridge Broussard, formed Ecclesia to steer inner-city children away from drugs and crime through religion and athletics. Broussard did not attend the trial or the release hearing. He also did not attend his daughter's funeral.

Witnesses testified that Dayna was struck hundreds of times with a variety of instruments, including a rubber hose, a braided electrical cord, a bamboo rod and a plastic pipe. Several of the children testified that Chambers repeatedly beat the child while Brinson and Doolittle held her down and that Jackson bit the child on the face and stuffed a sock in her mouth to muffle her screams. A radio was turned up to drown them out. Chambers testified that Broussard gave him permission to discipline Dayna because the child stole a piece of zucchini from another youngster's plate, and then bit Jackson, who had tried to punish her.

Dayna had previously been deprived of food as a disciplinary measure. Also, when authorities raided the farm home, they found only a few tomatoes and heads of lettuce for the 54 children. There was no refrigerator.

Father's reaction

Broussard, who once called himself "an extension of Martin Luther King," appeared on television and radio talk shows and blamed the media for Dayna's death.

In January, Broussard went into seclusion, saying that he needed "more time to be with the Lord." Since then, his whereabouts have been uncertain.

Most parents reject state-approved plans

In May, 10 of the 53 children were released to live with parents or other relatives in California. The parents of the released children agreed to follow state-approved plans for custody, care and discipline of the children officials said. As of May 22 the "rest of the parents had been

unwilling to do that," said Bart Wilson, manager of Protective Services for Clackamas County.

"The short-term goal is to discuss with them the disciplining that went on in the group, why that wasn't the best form of discipline, and for them to make assurance that it won't happen again," Wilson said.

A plan submitted by Ecclesia members to return the 53 children to the farm for a summer camp was rejected July 6 by an Oregon Juvenile Court judge, who complained that it lacked detail and failed to show how funding could be raised to care for the children adequately.

Federal investigation continues

The activities of Ecclesia are also the focus of a continuing investigation by the Civil Rights Division of the U.S. Department of Justice. Federal officials said Justice Department investigators were looking at whether anyone had conspired to deny the civil rights of children living at Ecclesia homes, and whether prosecution is possible through federal slavery statutes.

Failures of officialdom

Many neighbors reported to Oregon Children's Services Division their concerns about the Ecclesia children in the summer of 1987. They saw ragged, unkempt children marching around at all hours. They saw children picking fruits and vegetables day after day who said they were training for the Olympics. They worried about the "control, power, isolation and grandiose plans" of the Ecclesia leaders.

Children's Services said none of the reports were "allegations of abuse or neglect."

According to *The Washington Post*, a deputy sheriff "visited the house in response to telephone calls from neighbors who were concerned about the children's welfare and found 50 children left unsupervised in a closed garage in 90-degree heat. But he did not see anything wrong, so he left."

When neighbors blocked Ecclesia's zoning request, Broussard angrily pulled his group out of Oregon and said they would not come back. The neighbors did not know that Broussard had brought the children back to the farmhouse in October 1988, until Dayna died.

Taken in part from *The Los Angeles Times*,

January 30 and May 13, *The Oregonian*, May 13, 26 and June 2, *The Statesman-Journal*, May 22, and *The Washington Post*, October 25, 1988.

MOTHER PLEADS GUILTY IN CHILD'S DEATH

Darlene Jackson, 33, of Pace, Florida, pled guilty March 15 in the death of her four-year-old daughter Kimberly McZinc. She had starved and beaten her daughter to rid her of demons.

Jackson had been charged with first-degree murder and aggravated child abuse but was allowed to plead guilty to lesser charges of third-degree murder and child abuse.

The influence of Nicholson ministry

She and Kimberly lived in a mobile home with the Nicholson family. Mrs. Mary Nicholson claimed she could heal by laying on hands and interpreting revelations from God. Jackson said she gave Nicholson \$20,000 for her ministry; Nicholson said it was only \$1,000. Today Mary Nicholson and Darlene Jackson are bitter enemies and are both behind bars.

