

Warning: Satanists may spread AIDS

by Jeffrey Steinberg

A Satanic sect run by an active duty U.S. Army Reserve officer may have been responsible for infecting over one hundred children with AIDS.

On April 22, the U.S. Army base at the Presidio near San Francisco sent out letters to an undisclosed number of parents advising them that their children should be tested for AIDS. The children were all suspected victims of rape by a pedophile ring that operated out of the Child Development Center on the Presidio base during 1985-86. One of the prime suspects in the case, according to the letter, was "rumored" to have tested positive for the AIDS virus. According to media accounts, that suspect was Gary Hambright, a self-described Baptist minister and former daycare worker at the Presidio who was closely linked at the time of the rape spree to Lt. Col. Michael Aquino (USAR), the founder and head of the avowedly Satanic, Temple of Set.

The headquarters of the Temple, Lt. Col. Aquino's Russian Hill home, was raided by the San Francisco Police on Aug. 14, 1987, based on allegations that the home had been the scene of a rape of a four year old girl. In the raid, police confiscated 38 pornographic videotapes, photo negatives, and other evidence that the house had been the hub of a pedophile ring operating in and near the base.

A month later, Hambright was arrested on ten counts of "lewd and lascivious acts" with six boys and four girls ranging in age from three to seven years. The incidents occurred in September-October 1986. At the time, San Francisco police spokesmen said that they believed there were at least 56 children assaulted by Hambright and others. All the children were attending the Presidio daycare center at the time, and all were offspring of either active duty or civilian Army personnel. In April 1988, FBI Special Agent Richard Held of the San Francisco office filed an affidavit stating that "to date, 102 children had been identified as potential victims" of the Presidio pedophile ring. It is presumed that the parents of all 102 of those "suspected victims" were sent the letters.

Aquino and his wife Lilith were never indicted with Hambright. Although several of the children identified the couple

as participants in the rape scenes, some of which were allegedly videotaped by Aquino in the bathroom of his house, and although several children had provided detailed descriptions of the interior of the Aquino house, the reserve officer claimed that he had been in the Washington, D. C. area for the entire year that the rapes had allegedly occurred—taking a military intelligence course at the National Defense University. Although Aquino was posted to the NDU at the time, he did retain his Russian Hill temple/home and frequently traveled back to the West Coast, according to published accounts.

Eventually, the U.S. Attorney in San Francisco dropped the charges against Hambright under mysterious circumstances. The federal prosecutor acknowledges that the children had been sexually assaulted. An undisclosed number of the victims contracted chlamydia, a form of venereal disease that can cause blindness if not promptly diagnosed and treated. However, when Hambright was arrested over one year later, he did not test positive for chlamydia. Doctors and prosecutors admit that chlamydia, once properly treated, leaves no detectable after-effects. Supposedly, the U.S. Attorney's office dropped the prosecution, rather than present a case based solely on the testimony of the children who had been raped.

Hambright was fired from his job at the Presidio daycare center and his current whereabouts are not known.

Lt. Col. Michael Aquino was transferred from the Presidio to the U.S. Army Reserve Personnel Center in St. Louis, Missouri. At the time of the Hambright rampage, Aquino had been the deputy director of reserve training at Presidio. Even in the aftermath of the Presidio scandal, Aquino retained his top secret security clearance.

Asked by *San Francisco Chronicle* reporters John Whittinger and Bill Wallace to comment on Aquino's continued security clearance, U.S. Army Public Affairs officer Maj. Greg Rixon, stated at the time: "The question is whether he is trustworthy or can do the job. There is nothing that would indicate in this case that there is any problem we should be concerned about."

Satan in uniform

By his own accounts, Aquino, in addition to being a practicing Satanist, is a specialist in psy-ops, the use of psychological warfare techniques in a combat environment. A Temple of Set biography describes him as follows:

"Dr. Aquino is High Priest and chief executive officer of the Temple of Set, the nation's principal Satanic church, in which he holds the degree of Ipsissimus VI. He joined the original Church of Satan in 1969, becoming one of its chief officials by 1975 when the Temple of Set was founded. In his secular profession he is a Lieutenant Colonel, Military Intelligence, U.S. Army, and is qualified as a Special Forces officer, Psychological Operations officer, Foreign Area officer, Civil Affairs officer, and Defense Attaché. He is a graduate of the Command and General Staff College, the

National Defense University and the Defense Intelligence College, and the State Department's Foreign Service Institute."

Sometime in the 1980s, Aquino and another Army officer, Col. Paul E. Vallely, co-authored an article submitted but never published in *Military Review* called "From PSYOP to Mindwar: The Psychology of Victory." Praising a 1980 *Military Review* article by Stanford Research Institute affiliate Lt. Col. John Alexander called "The New Mental Battlefield: Beam Me Up, Spock," which advocated widespread use of ESP in military intelligence, Aquino went even further in calling for a new Nietzschean military doctrine of "Mindwar."

