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CATHOLIC CHURCH 'SCARED HOLLYWOOD INTO DUMPING HIS DARK MATERIALS'

SAM ELLIOTT, THE AMERICAN ACTOR, HAS ACCUSED THE CATHOLIC CHURCH OF SCARING HOLLYWOOD PRODUCERS INTO SHELVING THE REMAINING TWO FILMS IN PHILIP PULLMAN'S FANTASY TRILOGY, HIS DARK MATERIALS.

CO-STAR SAM ELLIOTT SAID HOLLYWOOD HAD BEEN COWED INTO DROPPING THE SEQUELS BY THE CATHOLIC CHURCH. HE SAID EXECUTIVES AT NEW LINE CINEMA HAD SHELVED PLANS FOR THE TWO FILMS, "THE SUBTLE KNIFE" AND "THE AMBER SPYGLASS," DESPITE THE "INCREDIBLE" COMMERCIAL SUCCESS OF THE FIRST IN THE TRILOGY, THE GOLDEN COMPASS; STARRING NICOLE KIDMAN AND DAKOTA BLUE RICHARDS.

THE FILM, STARRING NICOLE KIDMAN, DANIEL CRAIG AND EVA GREEN, GROSSED MORE THAN $380 MILLION WORLDWIDE FOLLOWING ITS CHRISTMAS 2007 RELEASE. BUT AFTER A CONCERTED CAMPAIGN BY PARTS OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN THE US, IT ONLY TOOK A MODEST $85 MILLION THERE.

(MY COMMENT: OUR FREEDOMS WILL CONTINUED TO BE HACKED AWAY UNTIL ALL OF US ARE DOWN ON OUR KNEES AND FACING BETHLEHEM - 5 TIMES A DAY).

BILL DONOHOE OF THE CATHOLIC LEAGUE FOR RELIGIOUS AND CIVIL RIGHTS LED THE ATTACK, CALLING ON PARENTS TO BOYCOTT THE FILM, SAYING IT WOULD PROMPT CHILDREN TO GO AND BUY PULLMAN'S NOVELS, WHICH HE DESCRIBED AS "ATHEISM FOR KIDS".

(WELL BILL, I GUESS RELIGIOUS AND CIVIL RIGHTS ONLY GOES IN ONE DIRECTION, HUH? THAT WOULD BE - YOUR DIRECTION).

THE TRILOGY SEES A YOUNG HEROINE CALLED LYRA BATTLING AGAINST A MANIPULATIVE ORGANISATION CALLED THE MAGISTERIUM, WHICH MANY HAVE INTERPRETED AS BEING BASED ON THE CATHOLIC CHURCH.

(MY COMMENT: IF YOU HAVE SEEN THE MOVIE - YOU'LL SEE THAT IT PRETTY ACCURATELY REPRESENTS THE TRUTH. THAT IS WHY THEY ARE DOING EVERYTHING IN THEIR POWER TO KEEP PEOPLE FROM SEEING IT).

THE MESSAGE IN THE GOLDEN COMPASS WAS TONED DOWN COMPARED TO THAT IN THE BOOK, PUBLISHED AS NORTHERN LIGHTS IN BRITAIN, TO APPEASE THE AMERICAN RELIGIOUS RIGHT.

(MY COMMENT: SO MUCH FOR APPEASEMENT - IT DIDN'T WORK).

HOWEVER, THAT DID LITTLE TO DAMPEN THEIR PROTESTS AND IT NOW APPEARS THAT CAMPAIGNERS' TACTICS HAVE WORKED, WITH NO SIGN THAT THE FILMS WILL BE MADE.

(MY COMMENT: "MIGHT MAKES RIGHT" - TRUE YESTERDAY, TRUE TODAY, TRUE ...?).

ASKED WHAT HAD HAPPENED TO THE TWO REMAINING FILMS, ELLIOTT, 65, WHO PLAYED A TEXAN AERONAUT CALLED LEE SCORESBY IN THE FILM, SAID: "THE CATHOLIC CHURCH HAPPENED TO THE GOLDEN COMPASS, AS FAR AS I'M CONCERNED. "IT DID 'INCREDIBLE' AT THE BOX OFFICE, TAKING $380 MILLION. INCREDIBLE. IT TOOK $85 MILLION IN THE STATES."

HE ADDED: "THE CATHOLIC CHURCH ... LAMBASTED THEM, AND I THINK IT SCARED NEW LINE OFF."

(OH COME ON SAM, THE CATHOLIC CHURCH WOULD NEVER RESORT TO MAFIA TACTICS).

MR DONOHOE SAID HE WAS "DELIGHTED THAT THE BOYCOTT WORKED".

