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AFP

## **Checklist for anthrax symptoms helps fight against bioterror**

Thu Jul 29, 8:20 PM ET

PARIS (AFP) - American doctors have finetuned the list of symptoms that point to inhalation of anthrax, providing useful help for physicians facing the aftermath of a bioterror attack, The Lancet reports.

One of the biggest problems about treating anthrax is how to tell between people who have been infected by the germ and those suffering from bad influenza or pneumonia, for many of the symptoms are the same.

Anyone who inhales anthrax spores should be treated immediately with powerful antibiotics, so precious days can be wasted if a doctor believes the patient has a common respiratory illness.

Hoping to give physicians a better steer, Demetrios Kyriacou of Chicago's Northwestern Hospital and colleagues compared 47 historical cases of anthrax inhalation with 376 individuals who had pneumonia or an influenza-like illness.

The cases were matched as far as possible for age and health background to avoid any potential distortion.

Eleven of the people in the anthrax group were victims of the mail attacks that unfolded in the United States after September 11 2001. Others were people who had inhaled naturally-occurring anthrax. The germ lives in the soil and can infect grazing animals.

Kyriacou's team found that the anthrax victims were far likelier to suffer from nausea and vomiting than the pneumonia/flu group, and another good indicator was neurological signs such as fainting or confusion. But the best prompt came from swollen tissue in the mid-chest, a condition caused by enlarged lymph nodes in response to lung inflammation, and from X-rays that showed the shadow of fluid on the lungs. Kyriacou admits though that the checklist is only a preliminary step, and acknowledges that these symptoms could be mild or even absent in the early stages of the disease. The study is published in this Saturday's issue of the British medical weekly. The researchers also found that there was no difference in the severity of symptoms between those who had inhaled "weaponised" anthrax and those who had inhaled the germ in a cruder form. The weaponisation of anthrax aims at producing small spores that can be easily dispersed, and which lodge deep in the lung. Anthrax that had been sent to the US Senate by the unknown assailant were a uniform 1.5-3 nanometres (billionths of a metre) in size. They had also been electrostatically charged to enhance dispersal, and coated with polymerised glass and silica to prevent clumping. According to an estimate published last year in the US journal Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences ([news - web sites](#)) (PNAS), the release of only one kilo (2.2 pounds) of weaponised anthrax could kill more than 100,000 people in a city of 10 million. [http://news.yahoo.com/news?tmpl=story&u=/afp/20040730/hl\\_afp/health\\_attacks\\_anthrax\\_040730002039](http://news.yahoo.com/news?tmpl=story&u=/afp/20040730/hl_afp/health_attacks_anthrax_040730002039)

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Washington Post  
July 30, 2004  
Pg. 14

## **No Progress In Nuclear Talks With Iran**

*U.N. Discussions Likely After European Effort, Powell Says*

By Dafna Linzer, Washington Post Staff Writer

A meeting yesterday between European and Iranian officials over Tehran's suspect nuclear program ended with the sides agreeing to continue discussions, but Secretary of State Colin L. Powell said it is increasingly likely the matter will have to be brought to the U.N. Security Council.

The Paris meeting, attended by French, German and British diplomats, was the first since Iran resumed nuclear work in June that it had promised to suspend 18 months earlier in exchange for European trade incentives.

The three European powers, trying to defuse a standoff over Iran's nuclear efforts, want Tehran to work with U.N. nuclear inspectors and halt activities that could lead to weapons development.

"The discussions are continuing with Iranian authorities toward obtaining all the guarantees relative to the peaceful nature of the Iranian nuclear program," said Herve Ladsous, spokesman for the French Foreign Ministry. He said the meeting was aimed at reestablishing trust between the sides.

But Powell, traveling in Kuwait yesterday, made it clear that the United States believes Iran is concealing its true intentions and suggested the European efforts were unlikely to succeed. "It is getting more and more likely that this matter is going to have to be referred to the Security Council," Powell said.

"It is our judgment that Iran is developing a nuclear weapon," Powell said. "The world has to take note of this."

The secretary talked by phone with his German, French and British counterparts ahead of the meeting, which had been scheduled for London and then moved to Paris.

European diplomats, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said both Washington and Moscow would be briefed on the outcome of the discussion.

The Bush administration wants Iran rebuked by the Security Council for violating the Non-Proliferation Treaty and has been pressuring allies to take a harder line with the Islamic republic.

In June, the Europeans crafted a condemnation of Iran for failing to fully cooperate with international inspectors.

But Iran responded by breaking its commitments to halt certain nuclear efforts.

A European diplomat, who spoke ahead of yesterday's meeting, did not discount the possibility of going to the Security Council but said that currently appears remote. "All different scenarios are in play, but the goal is to try to convince Iran to come back to the process."

Since June, Iran has resumed building centrifuge parts and is conducting tests at an enrichment facility. But the activities, which Iran is allowed to carry out for peaceful purposes, are being done under the eye of nuclear inspectors from the International Atomic Energy Agency who have been trying to determine whether the country has a clandestine weapons program.

