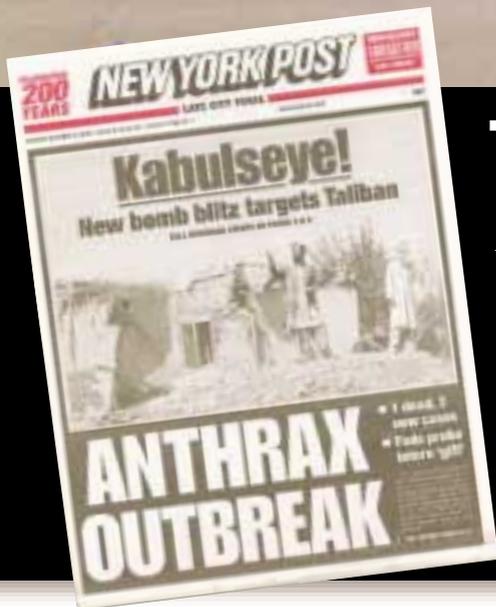


**POISON PEN**

A technician at Fort Detrick, in Maryland, displays the anthrax letter sent to Senator Patrick Leahy. Inset, the October 9, 2001, *New York Post*.



# THE MESSAGE IN THE ANTHRAX

After fingering Joe Klein for *Primary Colors* and helping snare the alleged Atlanta Olympics bomber, the author, a professor of English at Vassar, was asked to analyze the 2001 anthrax letters. Frustrated with the F.B.I.'s anthrax task force, he unseals his investigation of a most intriguing—and disturbing—suspect

**BY DON FOSTER**

In the spring of 1998, an officer at the Dugway Proving Ground, in Utah, called the veteran biowarrior William C. Patrick III to ask for his help. The army wanted to convert some of its deadly anthrax into a dry powder, but, in Patrick's words, "didn't have a freeze-dryer, didn't have a spray dryer, no drying capability at all." The Soviets hadn't let the 1972 biological-and-toxin-weapons convention stop them from producing 4,500 metric tons of anthrax *per year*. But when the Americans signed it, they put Bill Patrick out to pasture and then seemingly forgot the art, developed by Pat-

rick in 1959, of weaponizing *Bacillus anthracis* without milling. Now Patrick had to re-educate the army's top microbiologists, showing them how to freeze-dry a slurry of anthrax simulant; how to purify it to a trillion spores per gram in a centrifuge; and how to remove the electrostatic charge, to prevent clumping. On one visit to Dugway, Patrick said he had employed the less sophisticated method of acetone extraction to produce a pound of dry anthrax in a single day—enough to kill thousands of people. (Patrick now says that he misspoke when he claimed to have produced the pound of anthrax.)

For nearly two decades—until Richard

Nixon shut down America's offensive-bioweapons program in 1969—Bill Patrick worked in secret government laboratories, designing and testing germ agents. His skull-and-crossbones calling card describes him as a "Biological Warfare Consultant." An old-school warrior, Patrick, 77, looks like a big teddy bear, but he continually slips into talk of mass destruction. When lecturing on biodefense, he speaks of "beautiful bomblets" and of how many people the U.S. could kill in good weather with a dry bioweapons agent—"especially in the Middle East."

On February 19, 1999, Patrick briefed

two dozen officers at Maxwell Air Force Base, in Montgomery, Alabama, on his recent visits to Dugway: “The principles of biological warfare that we discovered 35 to 40 years ago have not changed.” Patrick held up a sealed vial containing eight grams of highly refined powder. “Now you’re very fortunate today,” he said, “that I’ve carried in my suitcase here a sample of anthrax. The only requirement I have is that you don’t drop it.” His audience tittered nervously as the bottle passed from hand to hand.

“I want to bring several things to your attention,” said Patrick. “Look how easily that powder flows. . . . It is composed of three to five microns, the particle size that gets down into your lungs and causes the infection.” Then he came clean. It was not really anthrax but rather *Bacillus globigii*, or B.g., the army’s anthrax simulant of choice. “Now if you think I’m stupid enough to release anthrax in that powdered form,” Patrick said with a grin, “you’re giving me too much credit.”

Patrick’s B.g. sample was purified to a trillion spores per gram—near the theoretical limit, and better than anything ever produced by Iraq, South Africa, or the Soviet Union. An untrained eye could not differentiate it from the anthrax powder that Patrick had produced in 1959. The purpose of the exercise at Dugway, however, was defensive: to prepare our nation for a bioterror attack.

In April 1999, Patrick told Fox News that in two years there will be an attack with a sophisticated agent manufactured overseas. His prediction was not far off the mark.

**B**y October 12, 2001, the press was reporting that Bob Stevens, the 63-year-old tabloid photo editor at American Media Inc. in Boca Raton, Florida, who had mysteriously succumbed to inhalational anthrax on October 5, had been infected at work. (Inhalational anthrax comes from breathing in spores, and is far deadlier than the cutaneous form of the disease, which is usually contracted through cuts and scratches in the skin.) Spores were found throughout the A.M.I. building, with hot spots in the mailroom and on the victim’s keyboard.

