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Opening Statements in the McMartin Preschool Abuse Trial

Parent Category: McMartin Preschool Abuse Trial (1987-90)

Opening Statement of Deputy District Attorney Lael Rubin:

"Your honor, ladies and gentlemen, this is a case about trust and betrayal of trust . . . trust placed hands of Ray Buckey and Peggy Buckey. Parents who will testify will tell you. . . they didn't ask ab activities that were going on at the preschool. They didn't piece together the clues they were gettir their children. These parents will tell you they now understand the importance of listening. The cas contains one hundred felony counts of Section 288-A and B, and one count of conspiracy...."

"Betrayal! These innocent children placed their trust in these two teachers and the teachers betray them. . . . One mother observed her two daughters performing oral copulation on each other. Anot mother saw a sore rectum in her child. She will tell you she did not want to go to school, did not wa sit on her father's lap and that she ran through the house singing. 'What you see is what you are/ \ a naked movie star.'

"One mother will tell you that she saw her daughter masturbating with a wooden pole. One mother tell you that her children had nightmares. One mother will tell you that her child had a rectal fissure Another mother
will tell you she saw bloody stools when her child went to the bathroom. Then, the people will ask bring back verdicts on all one hundred counts.... "

Opening Statement of Dean Gits, Defense Counsel for Peggy McMartin Buckey

"Ladies and gentlemen, yesterday, Miss Rubin told you this is a case about trust. I'm here to outlin Buckey's defense. This is not a case about trust. This is a case about victims. It is your job to deci

are the victims, and what I call 'the enemy....' "

"It is the theory of the defense that all these people are victims. There is one more victim I will not but before this case is over you will know who he is."

"You will come to know Mrs. Buckey. You will find out she is not a perfect person. Some say she t too much, that she is nosy. But under all of it you will see a warm and kind heart. You will come to that Mrs. Buckey does not molest children. She loves children. You will come to know that Mrs. Bu does not slaughter animals. The D.A. seems to talk about games and mentions that someone dug lot, and someone left the school with a bunch of boxes, suggesting that pornography was someho secreted. You will come to know exactly what was taken out. Also, you will come to know the mon was spent and the people utilized. It's what I call the nonevidence in this case."

"The people interviewed included 450 children and 150 adults. Also, forty-nine photo lineups were prepared, bank account records were seized and examined. Eighty-two locations were photograp one church was investigated. Three churches were implicated, two food markets, two car washes, airports, and one national park. Thousands of pornographic photographs and movies, confiscated police, were examined in a search for pictures of the McMartin children. Laboratory tests were con of twenty blankets from the school, children's clothing, sheets, rags, and a long list of other items, including mops, kitchen rags, notebooks, soil samples, sponges, animal bones, quilts, underwear, an archeological dig was conducted.

"All of these investigations came up negative. They were looking for secret tunnels, trap doors. Th conducted surveillance of Ray Buckey, his family, and friends, which consumed 135 hours. They consulted with a
satanic expert, U.S. Customs agents. They contacted pedophiles; they checked real estate record utilities records, relatives, friends, associates of the Buckey family, other possible offenders, vehic uncharged suspects.

"They attempted a pornography buy. All of this cost more than one million dollars. The results? Ze believe the money was well spent. It was well worth it. Everything they investigated and found not [this is] defense
evidence! It was well worth it.

"Between August 17 and September 7, 1983 . . . Detective Hoag will tell you she contacted twelve families, and you can imagine what impact that would have. But the result of the investigation was molestation. Peggy's name
was never mentioned. So, as of September 7, 1983, there was no molestation. There was a searc the purpose of the search was to find pornography. So she executed a search warrant. A letter wa out stating that Ray
Buckey was arrested for child abuse. It told the parents 'ask your child. . . .'As of that date, nobody

indicated any molestation was going on at that school.

"Within the CII structure, many things happened that you have to know. . . . And when Kee MacFa said a child had been molested, the mother would talk to another mother. . . . The interviewers gav parent a nine-page questionnaire, and while the parent was filling out the questionnaire, they took child into a separate room and interviewed the child for an hour, or two hours!

"You need to look at that tape carefully. . . . Why did the parents take their children there? They we told that they were experts. They had an impressive building. They had a separate unit called 'Chil Abuse Diagnostic Center.' These people must know what's going on. The parents were told and b they were experts.

