

Warped

by Scott McCullar



Child abusers to be replaced at home for neglected kids

United Press International
CULLMAN, Ala. — The directors of a haven for neglected children have agreed to a grand jury's demand to replace the staff of a church-run facility where children were allegedly sexually and physically abused.

"In accordance with the recommendation of the Cullman County grand jury, the personnel of the children's home will be almost completely replaced within 90 days," the directors of the Childhaven Home said after their meeting Saturday night. The Cullman County grand jury returned five indictments

against three people who worked at the Church of Christ-run home and demanded the entire staff be dismissed.

J.D. Alexander, 55, was arrested Thursday on second-degree sodomy charges and John Symonds, 27, was booked on charges of child abuse for allegedly torturing a young girl. An unidentified third suspect was expected to be arrested when he returns to Alabama this week.

"Of all the reports we had from all sources, we were running a satisfactory home," Childhaven board chairman John E. Evans Jr. said Sunday.

"When we learned (of the alleged abuses), I imagine the board was far more shocked than other people were. We were utterly shocked when we heard."

The grand jury recommended that "all cottage parents, social workers and the top administrative people at Childhaven" be dismissed and the home's license revoked if suggested measures are not followed in 90 days.

Evans said the board's first indication of problems at the home came during a Department of Pensions and Security probe in early March.

Americans asked to pray

Reagan calls for end to war

United Press International
HONOLULU — President Reagan, standing at a crossroads of the Pacific at the midpoint of "a long journey for peace," issued an Easter holiday call for an end to war Sunday and voiced hope his visit to China will further this goal.

"I ask for the prayers of all Americans and the peoples of the world for peace among men, for peace among nations," Reagan said in remarks prepared for the start of a two-day rest stop on the road to China.

"Let the nations and peoples of the world renounce war," he said. "Let us pledge ourselves to its permanent abolition. Let us forsake its anguish and agony and live in love with one another."

The president and Mrs. Reagan began Easter Sunday by wrapping up three days of peace and solitude at their mountaintop ranch and boarding Air Force One for a 2,615-mile flight to Honolulu — the second of three rest stops on a 11,190-mile week-long trip to China.

With the White House determined to keep the spotlight focused on the China journey — the first by an American president since 1975 — Reagan draped his trip in lofty goals during an arrival ceremony at Hickam Air Force Base.

"We want to say how thrilled we are to begin this long journey for peace in this place of overpowering beauty and tranquility," he said. "It is also appropriate that this journey should begin on Easter Sunday — a day of peace proclaimed, a day of triumph over evil and suffering."

Voicing hope the day will come "when mankind will renounce forever the use of force," Reagan, whose political advisers are eager to cast him in

the role of campaign-year peacemaker, said, "It is our fervent hope that the events of the coming week will also bring us closer to that day."

"The United States is resolved to avoid war, pursue peace and to do so by remaining strong and remaining ready," Reagan declared.

In a somber reminder of the attack that drew the United States into war against Japan in 1941, Reagan said the people of Hawaii "have known first-hand the destruction wrought by nations that take up arms against one another."

Reagan, a long-time friend of Taiwan, displayed none of his previous animosity toward the normalization of relations with China undertaken by President Carter. Baring the more pragmatic approach he has taken since assuming office, he called the evolution of U.S.-Sino relations over the last 12 years "one of the critical developments in our country's postwar foreign relations."

"This week, we hope to continue that process of reconciliation," he said. "I believe the mission we undertake is another careful, yet sure step towards peace and friendship between the Chinese and American people."

Reagan described the significance of his two-week journey in terms broader than the improvement of bilateral relations with China. He said it highlights the growing importance of closer relations among all nations of the Pacific.

"The Pacific Basin is one of the fastest growing markets for American goods, services and investments," he said. "To a great extent, our nation's future

is in the Pacific." Except for a private meeting with Adm. William Crowe, commander in chief of the U.S. Pacific Command, Reagan was to spend all of Monday reviewing China briefing materials and

conferring with his foreign policy advisers.

Crowe was to give Reagan a full briefing on the balance of power in the Pacific, including the movement and presence of Soviet warships in the region.

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