Nicholson spread sulphur around her yard and kept glasses of ammonia in the house to ward off evil spirits. Nicholson allegedly told Jackson to starve her daughter after convincing her that the child was possessed by demons. Nicholson also "told Darlene that Kimberly was an evil child and, according to her religious beliefs, any child born out of wedlock was inherently evil," defense attorney Leo Thomas said.

Jackson testified that Nicholson "once forced her to stare at Kimberly until she saw a wolf's spirit within the child."

"Nicholson burned two dolls and claimed they called out Kimberly's name from the flames," Jackson said. She said she "suffered severe headaches, constant drowsiness, skin rashes and a flu-like weakness during most of her stay at Nicholson's home." Nicholson claimed that "Kim's evil spirits were sapping [her] strength," Jackson testified.

Diary of exorcism

As part of the exorcism regimen, Kimberly was put on a strict, inadequate diet and deprived of

all food for days at a time. Darlene Jackson kept a floral-patterned diary and testified that "entries in the diary were instructions from God relayed through Nicholson about Kimberly, who was called 'thine seed.'" "It did not eat on Saturday. . . didn't feed it because of its behavior," reads a September 1987 diary entry. "Sunday it had nothing to eat. Mon. and Tues. the same. Wednesday, she drank some of her urine and bath water."

An undated entry read: "Worry not about this Kimberly. When she disobeys, knock her down, knock her down, I say. Show her the bottom of your foot. Continue to press thine seed. . . bring the child into total submission."

The December 9, 1987 entry read: "Hit her in the mouth, in the mouth, I say. Keep to the diet. . . spare not the rod of correction. . . speak less and whip more, with severity."

In late January 1988 an entry reads: "My hand is upon her. Her weak state demonstrates my way is the only way. . . regardless of how thin and weak she becomes, I will sustain her."

Medical records document starvation

Medical records showed that two years before her death the child had weighed 34 pounds, which was normal for her age and height of 39 inches, Dr. Lelia Montes, district pediatrician for the state's child protection team, testified. Montes was in the emergency room at Santa Rosa Hospital on February 8, 1988, when Kimberly was brought in dead. During the interval, she had grown five inches taller but lost six and one-half pounds, Montes said.

Child protection workers twice called

Assistant State Attorney Kim Skievaski revealed that one of Mrs. Nicholson's daughters twice reported Kimberly's condition to the State Department of Health and Rehabilitation Services (HRS) in the four months prior to her death. The second time, HRS sent an investigator who took no action after observing Ms. Jackson was well educated, the other children were healthy and there was plenty of food in the home. Jackson told investigators that Kimberly had always been thin. They examined her and closed their cases.

A "prolonged, painful, torturous death"

The medical examiner who conducted the autopsy testified that the child had no fat, her liver was shrunken, and her body had begun to feed on internal organs.

She died a "prolonged, painful, torturous death," Skievaski said.

Darlene Jackson graduated from North Carolina A&T University with a major in community health. Three years later she had her master's degree in public administration from the University of South Carolina and was working as a computer programmer for the American Telephone & Telegraph Co. in New York.

Mary Nicholson was charged with first-degree murder and aggravated child abuse after Jackson pled guilty. Her case is scheduled for trial this fall.

Taken in part from the *Tampa Tribune*, April 10, and the *Lake City Reporter*, March 16.

COUPLE SENTENCED TO PRISON

On May 1, Dean and Sheila Camren of Cushing, Oklahoma were sentenced to prison for the 1987 death of their 3-month-old daughter, Desiree Jean Camren. Associate District Judge Charles Headrick ordered a two-year sentence for the couple, who pleaded no contest in March to charges of second-degree manslaughter, but then suspended all but four months of prison time.

The couple are members of the Church of the First Born and claimed their religious beliefs prevented them from seeking medical help for Desiree who died on February 14, 1987, of pneumonia after a week's illness. A medical examiner listed the manner of death as homicide, saying it could have been prevented with medical treatment.

Judge Headrick gave them until May 10 to start serving their sentences in order to find care for their four children. They are expecting another child who could be born before Sheila Camren completes her prison sentence.