Iran has denied it is intending to build a nuclear bomb, but in recent months inspectors have turned up inconsistencies in Iran's claims and have found evidence suggesting research in the area of nuclear weapons development.

Iran's foreign minister, Kamal Kharrazi, told reporters in Tehran yesterday that "Iran's right to peaceful nuclear technology should be respected."

"We have started a process of cooperating with the E.U. and the IAEA and are determined to continue that," he said. In Washington, State Department spokesman Adam Ereli said the United States would decide whether to bring up Iran in the Security Council after the IAEA's 35-member board of governors meets in September.

"This is a subject that not only concerns us but is bothersome and troubling to the other members of the board of governors," Ereli said.

Noting pressure from Washington and a U.N. report on Iran's activities due in September, one European diplomat said: "This is a critical moment, and we think it's a kind of turning point. The ball is in Iran's camp right now, and they should take careful steps to cooperate with inspectors."

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A26012-2004Jul29.html>

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Moscow Times

July 30, 2004

Pg. 2

## **NATO Observers**

MOSCOW (AP) -- Russia has invited NATO to monitor a military exercise that will simulate dealing with the consequences of a nuclear disaster, Interfax-Military News Agency reported Thursday.

The agency quoted an unidentified Defense Ministry official as saying that 50 officials from various NATO member nations are expected to observe the exercise next week in the Murmansk region.

The exercise is to involve about 700 soldiers and several hundred workers from various law-enforcement agencies. Its goal is to practice measures aimed at preventing nuclear weapons seizure by terrorists and coping with the aftermath of a nuclear disaster, the agency said.

<http://www.themoscowtimes.com/stories/2004/07/30/031.html>

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Washington Times

July 30, 2004

Pg. 17

## **U.S. Seeks Treaty To Ban Fissile Material**

By John Zarocostas, The Washington Times

GENEVA — In a surprise reversal yesterday, the United States offered to begin negotiations on a fissile material cutoff treaty [FMCT] that would ban nuclear bomb-making components such as plutonium and highly enriched uranium.

"An FMCT is ripe for negotiations," the U.S. ambassador for disarmament, Jackie Sanders, told the 65-nation Conference on Disarmament.

"The U.S. reaffirmed its commitment to negotiation in the conference of a legally binding treaty banning the production of fissile material or other nuclear devices," she said.

Mrs. Sanders said the United States had not produced any fissile material for more than 15 years and was working to dispose of its stockpiles.

The Bush administration's decision to move forward on the treaty comes after an exhaustive interagency policy assessment.

Several member nations lauded the U.S. decision, but questions remained as to how effective the treaty would be if, as Mrs. Sanders said, it could not be verified.

"Our own view has always been that an FMCT should be effectively verifiable," said British envoy David Boucher. He added, however, that Britain would approach the U.S. proposals with an open mind in the hope they would lead to an early agreement among conference members.

"For the first time, there are signs of movement in the chamber," Mr. Boucher said. "We need to strike while the iron is hot."

One senior conference diplomat, speaking on the condition of anonymity, cautioned that "if the Americans agree to negotiations with no preconditions it will be accepted, but whether all will accept a ban with no verification is another matter."

Francois Rivasseau, the French ambassador to the conference, said he welcomed the United States' "coming back" to the multilateral disarmament forum.

Algerian Ambassador Salah Dembri said the U.S. initiative meant "there was now a glimmer of hope" for the treaty, which he said was the best way of combating attempts to produce nuclear weapons.

In the same session, the U.S. ambassador also called on Iran and North Korea to cease their pursuit of weapons of mass destruction.

Mrs. Sanders stressed that Tehran "should cease its covert nuclear weapons program" and that Pyongyang should "cease all routes it was pursuing to produce a nuclear bomb ... [and] dismantle its nuclear program."

<http://www.washtimes.com/world/20040729-094152-7492r.htm>

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Washington Post

July 31, 2004

Pg. 1

## **U.S. Shifts Stance On Nuclear Treaty**

### ***White House Resists Inspection Provision***

By Dafna Linzer, Washington Post Staff Writer

In a significant shift in U.S. policy, the Bush administration announced this week that it will oppose provisions for inspections and verification as part of an international treaty that would ban production of nuclear weapons materials.

For several years the United States and other nations have pursued the treaty, which would ban new production by any state of highly enriched uranium and plutonium for weapons. At an arms-control meeting this week in Geneva, the Bush administration told other nations it still supported a treaty, but not verification.

Administration officials, who have showed skepticism in the past about the effectiveness of international weapons inspections, said they made the decision after concluding that such a system would cost too much, would require overly intrusive inspections and would not guarantee compliance with the treaty. They declined, however, to explain in detail how they believed U.S. security would be harmed by creating a plan to monitor the treaty.

Arms-control specialists reacted negatively, saying the change in U.S. position will dramatically weaken any treaty and make it harder to prevent nuclear materials from falling into the hands of terrorists. The announcement, they said, also virtually kills a 10-year international effort to lure countries such as Pakistan, India and Israel into accepting some oversight of their nuclear production programs.

