

CSER

COMMITTEE FOR THE SCIENTIFIC EXAMINATION OF RELIGION

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Steven L. Mitchell (*ex officio*,
executive director, Academy of
Humanism—USA)

June 4, 1986

Dr. Marvin Eastlund
3121 E. State Blvd.
Fort Wayne, IN 46815

Dear Dr. Eastlund:

I am enclosing a copy of a letter that was written by
James C. Dobson. What he ascribes to you is surprising. I
would appreciate it greatly if, in the interest of scientific
research, you could respond to the following questions.

- 1.) Is the enclosed account of your letter accurate?
- 2.) Can you confirm the fact that "just a few hours before"
the intended abortion, you "had obtained an ultrasound of the
pregnancy showing a live fetus with a beating heart and what
appeared to be a normal pregnancy in progress?" Can anyone else
corroborate that fact? Might you have been mistaken?
- 3.) If it is the case, is there any scientific evidence
that a fetus can degenerate so rapidly by normal means?
- 4.) Is it possible that the cancer or some other natural
causes had already destroyed the fetus?

Inasmuch as many thousands of persons have already read
about your claims, I would appreciate your clarification.

I look forward to your response.

Sincerely yours,


Paul Kurtz

GARY P. POSNER, M.D.
6219 PALMA DEL MAR BLVD. #210
ST. PETERSBURG, FLORIDA 33715

Mark
We want to do
something for T. R. on
this. Can you
help?
November 2, 1986

Paul Kurtz
CSER/Free Inquiry
P.O. Box 5
Buffalo, N.Y. 14215

Dear Paul,

I am pleased to be of assistance in CSER's evaluation of Dr. Marvin Eastlund's report. The questions posed by you to him on June 4 were right on target, and his answers to (1) and (2) immediately arouse suspicion as to the accuracy of the reported events. In his reply to (1) he says, "I wrote in my letter [to Dobson] some of these experiences...and Dr. Dobson printed some of these experiences." I still do not know whether Dobson printed Eastlund's letter verbatim or made editorial adjustments. And in his letter to you of October 6, Eastlund's answer to (2) appears to be in effect 'Not quite'.

Please follow along as I comment on Eastlund's letter to you:

(A) Need clarification as to whether or not letter distributed by Dobson was verbatim (see D).

(B) Dates and dosages of chemotherapy might be relevant in determining its possible role in fetus' death.

(C) Need copy of the sonogram report. Of relevance are the exact date, measurement of crown-rump length of fetus, and documentation of fetal heart pulsations.

(D) In his letter to Dobson (assuming it to be verbatim) Eastlund claimed that "Just a few hours before [the third D&C] I had obtained an ultrasound of the pregnancy showing a live fetus with a beating heart and what appeared to be a normal pregnancy in progress." This describes the sonogram (C) which, according to his letter to you, was actually performed two weeks before the third D&C.

(E) All that he did "The evening before surgery" was use a small doppler device to listen for the presence of a fetal heart-beat. This is a totally different type of "ultrasound" device, which unlike a sonogram does not provide visual images (only sounds), and which is a subjective, non-scientific exercise, open to interpretation (e.g. Did he mistake the mother's heartbeat for that of the fetus? Did he record the fetal heart rate (generally about 140/min) as compared to the mother's pulse?)

(F) Ordinarily a suction abortion would have been performed. I am told that the globs of tissue sucked into the vacuum bottle are not distinguishable as placental or fetal tissue until analyzed by the pathologist. Did Eastlund use suction or forceps? What was the total volume of tissue recovered? Was all, or just a

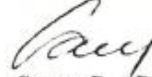
portion of the recovered tissue sent to pathology? We need copies of Eastlund's op report, and the pathology report.

(G) relates to (D) and (E). Specifically, the "images on the screen" and "fetal movement" refer to the sonogram performed (we are now told) two weeks prior to surgery.

(H) The names and mailing addresses of these parties should be requested, as we may wish to correspond with them.

