



The Burning Bush—Online article archive

A little girl's murder that shames the nation



Anna and her great Aunt who murdered her

Nothing illustrates the moral decline of our society more clearly than the cruelties inflicted upon children. From the legalised murder of the unborn child by abortion to the torture and murder of youngsters by adults, oftentimes their parents or close relatives. The latest incident was highlighted in the conviction for murder of the guardians of an eight-year-old girl who died after being kept in a bath, beaten and fed scraps of food like a dog. A jury convicted Marie Therese Kouao and her boyfriend Carl Manning of child cruelty at the Old Bailey court. Both defendants have been sentenced to life imprisonment.

Little Anna Climbie was repeatedly beaten, burnt with cigarettes and scalding water, tied up and forced to sleep naked in a bath with only a bin liner to cover her. Her body was covered in 128 injuries. The Ivory Coast schoolgirl, whose real name was Adjo, was sent away by her family in 1998 in the hope of a better life.

The Home Office pathologist who examined her body, Doctor Nathaniel Cary, said it was the worst case of abuse he had seen in his career. Anna died of hypothermia in February 2000. Her great-aunt Kouao claimed Anna's injuries were caused by witchcraft.

Detective Inspector Keith Niven who led the investigation into Anna's death said: "During the investigation I've been horrified by the evidence I have discovered." "It beggars belief how these two defendants could inflict such suffering on an eight-yearold child."

The customary inquiry has been instigated by Health Secretary, Alan Milburn. Social services and the police have been criticised for not stepping in to save Anna, despite having several opportunities to do so. During the trial, the court heard not only of Anna's torture at the hands of her carers, but of the repeated failure by officials - police, social services and medical staff - to protect her. Anna was seen by medics at two London hospitals, covered in scars and fresh bruises and, in one visit, with her scalp severely scalded. But after police and social services were contacted, it was decided Anna suffered scabies and other injuries were accidental. Anna was sent home to live with her torturers. Eight police officers in the child protection team are now the subject of an internal investigation.



Scripture is fulfilled before our eyes in this case. "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good," 2 Timothy 3:1-3.

Those clerics who have led the nation away from God's Word are the real culprits in this affair. It is they who are deemed guilty by God.