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20/20

April 5, 1984

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"A Case of Multiple Personality"

STANHOPE GOULD, LYNN MURRAY Producers
SYLVIA CHASE Correspondent

"What Happened to the Children?"

DANNY SCHECHTER Producer
TOM JARRIEL Correspondent
Investigative Producers: Glenn Silber and Peter Greenberg

"Too Good to Be True?"

ABIGAIL ROCKMORE Producer
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Special thanks to Florida Department of Law Enforcement
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April 5, 1984

HUGH DOWNS: Good evening. I'm Hugh Downs. And this is 20/20.

ANNOUNCER: On the ABC Newsmagazine, 20/20, tonight:
The Columbus, Ohio, community is outraged by the release of this man.

WOMAN: Women of Ohio, be warned that there is a known rapist free on the streets that has been released.

ANNOUNCER: Billy Milligan was acquitted because the court believed he had multiple personalities.

SYLVIA CHASE: What happened?

BILLY MILLIGAN: Adalina, she— she committed the rapes.

ANNOUNCER: Sylvia Chase, with some critical questions in "A Case of Multiple Personality."

Saigon, April 1975: Operation Baby Lift, the rescue of Vietnamese orphans. But the plane full of babies crash landed.

SUSAN DIRGE: It was just a crashing bumping, and it was endless.

ANNOUNCER: For the survivors, anguish, possible brain damage, and years in the courts.

CHARLES WORK: It is a travesty that this case has not been resolved, even as of this date.

ANNOUNCER: Tonight Tom Jarriel, with the aftermath of Operation Baby Lift: "What Happened to the Children?"

Have you ever had a phone call like this?

"MIKE JOHNSON": Guess what. Your business has been selected by our computer to win one of three fabulous prizes.

ANNOUNCER: Consumer correspondent John Stossel goes to the source of the calls, follows some people who responded, and looks at the prizes, to see if what was advertised was "Too Good to Be True?"

DOWNS: Up front tonight, crime and our perception of justice. Sylvia Chase is here with a fascinating story right on that subject. You know, strange events keep testing our faith in the justice system in this country. Convicts on parole commit murder; felons are on the streets after short sentences; and increasingly, we are baffled and enraged by this sort of thing. The people near Columbus, Ohio, are facing this dilemma now. There's a man there who raped three women and offered a bizarre defense which was successful. Sylvia, tell us about it.

SYLVIA CHASE: That man was found not guilty by reason of insanity, because he had multiple personalities. You remember a few months ago, Hugh, I did a story about multiple personalities.

DOWNS: Yes.

CHASE: They are people who have many personalities within one body, and when one personality is in control of the body, the other personalities don't know what's going on — they're asleep.

DOWNS: So it seems.

CHASE: Well, Billy Milligan was found not guilty by reason of insanity. He did spend, oh, five years institutionalized, being treated for this. Now he's adjudged to be well, and he's back out. And that is what has the people of the Columbus area upset.

WOMAN [at meeting]: Women of Ohio, be warned that there is a known rapist free on the streets that has been released.

CHASE [voice-over]: In February, Columbus judge Jay Flowers heard how local women felt about Milligan's release.

NEWSCASTER: Today's decision by Judge Flowers represents a sweeping victory for the women in—

CHASE [voice-over]: For local reporters, it was a fresh episode in an old story. Local news programs have reported each new development, and newspaper headlines have reflected community fears of the man who kidnapped, raped and robbed three women. After Milligan's release was made public, community leaders stated their opposition.

ROBERT ALLEN, sheriff: You know, as far as I'm concerned, I don't even want him in my county. If Judge Flowers of Columbus wants him loose, let him turn him loose in his back yard, not mine.

NORA PALMATIER, president, Columbus NOW: He should not be out. He is a menace to women; he should be in prison, where rapists belong.

CHASE [voice-over]: But Billy says he is no longer a rapist, that he is a changed man.

BILLY MILLIGAN, multiple personality: I know now what right and wrong is, and I do care about what is right and wrong.

CHASE [voice-over]: We interviewed Billy Milligan three times over the course of a year. He was still in custody when he told us that his problems began when he was very young.

Mr. MILLIGAN: I was— I was raped, I was beat around, I got tied up and different things.

CHASE [voice-over]: On this central Ohio farm, says Billy Milligan, his stepfather Chalmer Milligan repeatedly beat him and raped him. Chalmer denies raping his stepson, but refused to talk to us. Thirteen years later, at age 22, Billy Milligan, having already served time for robbery, was under arrest again, now facing three charges of rape. The prosecutor had an open and shut case.

BERNARD YAVITCH, county prosecutor: I had eyewitness identification, I had fingerprints. I had property of the victim found in Mr. Milligan's possession.

CHASE [voice-over]: But Milligan insisted that he had no memory of the rapes. In these psychiatric tapes made after Milligan's arrest, he claimed he had always had blank spots in his life, a symptom reported by all multiple personalities.

Mr. MILLIGAN [psychiatric tape]: I do things and I don't remember them 'cause I'm asleep. And people tell me I do things. Bad things.

CHASE [voice-over]: The experts who examined Billy say they found 24 separate personalities. By the time we interviewed him, he was no longer changing from one personality to another, but we are able to show you psychiatric tapes made while he was in two different institutions. There was an alternate personality named Tommy, 16 years old, an escape artist.

"TOMMY" [psychiatric tape]: It still bugs me when they call me Billy. But I don't say much. I don't say anything, really . . . But I'm not Billy.

CHASE [voice-over]: And Arthur, born in London, who spoke with an English accent and supervised the various personalities.