The announcement at the U.N.-sponsored Conference on Disarmament comes several months after President Bush declared it a top priority of his administration to prevent the production and trafficking in nuclear materials, and as the administration works to blunt criticism by Democrats and others that it has failed to work effectively with the United Nations and other international bodies on such vital global concerns.

"The president has said his priority is to block the spread of nuclear materials to rogue states and terrorists, and a verifiable ban on the production of such materials is an essential part of any such strategy," said Daryl Kimball, director of the Washington-based Arms Control Association. "Which is why it is so surprising and baffling that the administration is not supporting a meaningful treaty."

The U.N. Conference on Disarmament includes 66 countries as members. It had announced its intent to start negotiations this year toward a verifiable international agreement known as the Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT) that would ban production of highly enriched uranium and plutonium for weapons. The two ingredients are used for setting off a chain-reaction nuclear explosion.

The treaty wouldn't affect existing stockpiles or production for non-weapons purposes, such as energy or medical research. Mainly, it was designed to reinforce the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and to impose restraints on India, Pakistan and Israel, whose nuclear programs operate outside the reach of NPT inspectors.

In 2000, all three countries, the Clinton administration and the rest of the conference members agreed to pursue negotiation of the treaty. But last year, when the possibility of starting negotiations arose in the conference, the Bush administration decided to review its position on the FMCT.

On Thursday, Jackie Wolcott Sanders, the U.S. representative, said the United States would support the treaty, but without a way to verify compliance.

The State Department later released a statement saying that an internal review had concluded that an inspection regime "would have been so extensive that it could compromise key signatories' core national security interests and so costly that many countries will be hesitant to accept it."

Furthermore, "even with extensive verification measures, we will not have high confidence in our ability to monitor compliance with an FMCT." Bush administration officials would not elaborate on the statement or on the U.S. position, except to say they would send a delegation to Geneva to better explain the position to the conference. But the conference goes on recess in early September, leaving virtually no time to begin formal negotiations on the treaty before the end of the current presidential term. Since the disarmament conference can adopt a treaty only by consensus, the American position makes it highly unlikely that a verification system will be included in a future agreement.

Democratic presidential nominee John F. Kerry has supported the verification provision and has criticized the administration's policies on weapons of mass destruction, particularly after none turned up in Iraq after the war. Early this year, after revelations that Pakistani scientist Abdul Qadeer Khan had sold nuclear secrets to Libya, Iran and North Korea, Bush gave a major speech on the threat posed by weapons of mass destruction. He proposed several new measures, including encouraging all nations to criminalize proliferation and secure sensitive materials within their borders.

While declaring nonproliferation a priority, however, the administration has opposed other arms-control treaties that rely on inspection regimes.

In 2001, the administration opposed attempts to create an inspections regime for the Biological Weapons Convention. It has signed an arms-reduction deal with Russia that doesn't include new verification mechanisms, and in its first year in office, the administration pulled out of the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A28806-2004Jul30.html>

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Baltimore Sun

August 1, 2004

## **Buried Secrets Of Biowarfare**

*During the Cold War, top Army scientists toiled stealthily in rural Maryland to make covert weapons coveted by new enemies.*

By Scott Shane, Sun Staff

For years, in total secrecy, they studied the black art of bioterrorism.

They designed deadly, silent biological dart guns and hid them in fountain pens and walking sticks. They crunched lethal bacteria into suit buttons that could be worn unnoticed across borders. They rigged light fixtures and car tailpipes to loose an invisible spray of anthrax.

They practiced germ attacks in airports and on the New York subway, tracking air currents and calculating the potential death toll.

But they weren't a band of al-Qaida fanatics -- or enemies of any kind. They were biowarriors in the U.S. Army's Special Operations Division at Fort Detrick.

From 1949 to 1969, at the jittery height of the Cold War, the division tested the nation's vulnerability to covert germ warfare -- and devised weapons for secret biological attacks if the United States chose to mount them.

A few years ago, its story -- never before told in detail -- would have seemed a macabre footnote to U.S. history.

Now, after the Sept. 11 attacks, the anthrax mailings and a steady stream of government warnings on terrorism, the fears of the 1950s have returned -- and the experiments of Fort Detrick's covert bioweapons makers suddenly resonate in a new era. In the biological realm, there is little that any terrorist group could concoct that Fort Detrick's "dirty tricks department," as veterans call it, didn't think up decades ago.

But because of the division's scant recordkeeping and the fast-disappearing ranks of its aged scientist-warriors, the knowledge it acquired is being lost to history.

One of the few survivors is Wallace Pannier, 76, who remembers standing in a Frederick County field watching sheep shot with what the Army called a "nondiscernible bioinoculator" -- a dart gun. The bosses demanded a dart so fine that it could penetrate clothing and skin unnoticed, then dissolve, leaving no trace in an autopsy.

"If the sheep jumped, that meant people were going to jump, too," said Pannier, now living a quiet life tending his flowers and shrubs in Frederick.