The Camrens pleaded guilty just before their trial was to start. Testimony at a preliminary hearing indicated that the Camrens knew the child was dying, but believed her death was a punishment from God because the father had not

been attending church. A church elder testified that if his child asked for a doctor he would get one, but if the child was too young to talk, he would not seek medical help even if it meant his child would die.

Taken in part from *The Daily Oklahoman*, May 2, 1989.

U. S. SUPREME COURT DECLINES TO REVIEW FAITH DEATH RULINGS

On May 15 the U. S. Supreme Court declined to review the manslaughter conviction of Kenneth and Jamie Funkhauser of Purcell, Oklahoma. Because of their membership in Church of the First Born, the Funkhausers withheld medical treatment while their three-year-old son Benjamin struggled with pneumonia for two weeks. He died July 15, 1983. The Funkhausers were sentenced to two years in jail.

Last September the High Court declined to review the manslaughter conviction of Linda and William Barnhart of Ebensburg, Pennsylvania. Their two year old son Justin had a Wilms' tumor that grew to the size of a volleyball and starved him to death. They had a Faith Tabernacle minister anoint him with oil five months before his death.

Walker trial to proceed

On June 19, 1989, the High Court declined to review the California Supreme Court's ruling that Christian Science mother Laurie Walker must stand trial on charges of involuntary manslaughter and felony child endangerment. Walker's four-year-old daughter Shauntay died March 9, 1984, in Sacramento of meningitis after being sick at home for seventeen days.

Walker's appeal to the U. S. Supreme Court was signed by Harvard Law School Professor Lawrence Tribe. Tribe's support for the Christian Science position is surprising since he has in the past criticized religious immunity laws as discriminatory "government endorsement" of particular religions.

Other cases affected

Walker is expected to go to trial in December or January. Another Christian Science couple,

Lise and Eliot Glaser of Santa Monica, will likely go on trial this fall. They let their 17-month-old son Seth die of meningitis without medical help.

The trial of a third California Christian Science couple, Mark and Susan Rippberger, opened June 19 in Santa Rosa. Their eight-month-old daughter Natalie died December 9, 1984, of meningitis after two weeks of Christian Science treatment. The case will be given to the jury August 1, and the trial will be covered in the next issue of our newsletter.

SUPREME COURT OF CANADA ORDERS NEW FAITH DEATH TRIAL

In June the Supreme Court of Canada upheld the right to a new trial for an Ontario couple convicted of manslaughter for withholding insulin from their diabetic son.

Arthur and Carol Tutton of Aylmer were aware that their son Christopher was diabetic and had taken courses on administering insulin. In 1980, however, they became convinced God had cured him and discontinued the insulin. On October 2, Christopher was rushed to a hospital in a diabetic coma. Doctors stabilized his condition and stressed that he would need insulin injections all his life; the Tuttons promised not to discontinue them again.

The following October, however, Mrs. Tutton again had a vision in which she claimed God told her that Christopher was healed. The boy died at age five in a diabetic coma.

Tutton testified that she belonged to a Pentecostal church practicing faith healing.

The parents were convicted of manslaughter by criminal negligence in 1983. The judge instructed the jury to evaluate their conduct by an objective standard of what ordinary, prudent parents would have done.

Supreme Court holds divided views

However, the Supreme Court has upheld an appellate court ruling for a new trial on grounds that the judge did not accurately instruct the jury on the law. Two justices said that the jury must consider whether the parents' honest belief that Christopher had been cured by God was a

reasonably held belief and then "determine if their conduct represented a marked and significant departure from the standard to be observed by reasonably prudent parents." Others wanted such factors as the accused person's mental abilities, education and background considered. Three others stressed that subjective aspects of the accused person's mind must be considered. One said the law in this area "is notorious in its ambiguity."

Neither side raised any arguments based on the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the Canadian equivalent of the Bill of Rights in the United States Constitution. Thus freedom of religious beliefs was not addressed.

The Crown Attorney has not yet decided whether to refile the case. Key witnesses have died, among other factors.