"ARTHUR" [psychiatric tape]: I think the earliest part was when the first one came. The first one here was Christine.

CHASE [voice-over]: Then there was Danny, who's 14, and very nervous.

"DANNY" [psychiatric tape]: I usually don't notice it until somebody points it out to me, that one of my legs is bouncing or something.

CHASE [voice-over]: And Ragen, a 23-year-old Yugoslav with a heavy accent, supposedly with superhuman strength.

"RAGEN" [psychiatric tape]: None of them are violent. I am only violent one. But only for a reason.

CHASE [voice-over]: After meeting several of these personalities, Billy's attorneys used his disorder as a legal defense.

GARY SCHWEIKERT, public defender: Billy didn't do this. Billy wasn't here; Billy was someplace else at the time. The person being tried did not commit any crime, he was not there.

CHASE [voice-over]: Milligan says his personalities were fused, or combined, by treatment, which restored his memory. He claims he now knows that when the rapes were committed, one of his 24 personalities was in charge of his body. This is Milligan's painting

of that alternate personality: a 19-year-old Lesbian named Adalena.
[interviewing] Can you tell me, now that you know, what happened?

Mr. MILLIGAN: Adalena, she— she committed the rapes.

CHASE *[voice-over]*: Psychiatrist Frederick Milkie is one of two doctors who testified that Billy was faking. Milkie treated Milligan at a state mental hospital for three months, but not as a multiple personality case.

FREDERICK MILKIE, psychiatrist: Why didn't I treat him for multiple personality disorder? I said, the same reason I wouldn't treat him for syphilis, 'cause he didn't have it.

CHASE *[voice-over]*: However, most of the doctors who testified agreed with Cornelia Wilbur, the leading expert in the field of multiple personality.

[interviewing] How soon did you know Billy was a multiple?

CORNELIA WILBUR, psychiatrist: Oh, I would guess 20 minutes after the start of the interview, because by this time I'd already talked to three different people, and they had come spontaneously.

CHASE *[voice-over]*: And Dr. David Caul, who has been treating Billy all these years, is sure it's no hoax.

DAVID CAUL, psychiatrist: Sometimes when I interview patients, I'm like a prosecutor. I cross-examine — I don't what to be had, either.

CHASE *[voice-over]*: Billy was found not guilty by reason of insanity, and sent to Athens Mental Health Center for treatment. Since even the prosecution was convinced, Columbus judge Jay Flowers said he had no choice.

Judge JAY FLOWERS, Franklin County: The medical data that I had, without exception, was to the effect that he did have this multiple personality and that he in effect qualified as being insane under our statutes.

CHASE *[voice-over]*: The decision angered state representative Don Gilmore.

Rep. DON GILMORE, (R) Ohio: My concern is that no one was punished for the crimes that were committed.

Mr. MILLIGAN: I don't think anybody really understands what punishment is, until they've been through therapy, until they've been worked with by psychiatrists.

CHASE *[voice-over]*: Now that Billy's out on the street, the debate about whether or not he had multiple personalities has reopened.

Rep. GILMORE: The man should have an Academy Award.

CHASE: What?

Rep. GILMORE: He should have an Academy Award.

CHASE: For what?

Rep. GILMORE: For the performance he's put on.

CHASE: Is it a hoax? Has he been faking it? Without playing psychiatrist, we decided to investigate Milligan's story. We asked his sister about Billy's childhood. She remembered talking to someone who didn't sound like Billy.

KATHY MORRISON, sister: Well, when we were younger, he had this English accent. What I thought was, at first, as children we were playing, I can see now, looking back, that games don't last three and four days at a time.

CHASE *[voice-over]*: Kathy also confirmed Billy's stories of childhood abuse inflicted by their stepfather, Chalmer — abuse which, doctors say, could cause multiple personalities.

Ms. MORRISON: Chalmer was physically violent. Billy— Billy was just the object of a lot of his violence.

CHASE: Billy Milligan says the nightmare at home followed him to school. And there is evidence of that in the school records. In 1970, when Billy was 15, the psychologist here at Stanbury School reported, "On several occasions, Bill couldn't remember where he was, couldn't remember where his belongings were. During these episodes, he is depressed and cries."

[voice-over] This best-seller was written about Billy's life, and author, Professor Daniel

Keyes, did his own investigation. *[interviewing]* Didn't you doubt?

DANIEL KEYES, author: Every Monday morning, I'd wake up and say, "Oh, my God, I don't believe it. It's incredible." But in the 10 months I interviewed him on audio tape — as I say, some hundreds and hundreds of hours — I discovered I never got an inconsistency.

CHASE *[voice-over]*: But our investigation has uncovered one possible inconsistency. This is a letter in Arabic received by Dan Keyes while Billy was at Lima State Mental Hospital. Billy says his alternated personality named Arthur wrote it.

[interviewing] Dan Keyes, who wrote the book about you, received a letter in Arabic.

Mr. MILLIGAN: That was from Arthur.

CHASE: Now, does this mean that Arthur wrote it?

Mr. MILLIGAN: Yeah.

CHASE: Are you sure?

Mr. MILLIGAN: Arthur wrote it, yeah.

CHASE: Let me suggest to you that maybe Arthur was cunning and clever enough to find somebody to write the letter in Arabic for him.

Mr. MILLIGAN: In that dungeon, in Lima? No Arabs in Lima.

CHASE *[voice-over]*: In fact, this Arab was at Lima while Billy was there. Aiad Kallini, an Egyptian, a murderer, was being treated there for schizophrenia. Kallini says he knew Billy, and picked him out of some photos for us.

