

signal recognizes Ahmad Mohammad al Afghani's event

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Excerpt from 'TO: A Journal of Poetry, Prose + the Visual Arts', Summer 1992:

- * Hounded by the Federal Bureau of Investigation in a bizarre witch-hunt
- * at an expense to the taxpayers of over a million dollars, Sturges had
- * survived an attempt to destroy his life and his work and was now
- * countersuing the agency.
- *
- * Recapitulated briefly, Sturges, who's based in San Francisco, has for
- * years been photographing young people whose families practice nudity.
- *
- * He's done so with his subjects' permission, as well as that of their
- * parents, who often appear in the photographs along with their offspring.
- * Rejecting the use of standard model releases, with their blanket
- * permissions, the photographer chooses instead to request approval
- * from his subjects for each and every exhibition and publication
- * of each and every image --- an exemplary scrupulousness.
- *
- * Then, in 1990, alerted to the "questionable" content of some of his
- * images by a local processing lab, the FBI arrested Joe Semien, Sturge's
- * assistant, invaded the photographer's San Francisco studio without a
- * warrant, and seized all his prints, negatives, records, and equipment;
- * thereafter, without arresting Sturges, or even charging him with
- * anything, they refused to return his property and did everything
- * possible to destroy him personally and professionally by branding
- * him a child pornographer

On September 15, 1991, The New York Times reported that the Feds took the case to a grand jury after 17 months, and they immediately threw it out.

And that "this was unusual because only the prosecution's evidence is presented to a grand jury and they generally return indictments at the Government's request".

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- * It took another mon

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