Taken from the *Toronto Globe and Mail*.

MISSISSIPPI TO REQUIRE MONTHLY REPORTS FROM CHILDCARE FACILITIES

A law to require reports from residential childcare facilities in Mississippi took effect July 1. For six years the notorious Reverend Herman Fountain and other fundamentalists have battled the state's efforts to license such homes.

The legislature settled upon requiring monthly reports in lieu of licensing. The reports must contain the names, home addresses, and parents' names for all children in the homes. The reports must also certify that the children are receiving adequate medical care and that they are in school. The state will have the authority to remove children from homes who do not submit reports or cannot certify that proper care is being provided.

State twice raided facility

The Bethel Baptist Children's Home in Lucedale run by Rev. Herman Fountain has been named in numerous reports of child abuse. Abuse has allegedly included child labor, beatings, molestations, and torture for offenses such as talking without permission or for having Down's Syndrome. Kids had to memorize Bible passages that encouraged the beating of children.

There was bedtime guard duty of kids by other kids and a "pee watch" for bedwetters.

The state raided the school and attempted to close it down, but could not because the state had no licensing of such facilities. It was raided again in October 1988, with dozens of state troopers locked out waiting for Fountain to open the doors, while the welfare commissioner tried to negotiate the children's release. The commissioner sent his thirteen-year-old daughter out of state after receiving a threat that she would be kidnapped and put in a church home where she would never be located.

Seventeen children abused-- no charges brought

No charges were brought for child abuse, even though a youth judge ruled that seventeen children had been abused.

In January, boys from the Bethel Baptist Children's Home were found doing demolition work at the Alabama State Docks. The Freedom from Religion Foundation headquartered in Madison, Wisconsin, exposed the state of Alabama's involvement in violating child labor laws and got the practice stopped.

On August 1, we will know whether Reverend Fountain intends to comply with the new law on reporting. Our sources say that he will not. He owes the state about \$700,000 on contempt of court charges and is currently out on bond after assaulting a state trooper.

Taken in part from *Freethought Today*, January/February 1989.

POLITICS LIKELY TO END DAY-CARE BATTLE IN NORTH CAROLINA

On June 30, the terms of the North Carolina Day Care Association members expired. The governor, lieutenant governor, and House speaker will appoint new members shortly.

The new appointments will likely lead to a state regulation allowing church-related day care centers to spank children. Republican Governor James Martin has stated his support for fundamentalist churches who want the right to spank children in day care centers.

Corporal punishment was banned in day cares by a regulation of the previous Day Care Association. Church-related day care centers are

exempted from state licensing, but still have to have state approval to operate. In 1987 the Day Care Association withheld approval from thirteen parochial day care centers practicing corporal punishment. The churches operating the centers then requested a hearing on the issue before a state administrative hearing officer. Two and a half weeks of testimony were held.

Spanking as religious training

In November 1988 the officer recommended that the churches be allowed to make their own rules on spanking, citing a state law forbidding the state "to regulate or otherwise interfere with the religious training offered as a part of any church day care program." The Day Care Association rejected the recommendation, arguing that the statute referred only to curriculum, and continued to enforce the ban on hitting children.

The churches then requested review by a North Carolina Superior Court, but the new members of the Day Care Association will probably enact a regulation either allowing corporal punishment in day care centers or exempting church-related day cares from the ban before the judicial review is completed. The state already allows corporal punishment in schools.

Council of Churches opposes spanking in all schools and day cares

The North Carolina Council of Churches, representing 25 Catholic and Protestant denominations, voted to oppose spanking in all schools, including day care. The North Carolina Civil Liberties Union submitted an amicus brief supporting the state's ban on corporal punishment.

Biblical mandate cited

Lawyers for the churches argued that the spanking of young children was part of the churches' "biblical mandate to discipline and train [children]" and that the ban was an unlawful intrusion into their religious beliefs. They cited the following Bible verses as "requiring" corporal punishment: Proverbs 13:24, 19:29, 22:6, 23:13; Hebrews 12:5-11; Ephesians 6:1-4; and

Deuteronomy 21:18-22.