I prefer not to speculate at this time as to possible alternative scenarios, but to await the additional material requested in this letter (which I hope Dr. Eastlund will provide). Either one of us can write to him to request such---I'll assume that you will do so (on CSER letterhead) unless you request otherwise. After reviewing that material with my OB-GYN consultant (as we reviewed the letters), I'll send you my next report.

Sincerely,



Gary P. Posner, M.D.
Internal Medicine

(Assistance from
Jerry N. Stein, M.D.,
Board Certified OB-GYN,
Plant City, Florida)

cc: Jerry N. Stein, M.D.



COMMITTEE FOR THE SCIENTIFIC EXAMINATION OF RELIGION

Box 5 Central Park Station, Buffalo, New York 14215/Tel. 716-834-2

Chairman
of Southern
(USA)

November 26, 1986

University of
South Africa
Pretoria
(SA)

Dr. Marvin Eastlund
3121 E. State Blvd.
Fort Wayne, IN 46815

USA
Religion - USA

Dear Dr. Eastlund:

Thank you for your letter of October 6, 1986.

We appreciate your detailed reply. The incident is most interesting and worthy of a full examination by our organization, particularly our medical consultants.

After full consideration of your letter and discussing with our consultants, we have further questions and hope that you will continue the dialogue so that we can continue to study the incident.

Was the letter distributed by Dr. Dobson printed verbatim? If not, could we please have a full copy of your letter to him.

Could we please have the dates and dosages of the chemotherapy of the patient.

Could we please have a copy of the sonogram report? We would appreciate the date of the report/s, the measurement of the crown-rump length of the fetus and documentation of fetal heart pulsations.

We would appreciate the times and dates of the D & C.

Did you use suction or forceps in the abortion? What was the total volume of tissue recovered? Was all or just a portion of the recovered tissue sent to pathology? We would appreciate copies of the pathology report.

We would also like the names and mailing addresses of the parties involved as we may wish to correspond with them. The names would be kept confidential unless the parties agree on publication.

Sincerely yours,

Paul Kurtz

Chairman
of Southern
Humanists (USA)

PKt:jm

GARY P. POSNER, M.D.
6219 PALMA DEL MAR BLVD. #210
ST. PETERSBURG, FLORIDA 33715

October 13, 1987

Dear Dr. Eastlund,

Bob Basil has forwarded to me his recent correspondence with you. I am pleased to hear that you are willing to supply us with the documentation that we have requested, so that our investigation of this case may continue.

I disagree with your categorization of my article in last winter's issue of Free Inquiry, and would appreciate if you would please point out any passages in which I resorted to "ridicule" rather than facts (except for my speculation in the very last sentence, the explanation for which I provided to you at the time). I can find none.

As for my article about your experience, let me assure you that I have no desire to ridicule you or damage your reputation, but I have been asked to expose your claim to the same degree of critical scrutiny that we would apply to any claim of a "paranormal" event. You may or may not be pleased with the final result, which may or may not conclude that a "miracle" has occurred, but I shall be scientifically objective, and led by the weight of the evidence. We will gladly consider any suggestions that you may have to improve the article, and Bob Basil assures me that you will be afforded an opportunity to respond to it in Free Inquiry, should you so desire.

We look forward to receipt of the information requested in Paul Kurtz's letter of November 26, 1986, including copies of the pertinent medical records (with the patient's name blacked out), as well as the names and mailing addresses of those consultants who concur with your interpretation of the event as "miraculous".

Sincerely,

Gary P. Posner, M.D.

MEMBER:
FLORIDA SKEPTICS (LOCAL CSICOP AFFILIATE GROUP)
COMMITTEE FOR THE SCIENTIFIC INVESTIGATION OF CLAIMS OF THE PARANORMAL (CSICOP)
FAITH-HEALING INVESTIGATION PROJECT, COMMITTEE FOR THE SCIENTIFIC EXAMINATION OF RELIGION (CSER)