AIAD KALLINI, former mental patient: Yes, I recognize this American, is him — this one. This one, that's him.

CHASE *[voice-over]*: Kallini also says he wrote the letter to Dan Keyes for Billy.

Mr. KALLINI: Bill Milligan, he were used to ask me to help him to learn some Arabic, Egyptian language, and also he were used to ask me if I can help him translate some English letter to Egyptian. I wrote it to him.

CHASE *[voice-over]*: Milligan says Kallini is lying, and at any rate, Dr. Caul says Billy's been treated, and he's ready for a trial release, because even if Billy lied about the Arabic letter, it doesn't mean he wasn't a multiple personality.

[on camera] Milligan's problem is that even people who believe in rehabilitation become uneasy when someone like Billy is released in the neighborhood. No matter what the doctors say, many here are convinced that he's dangerous.

Ms. PALMATIER: Nobody knows about multiple personalities, quite frankly. People don't even agree if they really exist. We don't know if they fuse together, will they ever become unfused.

Mr. MILLIGAN *[to dog]*: Get her, bring her in. Take her in, Caesar.

CHASE *[voice-over]*: Dr. Caul says independence will help Billy's recovery, but there are no guarantees.

Dr. CAUL: You never really know. Our job is to take as intelligent a guess — and make no mistake about it, that's what we do — hopefully, it's a guess borne of knowledge, experience, background, including some hunches, intuition, a lot of hard work. And you make the best guess you possibly can make.

CHASE *[voice-over]*: Since Billy's release, he's been living on a farm a few miles from the Mental Health Center. His life isn't easy. He says he can't earn a living from the farm, and no one will give him a job.

Mr. MILLIGAN: The doctors told me that I have to get out on my own, and I have to start a new life, and I have to be responsible, I have to pay my bills, I have to get a job — I have to do everything that a normal citizen would do. And they didn't tell me that it was going to be like this. They didn't tell me that — that now that you're so famous, no one's going to want anything to do with you, no one's going to care about you. They're not going to want to take you in and help you, because you were branded, and they don't want to have a bad name as well.

CHASE: One thing that seems pretty clear. Hugh, Milligan is under the kind of pressure that

would be difficult for a person without a history of mental illness.

DOWNS: I'm sure that's true, and I'm not without sympathy for him, but I am uneasy about his being loose. You know, it's not—it doesn't bother me that he was acquitted by reason of insanity; that's a legitimate plea. But even if it's not appropriate to punish such a person, it's hard to accept the idea that it's appropriate to release him.

CHASE: Well, that's the way the insanity plea seems to be; it doesn't always make sense to the community.

DOWNS: Thank you, Sylvia. Well, next on the broadcast, the promise, the hope, of Operation Baby Lift, babies rescued from Vietnam. But it turned to tragedy. Tom Jarriel, with the story of what's happened to those children nine years later. Right after this.

[commercial break]

DOWNS: Tonight the tormented lives of children, nine years after a plane crash. It was called Operation Baby Lift, and I remember painfully that big cargo plane, a C-5A, taking off from Saigon loaded with babies, Vietnamese orphans, and then crashing minutes later. That crash devastated the hopeful beginnings of America's evacuation effort. It was initiated right in the White House. Tom Jarriel is here; and Tom, you were ABC's White House correspondent at the time.

TOM JARRIEL: Hugh, I remember very well President Ford making the announcement in the White House briefing room. It was an announcement of sanity and reason, during the final stages of a war that really didn't have much of either.

DOWNS: No. And there was a real warm glow of feeling in America. I think, over Operation Baby Lift. And then of course the shock of the crash.

JARRIEL: We have to remember half those babies survived, and they made it to new homes in the West. For them, since then life has been one long battle. This is the untold story, Hugh, of what those kids have been through since the horrors of the crash. Their story actually begins with a war, just as it was ending.

[television commercial]

ANNOUNCER: *The Vietnam Experience*. Who were they fighting? What were they fighting for?

JARRIEL [voice-over]: Vietnam is not a war we can easily forget. TV ads bombard us with powerful images now used to sell war histories.

ANNOUNCER: So call toll free and take another look at *The Vietnam Experience*.

JARRIEL [voice-over]: Public television documentaries bring back old memories. But one important chapter has faded from public awareness. Do you remember these kids, the children of Vietnam, many orphaned in a long and bloody conflict. Today, nine years later, some of the smallest war victims are involved in legal warfare against the very government that wanted to save them. They are survivors of an airlift that misfired. Some of those orphans are caught up in an ongoing tragedy involving a former president, a defective plane, a major corporation, the U.S. Air Force, and a battle against brain damage. Little Anh was one of them.

ANH TRAER, crash survivor: I just had—some of my brain cells were crushed, that's all.

JARRIEL [voice-over]: "Crushed brain cells"—why Anh today, and scores of other orphans, may be brain-damaged, is what this 20/20 investigation is all about. April 1975: the last month of the Vietnam War. The Ford administration announces Operation Baby Lift, a humanitarian effort to rescue Vietnamese orphans. In Saigon, Ambassador Graham Martin reportedly calls it "marvelous propaganda, which could be useful to persuade a reluctant Congress to vote more arms money to keep the war going."

President GERALD FORD [San Diego, California, April 3, 1975] These 2,000 Vietnamese orphans are all in the process of being adopted by American families. This is the least we can do, and we will do much, much more.

JARRIEL [voice-over]: In Saigon, American child care agencies are desperately trying to find a plane to evacuate their orphans. The President comes up with the very symbol of American power, the world's largest airplane, already bound for Saigon.