They also said that parents have given consent to the centers to use spanking, in some cases with paddles, as a form of discipline, but attorneys for the state and the Day Care Association said a parent cannot delegate his or her right to spank a child.

Spanking equated to assault

Supporters of the spanking ban said it too often leads to child abuse and that the state has a right to prohibit spanking in church centers.

"You're using violence against a child to inflict pain," said Steven Shaber, a lawyer representing the Day Care Association. "It is assault. It is a show of violence."

George E. Battle Jr., an Association member and a pastor at the Greater Gethsemane A.M.E. Zion Church in Charlotte, said, "I don't think I have to whip kids to demonstrate my belief. I did the right thing for some little child [in voting for the ban]."

Reports of abuse and neglect are common

In June, Protective Services received 80 reports of child abuse and neglect at both secular and parochial day care facilities.

Taken in part from *The Raleigh Times*, November 18, 1988.

SECOND SUIT AGAINST BROTHER JULIUS SETTLED

A civil lawsuit against a Connecticut cult leader known as Brother Julius has recently been settled out of court. The suit charged Julius Schacknow with sexually assaulting his step-daughter Karen Goodwin between 1965 and 1972 when she was a child in Dover, New Jersey, and of keeping her subjected to him when they moved to Connecticut. The abuse began when she was eleven. Terms of the withdrawal of the suit filed in August 1988 in Superior Court in Morris County, New Jersey, were not disclosed, and the principals would not comment.

It is the second suit settled out of court in recent years that alleged that Julius Schacknow had sexually abused a young girl. Schacknow

claims to be God and has several hundred followers in central Connecticut. One former member said in a 1987 affidavit that Julius told her that having sexual intercourse with him would help her "get closer to God."

CHILD member Peter Georgiades of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, represented the women in both suits.

Another abuse case won against Alive Polarity

Georgiades also won a settlement in suits against the California-based Alive Polarity Fellowship. One suit charged intentional infliction of emotional distress and alienation of affections because of the way family relationships were treated within the group. Another suit brought by former members charged that \$1 million in back wages was owed to them.

Alive Polarity responded that they provided childcare and schooling in lieu of wages. But witnesses for the plaintiffs gave vivid descriptions of what care and education for the children included. They told of children being confined in closets for long periods, of "physical therapy" so painful they stuffed pillows in their mouths to muffle screams, and of manipulative psychological techniques that left them dizzy and confused.

CHILD asks. . .

Why are these issues being pursued only in civil suits? Why isn't the state filing criminal charges of statutory rape and child abuse?

Taken in part from *The Hartford Courier*, May 11, 1989, and *The Riverside Press Enterprise*, December 15, 1988.

CHILD ABUSE ALLEGED IN WASHINGTON SECT

Three children have been taken into protective custody and sex tapes have been seized from a religious foundation campus near Spokane.

Court documents indicate that the tapes detail sexual encounters between the founder of the C. E. Hobbs Foundation and young girls who belong to the congregation.

The foundation is a Christian religious organization that moved to Newport, Washington,

in the late 1970s from Chicago under the leadership of its founder, Clifford E. Hobbs, a 66-year-old steelworker turned evangelist.

The congregation has 94 members, including 16 children. Hobbs said he does not seek new members and heads "what you might say is a closed church."

Most members travel to the church estate on Friday evenings and spend the weekend on the grounds, which includes a mansion with 21 bedrooms, lavishly furnished, and a nearby dormitory with 14 more rooms.

Mate swapping and group sex involving adults and children--called "sharing sessions"--are commonplace, but don't involve all members of the congregation, said two exmembers.

Children are pulled by the hair, beaten and verbally abused during church services, they said.

They also complained that Hobbs's sermons were heavily dominated by talk of sex. "What he calls 'salvation'--all of it is for his sexual gratification," an exmember said.

Parents are aware of and encourage the conduct, including the sexual contact, because they are "under the spell of Hobbs," she said.

Three teen-age boys were taken into protective custody July 14, and authorities are looking for another child.