Once perfected, the dart gun astonished those who saw it in action. Charles Baronian, a retired Army weapons official, recalls a demonstration at Fort Bragg in North Carolina.

"Twenty-five seconds after it was shot, the sheep just fell to the ground," said Baronian, 73. "It didn't bleat. It didn't move. It just fell dead. You couldn't help but be impressed."

The rest of the Army's offensive biological weapons program thought big: 500-pound anthrax bombs that could contaminate entire cities. But the Special Operations Division -- known at Fort Detrick by its initials, SO -- studied biowarfare on a more intimate scale, figuring ways to kill an individual, disable a roomful of people or touch off an epidemic.

### **'Army has no records'**

The existence of the SO Division was revealed only six years after it shut down, in a 1975 Senate investigation into CIA abuses. Senators wanted to know why the CIA had retained a lethal stock of shellfish toxin and cobra venom after President Richard M. Nixon's 1969 order to destroy all biological weapons stocks. They found that the poisons had come from the SO Division under a CIA-Army project code-named MKNAOMI.

But records show that even CIA bosses were stymied as they tried to get the facts on the SO Division. "The practice of keeping little or no record of the activity was standard MKNAOMI procedure," a CIA investigator wrote. The military offered little help, he added: "The Army has no records on MKNAOMI or on the Special Operations Division."

In response to a Freedom of Information Act request from The Sun, the Army said no records of the Special Operations Division could be found. Nor is there any mention at the National Archives, which reclassified Fort Detrick's old biowarfare records after the Bush administration ordered agencies to withhold anything that might aid terrorists.

Few SO Division veterans are still alive. Fewer still are willing to describe their work. They are not sure what is still classified and don't relish leaving biological horror tales for their grandchildren.

"I just don't give interviews on that subject," said Andrew M. Cowan Jr., 74, the division's last chief, who is retired and living near Seattle. "It should still be classified -- if nothing else, to keep the information the division developed out of the hands of some nut."

But it is possible to assemble a patchwork portrait from documents obtained by The Sun under the Freedom of Information Act, Senate investigative files and private document collections, including the National Security Archive in Washington and even the Church of Scientology, which long collected material on government mind-control research.

And a few Detrick retirees who worked in the SO Division or collaborated with it spoke sparingly about what they know. Most are proud of their work, pointing out that the Soviet biological program was much larger and also developed assassination tools.

### **Unsuccessful attacks**

The veterans still slip into biowarrior-speak, in which "good" means good-and-lethal. "It made a real nice aerosol," they'll say, or "That would give you real good coverage."

All say that if the biological devices they made were used against humans, they never learned about it. But it is impossible to be certain, they say, because the program was strictly compartmented: One worker didn't know what another was doing, let alone what CIA or Special Forces did with the bioweapons.

The 1975 Senate investigation revealed that the SO Division supplied biological materials for several planned CIA attacks, none of which were successful.

In 1960, the CIA's main contact with the SO Division, Sidney Gottlieb, carried a tube of toxin-laced toothpaste to Africa in a plot to kill Congolese leader Patrice Lumumba. But the CIA station chief balked and pitched the poison into a river, a congressional investigation later revealed.

Records suggest, though they do not prove, that the SO Division also supplied germs for CIA schemes to kill or sicken Cuban leader Fidel Castro, and that it came up with the poisoned handkerchief that the agency's drollily-named Health Alteration Committee sent to Iraqi Prime Minister Abdul Karim Qasim in 1963. (He survived.)

Army Special Forces also asked the SO Division to design biological assassination weapons. Fort Detrick's engineers delivered five devices -- including the dart gun -- collectively known as the "Big Five." But records of what Special Forces did with the weapons remain classified, said Fort Bragg archivist Cynthia Hayden.

If the work sounds sinister today, there were doubters at the time, too. A 1954 Army document says high-ranking officials -- including George W. Merck, the pharmaceutical executive and top government adviser on biowarfare -- wanted to shut down the SO Division because they considered it "un-American."

But Fort Detrick's rank and file rarely voiced such doubts. "We did not sit around talking about the moral implications of what we were doing," said William C. Patrick III, a Fort Detrick veteran who worked closely with the SO Division. "We were problem-solving."

And if the orders came to unleash the weapons, Fort Detrick's biowarriors were ready.

During the Vietnam War, William P. Walter, who supervised anthrax production at Fort Detrick and worked with the SO Division on projects, asked British intelligence agents for blueprints of the office occupied by North Vietnamese leader Ho Chi Minh. Plotting a covert germ assault is easier if the room's cubic footage and ventilation system are known, he says.



"We thought if the president of the United States wants to kill somebody, we want to be able to do it," said Walter, now 78 and retired in Florida.

### **Opening of the division**

A gun or a bomb leaves no doubt that a deliberate attack has occurred. But if someone is stricken with a sudden, fatal illness -- or an epidemic slashes across a crowded city -- there is no way of knowing whether anyone attacked, much less who.

That was the key conclusion of the Pentagon's Committee on Biological Warfare in a secret October 1948 report on covert biowarfare.