"The interviewer in every case walks in the door and says, 'Mr. and Mrs. [Parent], I have some bac for you. Your child has been molested.' You will see the tape. Each and every parent was told, 'Yo to be supportive
of the child.' It is hard to disagree with that, but the result is that it reinforces the child.

"And they wouldn't look at the whole tape. They would fast-forward so that the parents never saw denials. . . the parents were convinced that it happened. . . . The child gets love and affection. You see that they were referred to a therapist. One of those people was an employee of the very agen did the evaluation, connected ideologically. . . .

"The involvement of the CII didn't end there. They brought in an employee of CII, Dr. Heger. She v testify her findings. She will conclude [that] they are consistent with sexual abuse. She will testify t children were molested ....Medical evidence does not exist."

"You will find further reinforcement of the child. . . . It provides a bonding with other families. They been told and they believe their children were molested in these cases.

"You will see from the tape how [a child] testified in the preliminary hearing that she was locked in closet. There are no closets in the preschool!..."

"You will see how easy it is to think that constitutes evidence of molestation. So simple. So easy. will hear of trips away from the school and the problem of maintaining the school while all the teac are away molesting entire classes. The parents did come and go, and yet you will hear of entire cl molested. The 'Naked Movie Star' game. Each of thirteen children spoke of this and not one playe game the same way."

"Why were the Manhattan Beach Police, and CII victims? Because they believed in what they wer doing. They were not entirely victims, because they should have known better.

"There is one more victim, and that last victim is the same as the enemy. And when you get to kno person you will have solved this case."

Opening Statement of Daniel Davis, Defense Counsel for Raymond Buckey:

"Good morning, ladies and gentlemen....I have heard negative things about betrayal of trust. There something very, very wrong about what happened. The truth never really had a chance because c were artificially traumatized by interviewers into falsely believing they were molested.

"The evidence itself will be a source for you to decide. There are people who are primarily respons for what is very wrong in this case. . . . What is the effect of telling parents that their child has beer molested? If the child has not been molested, could you ever convince the parents thereafter that child was not molested? Can winning a trial at all costs be consistent with justice?"

"The evidence. . . will tell you that Ray Buckey was not at the school at the critical times....Ray Buc was not even there at the school when [a boy who accused Buckey] was there. The teachers who died were not accused. Those who are living were all accused.

"There were good reasons for people putting their trust in the school. There will be testimony that games were played. The children played good, wholesome, healthy games. The children went on trips. Parents came along. . . . Songs were sung. There was a music environment. No guns were permitted. . . . There were projects. Individual pieces were put up on the bulletin board. There were drawings and paintings these children did.. . . There were pets. Turtles, rabbits, guinea pigs, dogs, feeders. It was a happy environment.

"The D.A. sent [the families] to CII. CII said they were molested and referred them to therapists. . . were directed to Manhattan Beach Police Department and made statements. . . and parents were go to an agency
that provides funds for victims. That led to payments to CII and therapists. . . . Witnesses were generated. The D.A. is putting on his case with witnesses almost entirely from CII. CII provided the witnesses."

"Ray Buckey is twenty-nine. He was born in 1958 in Hawthorne. He attended the Virginia McMartin Preschool. He is an athletic person. You will find that he has been active in a number of sports. He attended El Camino College for two years. He has coached a variety of sports.

"When he was at home he kept a number of pets. He is not a person who could likely harm an ani They secretly taped conversations between Ray and his mother for hundreds of hours, hoping to h conversations of crimes. Instead, they talked about animals. He began as a teacher at McMartin Preschool in 1981, took classes at UCLA. He became a teacher in 1981 until he was arrested. He living with his parents. The house he lived in was
searched. Ray Buckey rushed to a hiding location and pulled out some pornography and attempte flush it down the toilet. It was not child pornography. It was pictures of nude adults. He was caught to flush it. Nude adults.

"I am Ray Buckey's attorney and I do speak for him, so I would like to tell you that I will be testifyin this case. He will be testifying. And we ask that you keep an open mind and that you await all the evidence in this case, and that he fully intends to reveal all he knows about the case, and that ther be victims on both sides....."

"...Mrs. Johnson told authorities that [her boy] was molested at a time when Ray Buckey was in jai gave no testimony at the preliminary hearing. He was interviewed on videotape by Dr. Gloria Powe That videotape has disappeared."

"....We were told that they were experts, that they had expert credentials. . . . Kee MacFarlane's or credentials were a driver's license and a welder's license."

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