Pres. FORD: I have directed that C-5A aircraft, and other aircraft especially equipped to care for these orphans during the flight, be sent to Saigon.

JARRIEL [voice-over]: It took that presidential order for the Air Force to assign the Lockheed-built C-5A Galaxy, embroiled for years in controversy. Huge vehicles could roll through its giant cargo doors, when they worked; the locking system frequently malfunctioned. In 1971, an Air Force report even called it "a monster system that could lead to a catastrophe." A successful rescue mission would bolster the plane's image, but as we will see, this cargo plane was not especially equipped. But others nearby were. ABC News has learned there were four fully-equipped medical planes in the Philippines, which could have been used but weren't.

PHIL WISE, crash survivor: We had a 141 on the ground, and three DC-9s, which were medical birds.

JARRIEL [voice-over]: Phil Wise, a sergeant in the Medical Corps, was on the C-5A. He was briefed on how the mission was supposed to end.

Mr. WISE: We knew that President Ford was going to meet us at Travers Air Force Base, and grab the first baby. It was like a big publicity deal then, but unfortunately it didn't work out that way.

JARRIEL [voice-over]: That's why this C-5A, number 80-218, was dubbed "The President's Plane." At 12:35 p.m., it arrived in Saigon. Its huge cargo doors opened to unload howitzers and other weapons of war. Its new cargo, babies, were loaded on board, a total of 248 children, many fathered by American GIs. Nurse Christine Lievermann was on the flight.

CHRISTINE LIEVERMANN, crash survivor: We went up several flights of stairs to get to the top section of the plane. Upstairs there were not enough seats in the plane. Many of the children were two children to a seat.

SUSAN DIRGE, crash survivor: I was taking care of two aisles of children, and on one side, there were six infants in three seats. The babies just kept filling on up.

JARRIEL [voice-over]: Downstairs, the older kids and the adults had to make do on blankets stretched out on the steel floor. Cargo straps substituted for seat belts.

LY VO, crash survivor: It was pretty scary, too.

JARRIEL [voice-over]: Among the children was Ly Vo.

LY VO: I was on the bottom of the floor of the airplane. A lot of us was crying.

Ms. LIEVERMANN: Children screaming, hollering, carrying on. Children aren't cargo; children are people, they belong in seats, they don't belong on the floor.

JARRIEL [voice-over]: More than 150 people were crowded into the barely-lit hold for what was to be a 20-hour flight. There were no life rafts downstairs, no toilet facilities, not enough air sickness bags, which would quickly be needed. What's worse, there was virtually no oxygen for emergencies. Oxygen might have been added, as it was to this other cargo plane, but it wasn't.

Mr. WISE: There wasn't any type of fallout masks given to us, and we were just without oxygen.

JARRIEL [voice-over]: The flight crew did their best to hurry things along, to keep plane 80-218 to a schedule and a rendezvous with the President. On the flight deck, even before takeoff, there were doubts about this plane's suitability. The cockpit recorder taped the crew's concern about exactly what would soon happen. In the actual audio tape obtained by 20/20, the crew discussed taking a high-altitude flight.

FLIGHT CREWMAN [on tape]: ... we're up at 370 [37,000 feet], and we have a rapid decompression, we're gonna lose someone ...

JARRIEL [voice-over]: They noted the lack of emergency oxygen, saying without it, they "ain't gonna get 'em all out in time."

FLIGHT CREWMAN [on tape]: ... those babies, they ain't gonna get 'em all out in time.

FLIGHT CONTROL: Loadmaster, do not stop the operation, do not.

FLIGHT CREWMAN: Two-one-eight clear for takeoff.

JARRIEL [voice-over]: It was 4:03 p.m. The giant C-5A, number 80-218, took off. Twelve minutes later, the nightmare began.

Ms. LIEVERMANN: I was in the galley in the rear of the plane, filling up baby bottles, and there was a loud explosion.

Mr. WISE: There was a loud explosion all at once, and I looked back and saw the doors falling off like they really never was attached, and blankets and debris flying throughout the aircraft, bodies flying, tumbling, and a lot of screaming.

JARRIEL [voice-over]: At 23,772 feet, four miles high, the door-locking system fails. These drawings suggest what happened. The huge rear door falls off, leaving a gaping hole.

Ms. DIRGE: Thoughts of a crash landing were in my mind.

Ms. LIEVERMANN: At that point I just assumed that we were all going to die.

JARRIEL [voice-over]: There was an explosive decompression. The flying door severed the control cables. The air inside the plane was sucked out. There was no oxygen at that altitude.

Mr. WISE: And our crew members that were back there at the time, they all went out of the aircraft at that time.

JARRIEL: You saw some personnel actually sucked out of the aircraft?

Mr. WISE: I sure did.

JARRIEL [voice-over]: Within seconds, Phil Wise and the others in the cargo hold passed out. He described it like suffocating.

Mr. WISE: Well, I felt like I was gasping for air and could not get air.

LY VO: It hurt really a lot, like, I don't know — can't really describe it, it just that I couldn't stand the pain any more, in both ear.

JARRIEL [voice-over]: Upstairs, some of the babies got very quiet.

Ms. DIRGE: I put a mask on as many children as I could, although there were twice as many children as there were masks.

Ms. LIEVERMANN: The masks in my section of the aircraft disintegrated in my hands, they fell apart. I found one mask that worked and I used that mask for myself, and I shared it with a baby who was turning very blue.