At the time, the United States feared a shadowy global enemy, organized in secret cells overseas and on U.S. soil -- Communists. Echoing today's fears, the report said the United States "is particularly vulnerable" to covert germ attack because enemy agents "are present already in this country [and] there is no control exercised over the movements of people."

Although it emphasized the threat to America, the report called for offensive capability. "Biological agents would appear to be well adapted to subversive use since very small amounts of such agents can be effective," the report said. "A significant portion of the human population within selected target areas may be killed or incapacitated." Setting an imaginative tone for what would follow, the report listed potential targets: "ventilating systems, subway systems, water supply systems ... stamps, envelopes, money, biologicals and cosmetics ... contamination of food and beverages."

Seven months later, in May 1949, the Special Operations Division quietly opened at Fort Detrick.

The other divisions there, created during and after World War II, focused on large-scale biological attack, said Walter, who completed a quadruple major at Mount St. Mary's College in Emmitsburg and went to work at Fort Detrick in 1951.

At the time, planners regarded bioweapons as a valuable military option -- more devastating than chemical weapons, but more selective than a nuclear attack.

"Biological agents can really cover more territory than nuclear weapons," Walter said. "Biological's better than nuclear because it doesn't destroy the buildings."

### **Shrouded in secrecy**

Fort Detrick's other divisions had diabolical tricks of their own. For instance, Walter said, their scientists bred antibiotic-resistant bacteria to make standard Soviet and Chinese treatments useless against U.S. weapons.

Still, the veterans say, Special Operations stood apart. You didn't apply for SO, you were chosen. And even within the tight-lipped world of Fort Detrick, the SO Division's secrecy was extraordinary.

"Most of the people [at Fort Detrick] didn't know what was going on in SO," Pannier said. "And they got angry because you wouldn't tell 'em what was going on."

When Pannier hitchhiked to Fort Detrick to take up his new assignment in 1946, he saw so many guard towers that he thought he had been sent to a prison. After three years there, he went home to Utah and completed a degree in bacteriology. When he returned, his former boss recommended him to the SO Division, "sort of a little Detrick within Detrick."

SO Division personnel -- about 75 at the unit's peak -- didn't get the usual parking stickers. They had metal tags that could be removed from their cars when they traveled undercover.

Pannier spent a night on the roof of the Pentagon taking air samples to rule out a bioattack before a visit by President John F. Kennedy.

He was also assigned to see what germs were leaking from a Merck pharmaceutical plant on the Susquehanna River, observations that would be crucial to U.S. spies trying to identify Soviet bioweapons facilities. Pannier posed variously as a fisherman, an air-quality tester and a driver with a broken-down car.

When East Bloc officials who were suspected of working in biowarfare labs traveled abroad, U.S. agents secretly swabbed their clothes so the SO Division could test for germs.

Fanning out across the country, SO Division officers also played the role of bioterrorists in an era before the word had even been coined. Their usual mock weapons were two forms of bacteria, *Bacillus globigii* (BG) and *Serratia marcescens* (SM).

Scientists thought both were harmless, though later research found that SM could cause illness or death in people with weakened immune systems.

In an elaborate 1965 attempt to assess how travelers might be used to spread smallpox, SO Division officers loosed BG in the air at Washington National Airport and at bus stations in Washington, Chicago and San Francisco, then tracked its movement using air samplers disguised as suitcases.

Tracking travelers' routes, Fort Detrick scientists plotted on a U.S. map the smallpox cases that would result from a real release.

The germ-spreaders were never challenged, the report noted: "No terminal employee, passenger or visitor gave any outward indication of suspicion that something unusual was taking place."

The next year, without alerting local officials, SO Division agents staged a mock attack on the New York subway, shattering light bulbs packed with BG powder on the tracks.

"People could carry a brown bag with light bulbs in it and nobody would be suspicious," Pannier said. "But when [a bulb] would break, it would burst. ... The trains swishing by would get it airborne."

The SO Division's report concluded that "similar covert attacks with a pathogenic agent during peak traffic periods could be expected to expose large numbers of people to infection and subsequent illness or death."

Understanding U.S. vulnerability may have been the main purpose of such experiments. But defensive findings had offensive implications. No one had to tell experimenters that Moscow, too, had a subway.

### **'Big Five' arsenal**

If the subway tests could be explained as defensive, there was no such ambiguity in the SO Division's development of covert biological weapons.

Mysterious characters from Fort Bragg and the CIA came and went at the SO Division, leaving wish-lists and checking progress. For cover, CIA visitors often wore military uniforms and said they worked for "Staff Support Group." No one mentioned aloud the name of the agency financing so much of the division's work.

"It was never really said, except that probably by the middle '60s it became obvious," Pannier said. Army bosses "would ask: 'Are you keeping them happy?'"

Most CIA records on the SO Division were apparently destroyed in 1973 by Gottlieb, the agency's liaison to Fort Detrick. But declassified invoices the division submitted to the CIA give a sense of the work.

