

It had taken just under an hour to be seated in the outer office of Superintendent Eugene Amundson of the Indiana State Health Department, and Thomas Boyd reflected the ease of his trip. The drive east on I-74 to the by-pass, south to I-70, and then east again brought him to the downtown area before he had realized it. Getting off at the West Street exit, going north on West Street to the campus of Indiana University-Purdue University at Indianapolis, and turning west again on Michigan Avenue brought him to the State Health offices located next to the Student Union building of IUPUI. Boxes and file cabinets lined the hallway of the old facility, as the move to the new State office building next the Capitol building was forthcoming. Boyd thought to himself that he wished he could move this old building to Crawfordsville to replace the offices he and his people occupied. A twinge of jealousy popped into his mind as he knew the state boys always got the best, and county boys like him had to make due. He knew if he was successful in this latest venture, then maybe he could make the trip her every morning, or relocate to the big city and become a state boy himself.

It had been a long, hard climb for Thomas Paine Boyd. Since graduating from Indiana University in Bloomington with the degree of Bachelor of Arts in Sociology in 1981, this forty-two year old started with ideals of helping society in general, and families in particular. Then came his first job as a Welfare caseworker in his home county of Montgomery. He had been the only male in the office with ten other caseworkers. The load of cases was unbearable, with each worker pressed to the extreme of their capabilities. Other than the usual reports of child abuse or neglect from hospitals, doctors, teachers, principals, and other mandatory reporters, there were the endless hot-line lists to greet them each morning from ex-wives, ex-husband, neighbors, family members, and even those who used the Welfare Department as a means to get back at an enemy. Very quickly Tom had become disillusioned with it all. After sorting through the hot-line calls, driving all day, having to work many nights just to catch people home, and having a job where he could see resentment towards him from nearly every person with which he spoke, his \$17,000 per year job had gotten old really fast. Then one day his superior let him in on the secret. "We can't have quotas around here, Tom," she had told him. "The public just wouldn't stand for it. However, if you don't reach certain goals, you might as well forget about advancement." Suddenly and purposely, his entire attitude towards his work changed. His first goal had become to have his superior's job, at \$26,000 per year. In order to do this, he became a professional at finding the most abuse cases of anyone on staff. He learned the easy ways to get ahead. All he needed to do was use the way the child protection laws were set up, with the accused having to prove their own innocence. Boyd did not have to prove their guilt, only make the accusations, built on whatever evidence he could manufacture. Usually the accused, not understanding that the child abuse legal system was inapposite to historical justice systems, gave Boyd all the information he needed by trying to defend themselves to him. The whole process was foolproof. Everyone would forget those who were falsely accused in the same way no one remembers a fortune teller's many predictions, but only those which are correct. Within two years he had his first goal. He was in charge. No more would he travel all day

in his car just to make ends meet. More importantly, he could afford a new car, a home, and other prestigious ways to keep his wife happy. This meeting today could help him reach new goals.

Boyd looked around the office and pictured this being his own someday as the secretary brought him back to reality with, "Mr. Boyd, Mr. Amundson will see you now." Rising, he made his way through an oak door with a gold nameplate, engraved with DR. EUGENE S. AMUNDSON, SUPERINTENDENT.

"Ah, Mr. Boyd," said the man as he came from behind the desk to greet the visitor. "It is a pleasure to finally see you in person. I'm pleased you could come on such short notice, but this is the only time all parties could get together on this issue. The others are already in the conference room. This way, please."

Boyd followed Amundson through an adjoining door to the office and into a room with a large conference table, around which were twelve plush chairs. Three of the chairs were already occupied at the other end of the room. Three briefcases occupied the table and legal pads were being written on when those seated looked up at the entering pair.

"Don't get up. Everybody, this is Tom Boyd, the head of Montgomery County Welfare over in Crawfordsville. Tom, this is Russell Durik, head of Marion County Welfare. To his right on the end is Anna Hyde-White of the State Welfare Department, Day Care Division, and to her right is Victor Venchenzo, Attorney for the State Welfare Department. Have a seat, Tom."

"Tom, did you know that there are over fifty Day Care centers being run in Indiana without any regulation whatsoever?" The question came from Ms. Hyde-White, catching Boyd off guard, not knowing whether to respond with an answer or not. He chose to simply nod his head and give a slight "huh".

The woman continued, "And that's just the ones we know about. That speaks of approximately one thousand of Indiana's children in unlicensed, unregulated Day Cares. That means that we don't know if the employees of these centers are well-trained, or ex-child molesters. We can't regulate a specific diet to ensure the poorer children are getting proper nutrition, and we don't know what they are being taught, or not taught for that matter."

"In other words, Tom," inserted Amundson, "Anna's department is losing over three million dollars in state and federal aid because of these renegade centers, she's overspent her budget already this year, and she's ticked."

That statement brought smiles from around the table. Even the lone woman had a hard time trying to keep her serious, convincing face.

"That's not fair, Gene. Everything I've said is true, and you know it." The woman smiled at the superintendent.

"Anna, Tom here knows the game. I've checked his dossier, and few people have had more success at playing the Chins game."

Each person there knew that since the Child in Need of Services, or Chins legislation came along, their caseworkers have enjoyed best success of any state agency.

Durik continued. "Tom, as you are probably aware, churches make up about eighty percent of these centers, and about ninety percent of the children involved. One large Day Care is located on the south side of this city with almost one hundred kids in it. Of course, it's in a church."

Anna jumped in again. "They all hide behind the First Amendment separation of church and state. Here we are trying to get legislation passed to regulate grandmothers babysitting in homes, and we have these church Day Cares with over a hundred in them."

"We have them in our country, too," stated Boyd, shaking his head frustratingly. "Just this morning one of my caseworkers paid a visit to one of these. That's why I called Dr. Amundson, uh, Gene, to find out what the State's policy is towards this types of Day Cares."

"Tom, that is precisely why we called you here this afternoon," said Amundson. "Russell would be foolish to go after that large church on the south side. Victor, you explain."

"Well, it is very simple, actually. A lion does not go after the largest and strongest gazelle. It waits until it sees an obscure, weak, or young gazelle which has strayed from the herd. When it finds one it systematically stalks it and kills it, thus, weakening the whole herd. The Day Care in your county that you told Dr. Amundson about; it is new and undoubtedly small. If we could make an example out of it, we could set a precedent for all others, including the large ones."

The woman spoke again. "Even if you cannot close it down, you can make it look bad enough to help legislation pass this term."

"Why not just wait for the laws to pass, then?" asked Boyd

"A State Senator friend of mine is sponsoring this legislation," said Hyde-White. "He could use all the thunder we can supply him when this bill is proposed."

Venchenzo and Amundson traded smiles at what Anna said, knowing this Senator to be much more than just a friend to the Welfare woman.

"I see. Well, I'll do whatever is required to help out in this," replied Boyd.

"Just get Victor the court precedent, get our Senator friend the much he needs, and get Anna a larger budget." Smiles were directed at Boyd as Amundson spoke. "I can guarantee this, Tom. Help us now, and we will help you later."

"Fine. How should I go about this legally?"

Boyd found out why Venchenzo was the specialist in this area. "Number one, make sure every move you make can be seen as protecting the children. Then you can get away with just about any tactics you want. Number two; make sure the Sheriff is in on everything. Use the Sheriff as the buffer between you and the church and the media. Number three, let the prosecutor handle the case, and we will help if need be. Number four; remove the pastor of the church. If he is the one in trouble, then the people will divide. When the people divide, the Day Care closes, and we have our legislation."

"It sounds easy enough."

"Tom, we'll be behind you all the way."