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Wednesday, 29 August, 2001, 16:16 GMT 17:16 UK

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## Paedophile businessman escapes jail



A paedophile businessman wanted by the FBI has walked free from a British court with a fine.

Jonathan Aslett, 53, was arrested in Greater Manchester after firefighters tackling a fire at his office spotted pornographic images of children.

Aslett was fined £3,250 with £1,000 costs after pleading guilty to 13 charges of making indecent photographs.

The maximum sentence is three years.

Sentencing Aslett at Manchester Crown Court, Judge Stuart Fish said: "I am sure this was a salutary lesson to you and a clear indication of what would happen should you stray again."

Detectives from the Obscene Publications Squad seized a bag from his property which contained indecent pictures of children.

They also found 399 images stored on the hard



Police found 339 obscene images on a computer

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drive of his computer.

## Escape to England

Inquiries revealed Aslett, who runs a software business, was wanted by the FBI in the United States in respect of precisely the same material.

Manchester Crown Court heard the latest arrest occurred in December 2000 when Aslett's office on Dane Street in Rochdale was set on fire.

“  
**You are part of a chain, you are a link in that chain of abuse**

”  
**Judge Stuart Fish**

Firefighters found 27 pornographic pictures of children on his desk.

Miss Tina Landale, prosecuting, said: "There were 399 pictures of children.

"Some involving boys aged nine and 10 in sexual acts.

"There were naked boys on a bed.

"The defendant was arrested and throughout the course of three interviews made no comment."

## 'Corrupting children'

Aslett, who spent the legal equivalent of one month in custody, could now face extradition proceedings to the US unless he voluntarily returns.

Defence counsel Paul Taylor said: "The defendant by his pleas has not been responsible for the distribution of images beyond the confines of his computer.

In sentencing Aslett, Judge Fish said: "You have pleaded guilty to offences contrary to legislation designed to protect the interests of the worldwide community's most vulnerable - namely children.

"You and people with your tastes create a demand

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for this material which other people are only too willing to meet.

"They do this by corrupting and abusing children.

"I accept you are not so to speak immediately involved but you are part of a chain, you are a link in that chain of abuse.

"It is clear... that perhaps the maximum penalties should not be applied in this case."

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