Ms. DIRGE: The kids were passing out. The children at the time of descent were unconscious.

Ms. LIEVERMANN: I was reassured — I was told, "Don't worry. This happens to these airplanes all the time, and everything comes out okay."

JARRIEL [voice-over]: The pilot, with only control of the engines left, turns the plane around, heading back towards Saigon. This is the very route he flew, as shown in this Air Force film. Just two miles from the runway, the plane crashed-landed here, as these tire tracks show, at 309 miles an hour, twice the speed of a normal landing. The plane couldn't stop, bounced back into the air, crossed the Saigon River, and hit an embankment. The wings went one way, the tail another.

Ms. DIRGE: My ear came off completely. It was sewn back on. My back was broken in four places.

Mr. WISE: They found me hanging upside down, with my leg twisted around a wire, my eyeball hanging out, my head laid open, multiple lacerations all over my body.

JARRIEL [voice-over]: To this day, the force of the impact remains in dispute. Lockheed experts say the descent was no worse than an amusement park ride.

Ms. LIEVERMANN: Well, the person that described that wasn't on board. No, it was not an amusement park ride.

JARRIEL [voice-over]: A Pentagon official called the landing "smooth."

PENTAGON OFFICIAL [press conference April 1975]: The plane made a smooth touchdown, bounced across a river, and a fire started.

170 *Plushes
World Record*

Ms. LIEVERMANN: And there was smoke and a lot of fumes. We impacted the ground with a terrific force.

Ms. DIRGE: It was just a crashing, bumping, and it was endless.

Ms. LIEVERMANN: Many of the seats were ripped up off the ground and turned over with children still strapped in them. Pieces of the— *[breaks down]* sorry.

JARRIEL [voice-over]: This scene cannot be disputed. Carnage, bodies strewn all over a rice paddy. One hundred fifty-five people perished; incredibly, 149 of the orphans survived.

LY VO: I woke up in a— a rice field. I guess that was what it was. I— my whole body covered with mud.

Ms. DIRGE: There were babies— just babies crying, crying.

LY VO: My body was pain everywhere.

JARRIEL [voice-over]: A South Vietnamese soldier said bitterly, "It's nice to see you Americans taking home some souvenirs. It's too bad some of them broke today." Those who lived were airlifted to the airport, rushed from there to a nearby hospital. Naomi Bronstein, a Canadian and a tireless child care worker, helped load the C-5, but didn't take the flight.

NAOMI BRONSTEIN, child care worker: Kids were just on the floor. The babies, the small babies, were upstairs; the bigger kids were downstairs with personnel, and there was nothing to hold onto. The bottom half of the plane came off.

JARRIEL [voice-over]: A month later she recaptured the images in a poem she called:

Ms. BRONSTEIN [voice-over]: Who ordered the death plane?/ I should have died on that plane/Why was I saved?

JARRIEL [voice-over]: Some of the children were badly hurt, but many showed no visible signs of injury, and were only given a cursory medical exam. In contrast, the crew was rushed to a military hospital for intensive observation. ABC correspondent Ken Kashiwahara remembers.

KEN KASHIWAHARA, ABC News: I remember feeling somewhat relieved because they were alive. But what struck me then was that the children were almost lifeless. They were in sort of a catatonic state.

JARRIEL [voice-over]: What the children looked like then would become important later in understanding the extent of their injuries. A massive effort went into fixing the plane's problems; the children, many of whom were flown to the United States the day after the crash, had their problems ignored.

[on camera] This was their gateway to a new life, the Presidio, army headquarters in San Francisco. *[voice-over]* President Ford did greet the Vietnamese children as they passed through here en route to their new families in the United States and overseas. But something went undetected that day: it would take weeks, indeed months, before it would be realized that some of the youngsters had experienced brain damage.

Dr. STEVEN FELDMAN, plaintiffs' medical expert: I believe the plane crash caused this by exposing these infants to a variety of conditions. A degree of lack of oxygen; a degree of what's called deceleration, or slowing down; a degree of explosive decompression; an impact, fumes — a number of factors in that crash which we will probably never fully understand caused the damage and insult to their brains.

JARRIEL [voice-over]: The families who adopted the children, like the Traers of Colorado, weren't told about what happened on the plane. It took years for most to find out what was wrong with their adopted child.

BOB TRAER, father of survivor: We really discovered it in second grade, when Anh began to cry in school.

JARRIEL [voice-over]: Anh has serious learning and emotional problems. She is now on medication and is doing much better in a special school.

Mr. TRAER: I didn't really want to see what was there. I didn't really want to know. I thought perhaps if we just were loving parents, we could deal with all the problems. But that's a — that's a fallacy.

JARRIEL [voice-over]: Medical exams, like this one on crash survivor Dirk Morrill, were

part of the preparations for the lawsuits filed on the children's behalf. *[on camera]* As the children were examined, doctors began finding a range of symptoms of MBD, minimal brain dysfunction. That's a syndrome that requires very close family support along with extensive medical examination. Two studies pointed to the air crash in Vietnam as being responsible for this brain damage. First, an unusually high proportion of the orphans who experienced that plane crash had symptoms of MBD. A second study of orphans who came to this country without going through such a plane crash showed no such abnormally high incidence of MBD.

Dr. YEOU CHENG MA, plaintiffs' medical expert: The symptoms are many. Some of the major ones are hyperactivity, difficulties with concentration, short memory, difficulties getting along with other children.

JARRIEL *[voice-over]*: Those MBD symptoms can develop from other causes, including malnutrition, heredity and physical abuse, factors not necessarily associated with the C-5 crash. But another family, the Reynolds, also of Colorado, illustrate how the crash could have done the damage. They have very different twins: James was in the crash, his brother Nathan was not.