"Like the sword Excalibur," he wrote, "we have but to reach out and seize this tool; and it can transform the world for us if we have but the courage and the integrity to guide civilization with it. If we do not accept Excalibur, then we relinquish our ability to inspire foreign cultures with our morality. If they then devise moralities unsatisfactory to us, we have no choice but to fight them on a more brutish level."

If Aquino's doctrine of "Mindwar" sounds remarkably like Nazi invocations, it is no coincidence. Aquino writes that he modeled the Temple of Set on three Weimar-era occult secret terrorist organizations that were antecedents to the Nazi Party: the Thule Society, Vehm, and Ahnenerbe. On Oct. 10, 1983, according to an official Temple of Set document, Aquino staged a Satanic ritual at the Wewelsburg Castle in Bavaria, which he described as follows: "As the Wewelsburg was conceived by Heinrich Himmler to be the *Mittelpunkt der Welt* (Mid-point of the world) and as the focus of the Hall of the Dead was to be the Gate of the Center, to summon the Powers of Darkness at their most powerful locus."

According to former Temple disciple Ronald K. Barrett, by no later than 1982, Aquino was running the sect as an avowedly Nazi organization. "Philosophically he has taken the Temple of Set in an explicitly Satanic direction, with strong overtones of German National Socialist occultism. . . . One fatality has occurred within the Temple membership during the period [May 1982-July 1983], the alleged suicide of a San Francisco attorney who attempted to convince the membership he himself was the incarnation of the Egyptian god Set."

One of Aquino's leading followers in the Temple of Set, Dr. Stephen E. Flowers, a professor of Germanic philology and the history of religion at the University of Texas at Austin, has admitted to interviewers that he is in close contact with the Republikaner Party in the Federal Republic of Germany. The pro-neutralist neo-Nazi Republikaner party is heavily penetrated by Soviet bloc intelligence services. In recent elections in West Berlin, the Republikaner skimmed enough votes from the Christian Democrats to throw a majority to a coalition of the Green Party and the Social Democrats, who now govern the city.

The Church of Satan

Aquino is a protégé of Anton Szandor La Vey, the founder in 1966 of the Church of Satan. A former lion tamer for Clyde Beatty's circus and a police photographer for the San Francisco Police Department, La Vey relaunched the Golden Dawn movement of Aleister Crowley, the notorious British Satanist, ritualistic sexual pervert, and drug addict who migrated to California. La Vey's Church of Satan recruited from the drug-rock counterculture of the late 1960s, founding Satanic covens or "grottoes" in many major cities around the United States. La Vey's Satanic Bible sold over a half-million copies. Such Hollywood celebrities as Jane Mansfield and Sammy Davis Jr., counted themselves among La Vey's disciples.

So did Roman Polanski, the husband of actress Sharon Tate, who was brutally murdered by followers of Charles Manson. Disputed reports place Manson himself in the orbit of La Vey's Church. One Manson Family member, Susan Atkins, worked for La Vey in a San Francisco go-go bar which specialized in Satanic rituals.

In 1975, Aquino took over the Church of Satan, changing its name to the Temple of Set, after the Egyptian god of evil, leaving La Vey to continue his public relations antics on behalf of Satanism, but apparently putting the movement under military discipline. Today, law enforcement officials have only the vaguest idea of how many hard-core followers Aquino has. Usual estimates range between 50-100, mostly concentrated in the military and on universities—probably a gross underestimate.

Out of his new base of operations in St. Louis, Aquino maintains a nationwide computer data base and bulletin board called "BaphoNet." Thousands of Satanists, and would-be initiates (referred to by law enforcement specialists as "dabblers") organized into local covens, or some running Satanic and New Age bookstores, access a daily flow of information and marching orders through their personal computers. In addition, Aquino and the Temple of Set are an integral part of an international Satanic underground movement. One center of that underground is the Sorcerers Apprentice bookstore and mail order house in Leeds, England, which maintains an active mailing list of over 40,000 readers. British law enforcement officials believe that Christopher Bray, the manager of the bookstore, is also involved in money laundering through the sale of Satanic artifacts. These officials suspect that the trade is a cover for white slavery rings servicing the growing super-rich Satanic elite, who often overlap with secret lodges of international Freemasonry.

According to law enforcement sources, even before the April 22 letters from the U.S. Army to parents of the Ham-bright victims, the Pentagon had reopened its investigation into Aquino and the Temple of Set, even temporarily lifting Aquino's top secret clearance. A Pentagon spokesman refused to either confirm or deny that report in a call from *EIR* on May 1.