That day I got a call from supervisory special agent James R. Fitzgerald, a top F.B.I. profiler and threat-assessment expert. He said that anthrax had been discovered at NBC, and that he might be sending me some documents.

For my first 10 years as a professor of English literature at Vassar College, I got no closer to real-life tragedy than *Titus Andronicus*. Today, much of my time off cam-

pus is taken up by police detectives, F.B.I. agents, and district attorneys. My home-phone number is unlisted, and my unexpected mail must be X-rayed or discarded. On the shelves of my office, the Great Books have been displaced by the writings of hoaxers, terrorists, kidnappers, the D.C. sniper, the anthrax killer.

It all began in January 1996, when Random House published *Primary Colors*, “by Anonymous.” The editors of *New York* magazine asked me to figure out who had written it by applying the same methods I had always used for assigning authorship to ancient poems and anonymous plays. Relying mostly on old-fashioned linguistic analysis, I concluded that “Anonymous” was the *Newsweek* columnist Joe Klein—who promptly announced on national TV that I was wrong.

Literary scholars look at punctuation, spelling, word usage, regionalisms, slang, grammar, sentence construction, document formatting, topical allusions, ideology, borrowed source material—but most of our

**As I analyzed the letters, I did see some red flags—or, rather, red-white-and-blue ones.**

ascribed attributions are for writers like Shakespeare, Pope, or Wordsworth. A dead poet cannot stand up and say, as Joe Klein did, “It’s not me. I didn’t do it. This is silly.”

Five months later, when Klein finally admitted that he had written *Primary Colors* after all, lawyers and law-enforcement agencies were quick to see a real-world application for the kind of work that I and other scholars perform. I never dreamed that my correct answer would lead me from fiction to Quantico, or to the Montana cabin where the Unabomber scrawled his manifesto, or to the Boulder Police Department to help with the JonBenet Ramsey homicide investigation, or to Boston’s Irish Mafia, or to Centennial Olympic Park and the so-called Army of God bombings, much less to deadly anthrax at the heart of our own biodefense establishment.

**E**very day, crimes are committed that involve unsigned or forged documents. When confronted with a “questioned document,” most police detectives seek out experts to analyze the physical evidence. It took *Primary Colors* for law-enforcement agencies to realize how much can be learned from the writing itself. A first-rate special

agent in charge, such as Woody Ender-son of the Southeast Bomb Task Force, can turn an investigation around by getting expert help with the linguistic evidence. Following the Centennial Olympic Park bombing at the 1996 Summer Games in Atlanta, traditional profiling techniques had at first focused investigative attention on Richard Jewell, who was innocent. Ender-son’s task force gathered the Army of God letters from other bombings, along with envelopes, school papers, a grocery list, even marginal annotations in a Bible—linguistic evidence that helped direct attention to Eric Robert Rudolph. He was arrested on May 31, 2003, after five years on the lam.

The main obstacle to the investigation of anonymous writing is simply that there is so much of it. Take the epidemic of hoax anthrax letters. Since April 1997 (the first recorded incidence of a major mailed anthrax hoax), law-enforcement agencies have responded to countless chemical and biological hoaxes—an estimated 10,000 of them in October 2001 alone, following the news of Bob Stevens’s infection. Most mailed biothreats contain harmless household powder and an anonymous message from the offender. Police and F.B.I. officials have established a routine for this entire class of documents: Confiscate both the letter and the envelope from the recipient without allowing any copies to be retained. Test the powder to confirm that it is nontoxic. Announce to the press

that “the incident will be investigated as a serious crime.” Then place the documents in what’s known as a zero file and never look at them again.

Unfortunately, when that same strategy is applied to the questioned documents in a case as important as the 2001 anthrax murders, critical evidence may be overlooked. Everyone saw reproductions of the New Jersey anthrax letters calling for “DEATH TO AMERICA DEATH TO ISRAEL.” More information has been gleaned from those brief letters than you may suppose. But many of the questioned documents pertinent to the anthrax case have been zero-filed. That is why I have decided finally to speak out.

**O**n the phone that day, S.S.A. Fitzgerald told me that Erin O’Connor, an NBC aide, had been diagnosed with cutaneous anthrax 17 days after opening a powder-filled letter addressed to *NBC News* anchor Tom Brokaw. The letter, post-marked on September 20 in St. Petersburg, Florida, began:

„THE УИТНИКABEL”  
SAMPLE OF HOW IT WILL LOOK

Brief but ominous, the handwritten note

threatened bioterror attacks on New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, and Washington, D.C.

I found the text curious for a number of reasons. First, the quotation marks were done Russian-style, with the opening quotes below the line, and the document's backward *N*'s resembled the letter *I* in Russia's Cyrillic alphabet. But a bilingual Russian would be unlikely to confuse English and Cyrillic characters. This appeared to be someone's attempt to make his writing look Russian, or at least foreign. The same went for the block letters, which Russian adults don't use.