LINDA REYNOLDS, mother of survivor: I could say, "Nathan, I want you to stay in the basket," and he would sit down. And I would say the same thing to James, and he wouldn't respond.

JARRIEL: Was this just the normal hyperactivity of a youngster, or was it more than that?

ALLEN REYNOLDS, father of survivor: Well, they wanted to run tests, but they couldn't. He was so hyperactive, they couldn't even test him.

Mrs. REYNOLDS: His attention span when he was five was about 20 to 30 seconds.

JARRIEL *[voice-over]*: James Reynolds, too, maintains mental stability through drugs.

Dr. FELDMAN: My experience, where we've been able to provide an extensive proper treatment, the outlook can be very good, in that children feel good about themselves, they're able to be self-supporting adults, they're able to lead normally productive lives. Where that's not done, they wind up in courts, institutions, prisons.

JARRIEL *[voice-over]*: Already one of these children is institutionalized, others suicidal. MBD children who look normal today, may develop problems in later life. To finance their medical costs, the parents sued Lockheed for negligence in building the plane. Lockheed brought the Air Force, which flew it, into the case.

[on camera] The slow, tedious and expensive litigation process has been taking place now for eight years here in the U.S. district courthouse in Washington. *[voice-over]* The air crash case, though, is one of the longest, most complex pieces of litigation ever heard in this district. Since 1976, there have been 12 trials, 163 hearings, and several rulings by the Court of Appeals. Legal experts estimate Lockheed and the government has spent nearly \$10 million defending this case.

CHARLES WORK, legal guardian: It is a travesty that this case has not been resolved, even as of this date.

JARRIEL *[voice-over]*: Washington attorney Charles Work was appointed by the court to act as guardian, representing the children's interest.

Mr. WORK: These people have in effect perpetrated, I believe, a terrible outrage on these children, because these children could be better off for the rest of their life if they had gotten treatment earlier.

JARRIEL *[voice-over]*: Federal judge Lewis Obendorfer criticized Lockheed for legal delays. Lawyers for the children, shown in these 20/20 courtroom sketches, charged a cover-up. Legally they obtained documents which, they claim, support allegations of misconduct motivated by the company's need to keep winning lucrative government contracts. They contended the Air Force and Lockheed were partners in suppressing the truth.

Mr. WORK: We have demonstrated that the government took tons and tons of photographs — and photographs are very important in this matter — photographs of the crash scene and destroyed them. Contrary to government regulation —

JARRIEL: Could it have been a bureaucratic snafu?

Mr. WORK: This was more than a bureaucratic snafu, and that issue now is before the court and being litigated.

JARRIEL *[voice-over]*: Lockheed and the government declined to be interviewed for this report because of the continuing litigation. So far the court has supported their position that there has been no deliberate cover-up or impropriety. In extensive court briefs Lockheed also denies the claims of brain damage, arguing that if the kids have medical problems, they were likely caused by the war and childhood deprivation.

Mr. WORK: We have to have five or six very expensive medical experts testifying on behalf of these children. We can't show these children's damage on an X-ray; it's not like a broken bone.

JARRIEL *[voice-over]*: In 1981, Lockheed and the government, without admitting liability, in effect conceded the crash survivors now in America did have problems. They agreed to an out-of-court settlement for \$13.5 million.

Mr. WORK: What do you pay for a damaged brain? What do you do for a child who, the rest of his life, will not be able to perform at full potential?

JARRIEL *[voice-over]*: After legal and other expenses, each family was left with little more than \$100,000 to meet their child's lifetime medical needs.

TOM MORRILL, father of survivor: It is terribly expensive. Typically, doctors cost \$100-plus per hour; his medication that he is on right now, how much is that per month?

PAM MORRILL, mother of survivor: It is approximately \$50 a month, perhaps a little bit more than that.

JARRIEL: This is a long-term process, too—

Mr. MORRILL: Oh, yes.

Mrs. MORRILL: Oh, yes.

JARRIEL: —several months or years?

Mrs. MORRILL: Oh, absolutely, yes.

Mr. MORRILL: It'll go on for years. His schooling is in excess of \$10,000 a year.

JARRIEL *[voice-over]*: The Vietnamese Baby Lift tragedy might have ended there, except less than half of the survivors were part of the settlement. Only orphans who resettled in the U.S. were covered. There are 70 children with families in Canada and Europe still seeking damages.

MARGARET WOOLLEY, mother of survivor: It's like living on top of a volcano — we never know when it's going to erupt.

JARRIEL *[voice-over]*: Margaret Woolley is British. Her family adopted Tam, a Vietnamese child who was on the C-5A. Now Mrs. Woolley and other European families are bringing their claims before the American courts.

Mrs. WOOLLEY: Well, they were part of it just as much as the American children. They suffered the same as the American children. Now all these years have been wasted; we must do something now before it's too late.

JARRIEL *[voice-over]*: The lawyers for the children have offered to settle the European cases on the same basis as the Americans. Lockheed and the U.S. government have said no. Instead, the lawsuits could take another 10 years.

Mr. TRAER: They were victimized by the long, drawn-out process. More money has been spent on attorneys in this issue than probably has been spent on any of the children. And there was no reason for that.

JARRIEL *[voice-over]*: The survivors, marked first by the terror of the crash, now fight mental problems and a slow, tedious legal battle. So the legacy of horror of the C-5 crash lives on. Only for those who died that day has the chapter ended.