Germ dispensers could be concealed in many objects, such as the exhaust system on a 1953 Mercury. ("It might look like a smoky, oil-burning car," Pannier said.) There were invoices for fountain pens, even "1 Toy Dog, 98 cents."

There are receipts for books with suggestive titles: The Assassins, The Enemy Within, Dictionary of Poisons. There are rent bills for cabins at state parks -- a favorite site for secret meetings.

And there is much ado about dogs, including supplies for a "Buster Project." One plan for the dart guns was to knock out guard dogs so U.S. agents could sneak into foreign facilities.

But dogs were not the primary target of the SO Division's creative efforts. "The requirements of the Army Special Forces were the driving force defining SOD activities, and ... Special Forces' interest included a number of weird things, definitely among which was assassination," a CIA retiree told an agency investigator in 1975, according to a declassified report.

The former CIA man referred to the arsenal that came to be called the Big Five. "The Big Five program was devoted to assassination," said Patrick, who worked closely with the SO Division as chief of product development at Fort Detrick. He calls it "the most sensitive program we ever created at Detrick," and says its details should still be kept secret because they might be useful to terrorists and "embarrassing to the United States."

Walter, the former Detrick anthrax maker, calls the Big Five "hair-raising. We really kept that thing hush-hush," he said.

Detailed descriptions of the Big Five remain classified. But documents show that they included at least one version of the biological dart, dipped in shellfish toxin and fired from a rifle using a pressurized air cartridge.

Walter recalled that colleagues were sent overseas to collect the mussels that produced the poison, into which the darts would be dipped. Tiny grooves guided the dose: "You could time a death by the load [of toxin] you shot," he said.

Among the other Big Five weapons: a 7.62 mm rifle cartridge packed with anthrax or botulinum toxin that would disperse in the air on impact; a time-delay bomblet that would release a cloud of bacteria when a train or truck convoy passed; and a pressurized can that sprayed an aerosol of germs. The fifth is described in unclassified documents only as an "E-41 disseminator."

Walter recalls an effort to package the spray device in a food can for smuggling into the Soviet Union and planting in a target's office or apartment.

"We had a hell of a time with that because we had to get Russian cans," he said. "It had to look exactly like an ordinary can."

### **'Nothing has changed'**

Of all the old bioweaponers, Patrick is the only one who still has ties to U.S. biodefense programs, working as a consultant and trainer. But he said the government has made little effort to learn from the work of the Special Operations Division and the larger biowarfare program.

Although bioengineering today could produce more virulent pathogens, "nothing has changed" in the most challenging part of covert biological attack: delivering germs so that they infect people, Patrick said.



"The problem today is there's a huge disconnect between what our old fossils know and what the current generation knows," Patrick said. "The good doctors at CDC [the national Centers for Disease Control and Prevention] don't have a clue about aerosol dissemination, and the military is not much better."

Walter, in Florida, agreed with Patrick's diagnosis. But he said it's fine with him if the dark lessons of Fort Detrick's early days are lost forever.

"When we all die off, that's it," he said. "If anybody with bad intentions got hold of the things we had, it would be disastrous."

<http://www.baltimoresun.com/news/nationworld/bal-te.detrick01aug01.1.685556.story>

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August 01, 2004

**Focus:**

## **Tracked down: The man who fooled the world - and was duped himself**

**The mystery middle-man who supplied bogus documents revealing Iraq's nuclear ambitions claims it was all a plot by Italian intelligence. Nicholas Rufford and Nick Fielding report**

'Call me Giacomo,' said the dapper man in the sand-coloured suit waiting anxiously in the Eurostar lounge in Brussels. Glancing around to make sure nobody was following, he led the way to a dimly lit corner of Sam's Cafe on the station concourse.

Ordering an espresso, he opened an attaché case and gave a glimpse of a CD-Rom inside. The disk contained proof, he said, of an Italian government-inspired plot to frame Iraq for clandestinely trying to acquire nuclear material. "All the information, names, telephone numbers, documents are in here," he said.

For the first time a figure involved in one of the most infamous scams in the furore surrounding the Iraq war had emerged from the shadows.

The Sunday Times later confirmed the real name of "Giacomo", who uses a number of aliases. A former member of Italy's armed services, he is a small-time tipster who found himself at the centre of an international hoax involving the CIA, MI6 and the United Nations.

In 2002 he hawked around documents purporting to show that Saddam Hussein had tried to obtain uranium ore from the Saharan state of Niger. The 17 documents were a collection of telexes, letters and contracts, stamped and signed and masquerading as an agreement by Niger to supply Iraq with 500 tons of ore, enough to make several bombs.

The papers were a convincing mixture of genuine and fake. Giacomo says he did not forge them and can prove that the Italian government was behind the plot.

At the time the CIA and the British Secret Intelligence Service (MI6) were searching for fresh evidence of Saddam's attempts to acquire non-conventional weapons. The documents appeared to corroborate their suspicions.

The Niger "evidence", when publicised by Tony Blair and George W Bush, helped to turn opinion against the Iraqi dictator in the run-up to the war.