(MR. DONOHOE IS DELIGHTED BY MANY THINGS: THE KILLING OF ABORTION DOCTORS, THE REFUSAL TO HELP DISEASED HUMANS WITH STEM CELLS, DENIAL OF CIVIL RIGHTS TO GAYS AND ATHEISTS, THE CURRENT MILITARY "CRUSADE" AGAINST MUSLIMS, AND ESPECIALLY THE UNLIMITED SUPPLY OF FRESH, YOUNG BOYS MADE AVAILABLE TO HIS PRIESTS).

"I KNEW IF WE COULD HURT THE BOX OFFICE RECEIPTS HERE, IT MIGHT PUT THE BRAKES ON THE NEXT MOVIE," HE TOLD THE EVENING STANDARD.

"THE REASON I PROTESTED WAS THE DECEITFUL ATTEMPT TO INTRODUCE CHRISTIAN CHILDREN TO THE WONDERS OF ATHEISM IN A BACKDOOR FASHION AT CHRISTMAS TIME.

(SO BILL, THIS MOVIE WOULD HAVE BEEN OKAY WITH YOU IF IT HAD COME OUT DURING EASTER? OR FATHER'S DAY? OR LABOR DAY? I DON'T THINK ANYONE OUTSIDE YOUR FLOCK IS GULLIBLE ENOUGH TO BELIEVE THAT CHRISTMAS HAD ANYTHING TO DO WITH YOUR BOYCOTT.

AS FOR INTRODUCING CHRISTIAN CHILDREN TO THE WONDERS OF ATHEISM - THAT IS WHY SO MANY OF YOU HOME SCHOOL YOUR CHILDREN. YOU DO EVERYTHING IN YOUR POWER TO PREVENT THEM FROM LEARNING ABOUT OTHER RELIGIONS, FROM LEARNING ABOUT SCIENCE, AND FROM LEARNING FROM OTHERS THAT THEY DO NOT HAVE TO BE TERRIFIED OF INVISIBLE GHOSTS.

HOW DO YOU EQUATE RELEASING A MOVIE, TO INTRODUCING ATHEISM THROUGH THE BACKDOOR? I THINK YOUR PRIESTS ARE PROBABLY "THE EXPERTS" WHEN IT COMES TO INTRODUCING CHILDREN TO IDEAS "THROUGH THE BACK DOOR").

"EVERYONE AGREES THE FILM VERSION WAS NOT ANTI-CATHOLIC, BUT THAT HARDLY RESOLVES THE ISSUE. THE FACT IS THAT EACH VOLUME IN THE TRILOGY BECOMES INCREASINGLY ANTI-CATHOLIC."

(AND BILL, HERE IN AMERICA WE CAN'T ALLOW THE FREEDOM TO EXPRESS ANTI-CATHOLIC VEIWS, CAN WE? THAT WOULD BE UNAMERICAN. WE MUST KEEP OUR DAMN MOUTHS SHUT, AND JUST MAKE SURE THAT WE KEEP SENDING YOU OUR YOUNG BOYS).

PHILIP PULLMAN ADMITTED THE CHANCES OF THE FILM TRILOGY BEING COMPLETED WERE SLIMMING.

(PHILIP, YOU SHOULD BE GRATEFUL THIS ISN'T 300 YEARS AGO, OR YOU WOULD BE GETTING FITTED FOR YOUR OWN STAKE).

HE SAID HE HAD HEARD NOTHING FROM WARNER BROS, WHICH ABSORBED NEW LINE LAST YEAR, BEFORE ADDING: "BUT I'M ONLY THE WRITER AND WE ARE ALWAYS THE LAST TO KNOW".

RE-CASTING THE MAIN ROLE OF LYRA WOULD BE NECESSARY BUT ARTISTICALLY PROBLEMATIC, HE SAID, AS ENGLISH ACTRESS DAKOTA BLUE RICHARDS WHO PLAYED LYRA WAS NOW 15.

HE SAID THE CATHOLICS' CAMPAIGN "MUST HAVE PLAYED A PART" IN THE PROJECT BEING SHELVED.

(PHILIP: WITH AS MUCH POWER AND MONEY AS THE CATHOLICS HAVE AT THEIR DISPOSAL - JUST BE GRATEFUL THAT YOUR FAMILY IS STILL OKAY).

ALTHOUGH PULLMAN OPENLY DESCRIBED HIMSELF AS AN ATHEIST, HE DENIES HIS DARK MATERIALS IS ANTI-CATHOLIC. RATHER IT IS A WARNING ABOUT WHAT RELIGION CAN DO "WHEN IT GETS ITS HANDS ON THE LEVERS OF POWER".

(PHILIP: THOSE WARNINGS HAVE GONE UNHEEDED NOW FOR ABOUT ... 2,000 YEARS. THEY ALREADY HAVE THEIR HANDS ON THE LEVERS OF POWER - AND THEY WILL NOT VOLUNTARILY GIVE THAT UP. ONLY WHEN THE MASSES ARE TRAINED IN CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS WILL THEY HAVE THE TOOLS NECESSARY TO FREE THEMSELVES).