[on camera] Just this week in Washington, Hugh, the first case of a European orphan, Magli Maupoint, went to trial, and a jury will have to decide if she was brain-damaged in that crash, and if so, how much to award her.

DOWNES: Thank you, Tom. Well, next, has this happened to you? You are told that you

have been selected for fabulous prizes. Consumer correspondent John Stossel tells you what you might really expect, in his continuing series, right after this.

[commercial break]

DOWNS: They are in there every day, in back rooms, working the telephone, calling people all over the country — maybe you — offering wonderful prizes, if only you'll respond to their sales pitch. Well, your letters alerted us, and we have asked our professional skeptic, consumer correspondent John Stossel, to look into your complaints. John?

JOHN STOSSEL: Hugh, I've received more complaint mail about this scam than any other this year. The mail comes from dentists, doctors, lawyers, mechanics — mostly people who run small businesses — and collectively, they're getting conned out of millions of dollars every month. It all starts with a phone call. *[phone rings]*

"MIKE JOHNSON," boiler-room operator *[simulation]*: Hi, John Stossel? Have I got some great news for you. My name is Mike Johnson, and I'm with a major pen manufacturer right here in Los Angeles. Guess what. Your business has been selected by our computer to win one of three fabulous prizes.

STOSSEL *[voice-over]*: This is a demonstration of the scam sales pitch the post office arranged for us. The postal inspector is reading from a confiscated sales script.

"Mr. JOHNSON": All you have to do is buy 100 of our high quality pens, and then you're a guaranteed winner of one of those three fabulous gifts I just read off to you.

STOSSEL *[voice-over]*: The scams are run from places called boiler rooms. They're called boiler rooms, because in the 1920s, they did this in basements, where the boiler was. Today a boiler room means a room full of con artists making telephone sales, one right after the other, all day.

WOMAN, boiler room operator: Your business has been randomly selected by our computer to win three fabulous prizes: a video recorder, a color TV, or an all-expense-paid trip to Hawaii. How does that sound? Great?

STOSSEL *[voice-over]*: In this scam, the sales people tell you you've won a contest. To get your prize, all you have to do is buy a few high-quality pens. They'll even put your name on them, so you can advertise your business.

JEAN CRAWFORD, business owner: The man on the phone said that Papermate pens were sponsoring this promotional. It was a strike-it-rich promotional; they were paying for the prizes.

STOSSEL *[voice-over]*: Jean Crawford is an interior decorator. She works out of her home in Menlo Park, California. When the salesman told her she won a \$500 or \$5,000 free trip, she ordered the pens.

Ms. CRAWFORD: Total bill was \$291.55. That was for 200 pens, and when the package came, it came priority mail, it came COD. It looked very authentic. And when you— when I opened it, there were six Frisbees.

STOSSEL *[voice-over]*: In Mesa, Arizona, city council candidate Lester Pearce ordered the pens.

LESTER PEARCE, business owner: I paid \$300 and I got a knife set that was sent to me as a complimentary gift, because they quote, said, that their presses were broke down and couldn't print the pens.

STOSSEL: The post office says the set's worth less than \$10. Still, that's more than some people get. The majority of people who don't get the pens, get this. A box filled with sheetrock and newspaper, nothing more.

I'm in the basement of a postal inspector's office in California, where they've collected just a sample of the phony packages they've confiscated. Some are very impressively packaged. It says "important, enjoy your gift" and to make it look official, it's got an American flag on it. Inside, same old piece of sheetrock and some newspaper. Does anybody ever get the pens? Yes. Some people do, but the pens are no bargain either.

[voice-over] Mark and Alice Bassett run a sign-making shop in West Stockbridge, Massachusetts. Mark carves the signs, Alice paints them. They ordered the pens, but they were suspicious, so they told us about it. And when the box arrived at the local post office COD,

we went with them as they went to pick up their package and their prize. They thought they might win a TV set.

MARK BASSETT: Ah-hah, it's a big box. Might be a TV.

POST OFFICE CLERK: Have to sign for this. One fifty-one fifty-five.

Mr. BASSETT: Twenty, 70, 90...

STOSSEL *[voice-over]*: Since it's COD, you don't get to open the box until after you pay. And what was in the box?

Mr. BASSETT: Okay, I feel some pens.

STOSSEL *[voice-over]*: Well, that makes them luckier than the others. But are the pens really worth \$150?

Mr. BASSETT: Let's check the pens.

STOSSEL *[voice-over]*: Not really, they're just hard-tipped markers. The company that makes them sells them for only 25 cents. The Bassetts felt ripped off, but even though they're still at the post office, they may not return the pens. That's why shipping COD is so terrific for con artists. The customer is stuck. The postal inspectors know about it. Inspector Jerry Gaines, of Burbank, California.

JERRY GAINES, postal inspector: They come back to the post office and say, "Look, this is not worth \$239" or whatever they pay. "I want my money back." And we have to explain to them we're the delivering carrier only. It's not our money; we remitted that money back to the sender.

STOSSEL: You know they've been ripped off, but you can't do anything for them. Isn't that frustrating?

Mr. GAINES: It's very frustrating for us, because we're almost— we feel as if we're in complicity with the operators in delivering this thing to them.