The documents were later discredited, although the British government continues to insist that the Iraq-Niger uranium nexus was genuine. MI6 has always claimed that it has intelligence from a separate untainted source.

TANNED, white-haired and moustachioed, Giacomo is coy about his past. He says he lives in Rome and that he used to work for Sismi, the external Italian intelligence agency.

This much is true, according to intelligence sources. Giacomo worked with Sismi — albeit for only a few months — on a project concerned with counter-proliferation. He is also said to have done some work for Sisd, the domestic intelligence agency.

Through the 1990s he immersed himself in intelligence and espionage. He provided tips and occasionally documents to selected journalists and to foreign intelligence agencies. In the murky world of spies and investigative journalists he was seen as a useful go-between and an occasional provider of scoops.

"I sell information, I admit," he said. "But I sell only good information."

He is angered by the suggestion that he knowingly passed fake documents and insists that he was himself hoodwinked by Sismi in a plot designed to discredit Iraq. He claims that he has taped and documentary evidence to prove it.

Corroborating his claims is difficult because he wants money for the full story of how he got the documents — the evidence on the CD-Rom and the tapes — which The Sunday Times is unwilling to pay.

Key aspects of his story are convincing, however; and whoever faked the documents was certainly no amateur forger and probably had inside knowledge.

The contents of the documents were highly plausible. Iraq had had extensive contacts with Niger in the 1980s and had bought uranium ore for its then active nuclear programme. Under UN sanctions in the 1990s, that programme apparently ceased to exist, but western officials remained suspicious of any contacts between the two countries. Niger (population 11m) was one of the poorest countries in the world, landlocked and prone to extended droughts. It exported little more than a few agricultural products — and uranium yellowcake ore. The yellowcake came from two mines controlled by French companies. Their output was closely monitored, but local people also dug ore from abandoned or unofficial workings to sell on the black market.

In February 1999, Wissam al-Zahawie, Iraq's ambassador to the Vatican, arranged a trip to Niger and three other countries in west Africa. According to Zahawie, his mission was to invite their leaders to Baghdad, trying to muster support over UN sanctions that were crippling Iraq.

"I had no other instructions and certainly none concerning the purchase of uranium," he now says.

According to sources at Sismi, however, Zahawie's mission was not just diplomatic. A "credible source" informed them that Iraq was looking for black market uranium in Niger. The source spoke of contacts, proposals, deals and dollar transfers. The source specified that no deal had been fully concluded.

Looking for corroboration, Sismi passed this intelligence to MI6, which filed it as interesting but unconfirmed.

The case went quiet until January 2, 2001 when staff at Niger's embassy in Rome reported a break-in. Papers were strewn about the building, but only some perfume and a watch appeared to have been stolen.

Shortly afterwards documents began to circulate in the intelligence community. Some referred to the visit of Zahawie to Niger and were clearly genuine. Others, which purported to be an agreement between Iraq and Niger for the supply of uranium yellowcake, were fakes.

According to one account, sets of the documents were passed to the British and the Americans. It is not clear how they were acquired although Giacomo admits that he had a hand in their dissemination.

Without being precise about dates, he said: "I received a call from a former colleague in Sismi. I was told that a woman in the Niger embassy in Rome had a gift for me. I met her and she gave me documents. Sismi wanted me to pass on the documents but they didn't want anyone to know they had been involved.

"It was the Italians and Americans together who were behind it. It was all a disinformation operation."

He claims that his taped material includes conversations with the woman at the embassy, who was Italian.

Giacomo says that he passed the documents to "contacts", but will not say who. The only person he is prepared to name is Elisabetta Burba, an Italian journalist on Panorama, the current affairs magazine based in Milan. Giacomo had previously given her stories which had proved accurate.

Burba described the handover of the Niger documents in an article for Panorama in which she referred to Giacomo as Mr X.

There were good reasons for Burba to believe that the Niger story was genuine. Parts of the documents were encrypted. When Burba asked Giacomo to help to decipher them, he went away and came back with a 1967 code book from the Niger embassy, not something that an average conman would do.

Furthermore, although Giacomo asked for €10,000 for the documents, he said: "Pay me only when you have verified them."

Burba found, however, that the documents did not stand up to scrutiny. There were spelling mistakes and inconsistencies: one document was dated prior to the events it referred to.

UNDER instructions from her bosses at the magazine, she took the bundle to the US embassy in Rome in October 2002. Three Americans who she met there took copies. Later an embassy official told her they were able neither to confirm nor deny the authenticity of the documents.

In fact the US had sent Joseph Wilson, a former ambassador to Niger, to check out the story in February 2002, soon after the embassy break-in, and he had reported back that it was false.

In September 2002 the British government's dossier on Iraqi weapons of mass destruction said that Iraq had "sought significant quantities of uranium from Africa, despite having no active civil nuclear programme that would require it". Despite Wilson's discrediting of the Niger connection, the story was resurrected in Bush's state of the union address in January 2003, which prepared America for war. Bush said: "The British government has learnt that Saddam Hussein recently sought significant quantities of uranium from Africa."