EARLIER THIS YEAR THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY, DR ROWAN WILLIAMS, PRAISED PULLMAN'S WORK FOR TAKING THE CHURCH "SERIOUSLY" AT A TIME WHEN THEOLOGY WAS "DRIFTING OUT" OF THE MAINSTREAM.

(MY COMMENT: IT IS NOT DRIFTING OUT OF THE MAINSTREAM. RELIGION IS VERY MUCH IN CONTROL OF THE WORLD - AS IT HAS ALWAYS BEEN).

NEW LINE HAS DECLINED TO COMMENT.

(MY COMMENT: WELL THEN - YOU CAN'T ACCUSE THEM OF STUPIDITY - THEY KNOW WHEN TO KEEP THEIR MOUTHS SHUT).

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THE SCIENCE SEGMENT

(EXAMPLE OF SCIENTIFIC BLUNDER)

SUPERNOVA STAR TOO CLOSE FOR COMFORT

ASTRONOMERS HAVE IDENTIFIED A TICKING TIME-BOMB IN SPACE THAT LIES PERILOUSLY CLOSE TO THE EARTH, THEY REVEALED TODAY. THE STAR, CALLED T PYXIDIS, LOOKS SET TO EXPLODE AS A SUPERNOVA WITH THE FORCE OF 20 BILLION BILLION BILLION MEGATONS OF TNT. BUT IT LIES LESS THAN 3,260 LIGHT-YEARS AWAY IN OUR OWN GALAXY - CLOSE ENOUGH IN COSMIC TERMS FOR A BLAST TO HAVE A POSSIBLY DEVASTATING IMPACT ON OUR PLANET.

IN THEIR NEWS RELEASE, THE SCIENTISTS SAY THAT A THERMONUCLEAR EXPLOSION AT SUCH A CLOSE DISTANCE WILL "FRY THE EARTH", DUMPING AS MUCH GAMMA RAY ENERGY AS 1,000 SOLAR FLARES AT ONCE. IT WILL STRIP AWAY THE OZONE LAYER, ALLOWING DEADLY RADIATION TO BOMBARD ALL LIFE.

THE STAR, IN THE SOUTHERN CONSTELLATION OF PYXIS, THE COMPASS, HAS ERUPTED BEFORE IN COSMIC BURPS AS A NORMAL, LESS POWERFUL NOVA. EXPLOSIONS WERE SEEN AT APPROXIMATELY 20-YEAR INTERVALS IN 1890, 1902, 1920, 1944 AND 1967. BUT IT IS 44 YEARS OVERDUE FOR ITS NEXT BLAST AND ASTRONOMERS DO NOT KNOW WHY.

NEW STUDIES USING THE INTERNATIONAL ULTRAVIOLET EXPLORER SATELLITE SHOW THAT IT IS MUCH CLOSER TO US THAN PREVIOUSLY THOUGHT AND IS A DOUBLE-STAR SYSTEM WITH ONE STAR LIKE THE SUN AND A SMALLER DENSER STAR CALLED A WHITE DWARF.

THE WHITE DWARF IS STEADILY BECOMING MORE MASSIVE AS GAS FLOWS ONTO IT FROM ITS COMPANION. THE SCENE LOOKS SET FOR IT TO REACH A CRITICAL STAGE - CALLED THE CHANDRASEKHAR LIMIT - WHERE IT SUDDENLY COLLAPSES UNDER ITS OWN WEIGHT TRIGGERING AN UNIMAGINABLY POWERFUL THERMONUCLEAR EXPLOSION THAT DESTROYS IT COMPLETELY. THE STAR WILL THEN BECOME AS BRIGHT AS ALL OTHER STARS IN THE GALAXY PUT TOGETHER AND SHINE LIKE A BEACON HALFWAY ACROSS THE UNIVERSE.

THIS CATASTROPHIC EVENT, CALLED A TYPE IA SUPERNOVA, WILL RELEASE TEN MILLION TIMES MORE ENERGY THAN A NORMAL NOVA. THE DOOMSDAY SCENARIO WAS DESCRIBED TODAY BY ASTRONOMERS EDWARD M. SION, PATRICK GODON AND TIMOTHY MCCLAIN FROM VILLANOVA UNIVERSITY, PHILADELPHIA, AT A CONFERENCE OF THE AMERICAN ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY IN WASHINGTON.

THEY SAID THAT PICTURES TAKEN BY THE HUBBLE SPACE TELESCOPE OF SHELLS OF MATERIAL THROWN OFF IN PREVIOUS ERUPTIONS FITTED THE VIEW THAT STAR IS SET TO GO SUPERNOVA.