STOSSEL: And what about the prizes? Are they really that good? You may get a promotion like this one, that shows a Whirlpool washer and dryer, a Colecovision home video set, an RCA projection TV, or a grandfather clock with a pendulum, encased in glass that adds elegance to any room. Well, if you get a prize, guess which one you get: you get the grandfather clock, and it's just a piece of garbage. We got one; this thing isn't glass, it's plastic, and it's flimsy. It's just a battery-powered clock, it's not even connected to the pendulum. And to make it worse, to get the prize you have to send in \$49 for shipping and handling. You can buy a clock like that for \$29. Another prize that's been offered is this thing. They say it's an Apple II home computer. It looks good in the brochure, but what prizewinners really get, say the postal inspectors, is a little hand calculator, like this one. You can buy them for \$5. But the most common prize is a vacation certificate. That's what the Bassetts got. The certificate invited them to stay at a real estate development in Jamaica. But food wasn't included, air fare wasn't included, and it wasn't free.

Mr. BASSETT: It says \$59 after it, which they didn't tell us about.

STOSSEL *[voice-over]*: Plus a \$30 reservation fee. The Florida Department of Law Enforcement told us you can buy this vacation more cheaply on your own.

Mr. BASSETT: What a ripoff.

1st MAN, boiler room operator: Vacation is literally nothing. It's a stay in some B class motel or hotel, food, drinks—

STOSSEL *[voice-over]*: This man has worked these kinds of boiler-room scams for 20 years. He agreed to talk to us if we disguised his voice and face.

1st MAN: It's a total scam from A to Z.

STOSSEL *[voice-over]*: Is anything ever done about it? Not that often. These people were working in a boiler room in Texas. We taped them when I reported on another scam two years ago. The problem in cracking down on boiler room con artists is that consumer law works so slowly, they can usually make their money and move on before anything bad happens to them.

1st MAN: They'll usually change names and move locations to avoid postal inspectors or any type of other heat. They'll move their bank account from one bank to another bank to

avoid the returns on their credit cards. As a rule, if a company is open six months, it's open a long time.

STOSSEL *[voice-over]*: But sometimes law enforcement agencies do move quickly enough to catch boiler rooms in the act. On this day in Florida, they finally caught up with and raided the place that sold the pens to the Bassetts. We tried to videotape that, but the man officials say is the owner, Sal Mangiamelli, told us to get out.

SAL MANGIAMELLI, boiler room operator: You're on my property!

REPORTER: What is your name?

STOSSEL *[voice-over]*: But a little later he changed his mind and did agree to be interviewed.

[interviewing] Sounds like you're a con man, and you just call these businesses and rip 'em off.

Mr. MANGIAMELLI: Well, first of all, we don't rip anybody off, okay? We have a legitimate business, we're an advertising company —

STOSSEL: Wait a second—

Mr. MANGIAMELLI: No, no, if you can ask me a question, now wait for my answer, okay?

STOSSEL: Sure.

Mr. MANGIAMELLI: We're an advertising company, and we use an award as an incentive to buy. We've got a lot of, lot of happy customers. We've got letters from a lot of good customers. And on the other hand, we do have a couple of customers that are mad, too.

STOSSEL *[voice-over]*: And what about the phony prizes? *[interviewing]* It's not a Sony TV, it's not made by Sony.

Mr. MANGIAMELLI: What does that say?

STOSSEL: Sony projection TV.

Mr. MANGIAMELLI: And that's what it is. A Sony—

STOSSEL: You give them a little magnifying glass thing.

Mr. MANGIAMELLI: No, no, no, you're incorrect. I said if someone gets that, it says Sony, they would get a Sony.

STOSSEL: They get a Sony TV?

Mr. MANGIAMELLI: If they were to get a Sony.

STOSSEL: Does anyone ever get the Sony TV?

Mr. MANGIAMELLI: I imagine they do, of course, they have to.

STOSSEL *[voice-over]*: No, they don't, says the Florida Department of Law Enforcement. When they raided the place, this is the only television product they found. It's just a magnifying glass, and it's not even made by Sony.

1st MAN: I've seen owners that went from little as three or \$4,000 investment go to multimillion-dollar businesses in a year or two years. It's not uncommon to have as many as 200, 250 employees in one of these companies.

2nd MAN, boiler room salesman: All I got to say is I'm 23 years old. I got an 11-month old baby at home, I don't rob banks, I don't sell dope, and I don't stand in welfare lines. But I'm a manufacturer's representative, and I sell good products for good prices.

1st MAN: When you're making two, three, four, five, six, \$7,000 a week, every week, you kinda justify in your own mind that what you're doing is okay, because if you don't do it, somebody else will do it. I've seen people laugh all the way to Switzerland with \$5 million.

STOSSEL: That's something for you to think about, next time someone calls you and says "Congratulations, you've been selected as a prizewinner." Also, don't be fooled when they mention brand names like Sony, RCA or Papermate pens. They often use brand names like those to make the pitches sound more legitimate. But none of those companies is connected to any of the scams we've shown you. And one more thing to watch out for, Hugh. These days they're not just selling pens, now they're selling vitamin pills, too.

DOWNS: Vitamin pills — I'll get my own, without prizes. Thank you, John. We'll be right

back.

[commercial break]

DOWNS: I want to end tonight's broadcast with something that Barbara Walters told me earlier this evening. You will recall a few weeks ago, we broadcast a report about the lures that child killers use to attract their victims. Well, a friend of Barbara's in suburban New York told her this story. She said that at her son's school, a little boy was approached by a man in a red car, who said, "Come with me, your mother sent me to pick you up." Well, the boy said, "No, Mommy said I shouldn't go with strangers no matter what they say." Now, here's the point. The boy's mother had seen our program, and had warned her son. And she really believes that warning saved her son's life. That's what we mean when we say we're in touch, so you be in touch. I'm Hugh Downs. Good night.

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