The story began to unravel when the International Atomic Energy Agency got hold of the Niger documents. When Mohammed ElBaradei, its head, announced last year that they were "not authentic", there was embarrassment in London and Washington.

Both the CIA and MI6 insisted privately that they had been sceptical all along, but the whole edifice of the claims of Saddam's nuclear ambitions came tumbling down.

To make matters worse, another strand of evidence about Iraq's alleged nuclear activities — that it had imported aluminium tubes to make centrifuges for uranium enrichment — was also discredited when the tubes were shown to have been for conventional weapons.

In July 2003 George Tenet, the CIA director, was forced to admit that the 16 words in Bush's state of the union address should not have been there. The CIA privately blamed MI6, which still maintains that it had other sources. Jack Straw, the foreign secretary, has denied that MI6 was influenced by "forged" documents, telling a parliamentary committee last June in a carefully worded statement that the British intelligence community was unaware of their existence "at the time when the September dossier was put together".

Giacomo wants to apologise for the hoax but says that he, too, was a victim and that the real culprits work in the world of Italian intelligence.

### **ITALY'S BAG OF DIRTY TRICKS**

The documents, purporting to show that Iraq was seeking uranium from Niger, were a mix of real and fake and are now suspected of being planted by Italian intelligence — which has been embroiled in dirty tricks before.

Sismi, the Italian counterpart to MI6, and Sisde, the counterpart to MI5, were implicated in the notorious case of "God's banker" Roberto Calvi, the former head of Banco Ambrosiano, who was found hanged under Blackfriars Bridge in London in 1982.

Three Italian intelligence chiefs were known to have been members of the notorious P2 masonic lodge of which Calvi was a member. One of the intelligence chiefs was found to have given other P2 members access to sensitive files on thousands of prominent Italians.

Individual officers in the past have been accused of blackmail, involvement in politics and lying in court.

Italian co-operation with Britain and America on intelligence matters goes back a long way. In the 1960s it emerged that Sismi had bugged the Italian president's palace and the Pope's library in the Vatican as a favour to the CIA.

<http://www.timesonline.co.uk/printFriendly/0,,2-524-1197988,00.html>

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International Herald Tribune

August 2, 2004

## **Iran Rebuffs Europe On Atom Plans**

*Regime rejects halt to all nuclear activity*

By News Reports

TEHRAN - Talks that the European Union's "big three" held with Iran last week on its nuclear program produced "no substantial progress," EU diplomats said Sunday, as Iran renewed its commitment to acquiring nuclear energy. Officials from Britain, France and Germany met with an Iranian delegation in Paris on Thursday and Friday, and emphasized their wish to see a halt to Iran's work on the nuclear fuel cycle.

"Each side repeated their positions, and there were no changes," said a diplomat from one of the European states.

"We would like Iran to stop nuclear fuel cycle work, but Iran sees its suspension as just a temporary measure.

Therefore, no substantial progress was made," the source told Agence France-Presse.

An Iranian government spokesman, Hamid Reza Asefi, speaking to reporters on Sunday, said Iran was continuing to talk to Britain, France and Germany on the use of nuclear energy. Washington strongly suspects Iran is using a civilian nuclear program as a cover for a secret nuclear weapons project. It has been lobbying for the International Atomic Energy Agency, the United Nations' nuclear watchdog, to refer Iran's nuclear dossier to the UN Security Council, which could impose sanctions.

The talks in Paris prepare the ground for a September meeting of the board of governors of the energy agency, which is expected to discuss Iran's program. Asefi said that since the Europeans did not fulfill promises to close Iran's nuclear dossier at the energy agency's June meeting, Iran felt no obligation to abide by an agreement that demanded Iran suspend manufacturing and assembling parts used in nuclear activities.

Under the agreement, reached last year with Britain, France and Germany, Iran had agreed to suspend uranium enrichment, allow tougher inspections and file a comprehensive declaration of its nuclear activities.

The measures were aimed at "building confidence" while the energy agency conducted a major probe of Iran's bid to generate electricity through nuclear power, seen by the United States as a cover for secret weapons development.

But since then, experts from the energy agency have found omissions in Iran's reporting, inspection visits have been delayed and the regime has backed away from a pledge to suspend all enrichment-related activities.

On Saturday, Foreign Minister Kamal Kharrazi of Iran confirmed that his country had resumed building nuclear centrifuges, though it had not resumed enriching uranium. The announcement by Kharrazi hardened the lines between Iran and the United States. Diplomats said last week that Tehran had resumed building equipment used to make uranium hexafluoride, which, when processed in centrifuges, can be enriched to low levels for power generation or high levels for nuclear weapons.

--AFP, AP

<http://www.ihf.com/articles/532131.html>

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## **Nuclear Nonproliferation: DOE Needs to Take Action to Further Reduce the Use of Weapons-Usable Uranium in Civilian Research Reactors.**

GAO-04-807, July 30.

<http://www.gao.gov/cgi-bin/getrpt?GAO-04-807>

Highlights - <http://www.gao.gov/highlights/d04807high.pdf>

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