The state also charged that liquor was regularly served to minors at the church. Liquor agents seized evidence of the sales at "Capt. Cliff's Kit & Caboodle," a cafe on the church property named in honor of the leader.

Taken from the *Spokesman Review*, July 13, 14, and 15.

FASHION SHOW BENEFITS CHILD

Grace United Methodist Church and the Williges clothing store in Sioux City held a fashion show and brunch on February 25, which benefited CHILD, the church remodeling fund, and Exaltation, a contemporary Christian music group.

Exaltation spent hundreds of hours organizing this event, which they titled "Linen, Sparkle, and Lace." Judy Richcreek did a magnificent job of contacting Siouxland merchants for door prizes and obtaining publicity. Marta Nelson planned clever table decorations and made media appearances. Phyllis Dickinson played piano

music for the fashion show. CHILD member Beth Burow was a gracious mistress of ceremonies. About a dozen Exaltation members worked most of Friday and Saturday morning baking muffins, preparing other entrees, and setting up tables. Exaltation also sang several songs.

Iowa State Representative Don Shoning, who has sponsored a bill to repeal Iowa's religious immunity laws, spoke.

About 250 people attended. Over 50 Siouxland merchants and institutions donated door prizes worth well over \$1200.

We were surprised, delighted, and humbled to see the broad respect and good will that CHILD has in the Siouxland community. Many thanks!

BOARD ELECTIONS; NEW BYLAWS

The candidates offered for CHILD's board of directors have been elected by the members. The board now consists of Drs. Rita and Doug Swan of Sioux City, Iowa; Ford Cauffiel of Toledo, Ohio; Rev. Ralph Brown of Grosse Pointe Park, Michigan; Shirley Landa of Bothell, Washington; Adrienne Southgate, an attorney in Providence, Rhode Island; and Dr. Scott Sokol, a pediatrician in Floral Park, New York.

Thanks to the many members who participated in the election.

CHILD, Inc. has revised its bylaws. Members may obtain a copy of the new bylaws by sending an envelope stamped with 45 cents postage.

MAGAZINE ARTICLES ON CHILDREN IN HEALING SECTS

Rita Swan has published two articles on endangerment of children in faith-healing sects. One is entitled "Barriers to Medical Care of Children: How You Can Help." It appeared in the January-February 1989 of *the exchangite*, the magazine of the National Exchange Clubs. Child abuse prevention has long been a very high priority with the Exchange Clubs.

The second article was titled by the editors "Fragile Life: Protecting Innocence" and appeared in the winter 1989 issue of *Kentucky Hospitals*.

CHANGE THE LAW

From the *Lake City Reporter*, April 14.
Reprinted with permission.

**"A boy's will is the wind's will. And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts."--
Henry Wadsworth Longfellow**

A baby died in Lake City. He was Michael David Boehmer. He lived four days. He bled to death.

A dose of vitamin K would have saved his life. A coroner's hearing was held Monday.

State Attorney Jerry Blair and Bob Dekle presented evidence to County Judge Julian Collins. . . .

Collins listened intently to the facts.

Collins made a ruling based on state law.

The parents, Kelly and Gail Boehmer, testified, anguished and shed tears during the five-hour ordeal.

Kelly and Gail Boehmer relived the horror of the last hours of their son's life.

We wanted to cry out, "Enough," as Gail Boehmer said she wanted her child back in her arms.

After the pain, after the agony, after the misery, we left the courtroom to search our souls.

Collins ruled that the state shouldn't prosecute the parents of the dead child.

Under the law, he made the right decision.

Yet. . .

Michael David Boehmer lies in a grave because End Time Ministries teaches their members to shun doctors.

Michael will never catch a high fly ball in left field.

Michael will never flirt with a girl.

Michael will never have a chance to decide on his individual rights.

Any law that lets a child die needs to be changed.

There will be other babies who will die as long as this law remains on the books.

The Bible doesn't speak on the merits of vitamin K but God was weeping while he watched Michael David Boehmer die.

Enough. Enough.

Change the law.