IT SOUNDS SCARY STUFF. AND THE ASTRONOMERS' NEWS RELEASE SUGGEST IT WILL HAPPEN "SOON". BUT I CONTACTED THE LEAD RESEARCHER, DR ED SION, AND HE TOLD ME: "AT THE ACCRETION RATE WE DERIVED, THE WHITE DWARF IN T PYXIDIS WILL REACH THE CHANDRASEKHAR LIMIT IN TEN MILLION YEARS. I HOPE THIS ALLEVIATES ANY WORRY BY READERS." SO NO NEED TO LOSE ANY SLEEP!

(MY COMMENT: THIS STORY HAS BEEN DEBUNKED. THE MATHEMATICS USED BY THE ASTRONOMERS TO ESTIMATE THE ENERGY WAS INCORRECT. ADDITIONALLY, MOST SCIENTISTS AGREE THAT EVEN 3,200 LIGHT YEARS IS TOO FAR AWAY TO HAVE ANY SIGNIFICANT IMPACT ON THE EARTH).

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ABROAD

HAITI

TRAVOLTA SENDS SCIENTOLOGY MINISTERS TO SAVE HAITIANS

ANY HAITIANS WHO FEEL A LACK OF L. RON HUBBARD'S TEACHINGS IN THEIR LIVES ARE IN LUCK. A 168-SEATER PLANE CHARTERED BY THE CHURCH OF SCIENTOLOGY LEFT FOR HAITI LAST NIGHT CARRYING MEDICS, AND SOME 80 VOLUNTEER MINISTERS WHO WILL ASSIST THE INJURED WITH SCIENTOLOGY TECHNIQUES AND "SPIRITUAL FIRST AID," SAID A STATEMENT FROM THE ORGANIZATION. THE MISSION IS APPARENTLY BEING FUNDED BY SCIENTOLOGIST JOHN TRAVOLTA. "I HAVE ARRANGED FOR A PLANE TO TAKE DOWN SOME VOLUNTEER MINISTERS, SUPPLIES AND MEDICS," SAID THE ACTOR.

THOSE TECHNIQUES INCLUDE "TOUCH ASSIST"—TOUCHING SUFFERERS WITH ONE FINGER NEAR THEIR INJURY, AND PARTIAL RE-ENACTMENT OF THE TRAUMA. THE MEDICAL PROFESSIONALS WILL CERTAINLY BE WELCOME, MARINA HYDE WRITES IN THE GUARDIAN. AS FOR THE REST, "NOTHING SHOULD FEEL MORE APPROPRIATE RIGHT NOW THAN GADDING ABOUT PORT-AU-PRINCE OFFERING SURVIVORS THE CHANCE TO BE HOOKED UP TO AN E-METER," SHE SCOFFS.

(MY COMMENT: I DON'T DISAGREE WITH HYDE, HOWEVER, AT LEAST MANY "REAL DOCTORS" WILL BE GOING. I TOO WOULD HAVE RATHER SEEN ALL THE 168 SEATS GO TO "USEFUL" PEOPLE. BUT IF TRAVOLTA IS WILLING TO PAY FOR IT, I GUESS HE IS ENTITLED TO SEND SOME OF HIS "MINISTERS" AS WELL. IF THE ALTERNATIVE IS FOR THE PLANE TO STAY HOME, THEN AT LEAST SOME HELP IS BETTER THAN NONE - AND BY SOME HELP, I AM ONLY REFERRING TO THE "MEDICS" - NOT THE "MINISTERS").

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FAMOUS QUOTES

MIKHAIL BAKUNIN (1814 - 1876) 62 YEARS

HE WAS A WELL-KNOWN RUSSIAN REVOLUTIONARY AND THEORIST OF COLLECTIVIST ANARCHISM. HE WENT TO SCHOOL IN MOSCOW TO STUDY PHILOSOPHY AND BEGAN TO FREQUENT RADICAL CIRCLES WHERE HE WAS GREATLY INFLUENCED BY ALEXANDER HERZEN. BAKUNIN GAINED GREAT INFLUENCE WITH RADICAL YOUTH IN RUSSIA, AND ALL OF EUROPE. BAKUNIN IS REMEMBERED AS A MAJOR FIGURE IN THE HISTORY OF ANARCHISM AND AN OPPONENT OF MARXISM, ESPECIALLY OF MARX'S IDEA OF DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT. HE CONTINUES TO BE AN INFLUENCE ON MODERN-DAY ANARCHISTS, SUCH AS NOAM CHOMSKY.

"ALL RELIGIONS WITH THE GODS, DEMIGODS, PROPHETS, MESSIAHS, AND SAINTS, ARE THE PRODUCT OF THE FANCY AND CREDULITY OF MEN

WHO HAVE NOT YET REACHED THE FULL DEVELOPMENT AND COMPLETE POSSESSION OF THEIR INTELLECTUAL POWERS."