The Brokaw letter matched two other biothreat letters, also from St. Petersburg, mailed 15 days later—same writing, same backward *N*'s and Russian quotes, same threats of imminent bioterror. One was sent to *New York Times* reporter Judith Miller, a co-author of *Germes: Biological Weapons and America's Secret War*, and the

advertent, I wondered, a reflexive misspelling by someone used to writing such words as “toxic,” “toxicity,” “toxins,” “toxicology,” “toxoid”?

Linking bioterror to 9/11, the Florida letter writer warned of the destruction of Tampa Bay's Sunshine Skyway Bridge and Chicago's Sears Tower. Those threats were not credible—terrorists do not send advance notice of their targets—but the powder seemed to be “THE REAL THING,” as

by someone else and postmarked on September 18 in Trenton. The letter read:

09-11-01

THIS IS NEXT  
TAKE PENACILIN NOW  
DEATH TO AMERICA  
DEATH TO ISRAEL  
ALLAH IS GREAT

Here, then, were two powder-filled biothreats addressed to the same news anchor, two days and 1,000 miles apart. Neither

writer could have known of the other unless they were in cahoots. But the powder in the New Jersey Brokaw letter was indeed the real thing. America, still reeling from September 11, was under attack by biological terrorists.

That “PENACILIN” was the offender's way of saying, “Don't start thinking I'm an American scientist.”

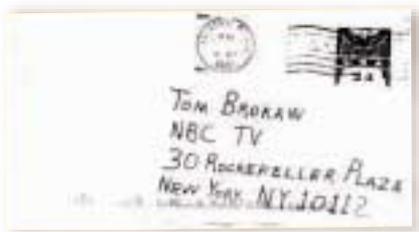
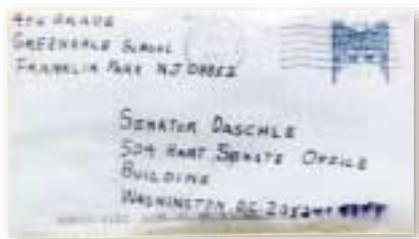
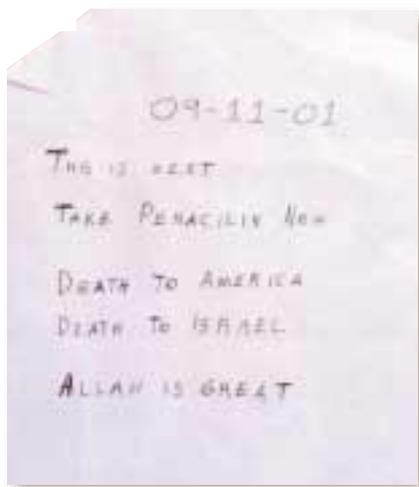
On Monday, October 15, a taped-up envelope ostensibly sent by schoolchildren was delivered to the office of then Senate majority leader Tom Daschle in Washington, D.C. When it was opened, a cloud of powder burst into the air. This letter read:

09-11-01

YOU CAN NOT STOP US.  
WE HAVE THIS ANTHRAX.  
YOU DIE NOW.  
ARE YOU AFRAID?  
DEATH TO AMERICA.  
DEATH TO ISRAEL.  
ALLAH IS GREAT.

Powder samples from both the Brokaw and Daschle letters were couriered to Fort Detrick, headquarters of the U.S. Army Medical Research Institute of Infectious Diseases (USAMRIID), in Frederick, Maryland. The USAMRIID scientists were alarmed by what they discovered. It was the same stuff that had killed Bob Stevens, the tabloid photo editor, in Florida: the Ames strain, used in the U.S. bio-defense program. The distribution of Ames, regulated by USAMRIID, was limited to about a dozen labs under tight security controls. Moreover, the anthrax had been weaponized, refined to its most lethal particle size of one to three microns. Most astonishing was its purity: the powder had been concentrated to a trillion spores per gram.

Speaking to the press on Tuesday afternoon, October 16, Senator Daschle described the dry anthrax sent to his office as “very potent.” Dr. Richard Spertzel, the former chief bio-inspector for the United Nations Special Commission (UNSCOM) search for weapons of mass destruction in Iraq, went a step further. Describing the powder as “weapons grade,” Spertzel told ABC that he knew of fewer



other to Howard Troxler, a columnist for the *St. Petersburg Times*. Troxler opened his powder-packed letter on Tuesday, October 9. Miller opened hers at her office on Friday the 12th—the same day the NBC infection was diagnosed.

“THE УИТНИКАВЕЛ” looked like a deliberate misspelling, but why had it been placed in quotation marks? Turning to the Internet, I found announcements for a disaster-management conference to be held in Orlando called “It Could Happen to You . . . Preparing for the Unthinkable” and featuring talks on bioterror readiness. The St. Petersburg letters, with their arrows and lists and dashes, vaguely resembled a slide from a PowerPoint presentation, a common feature at scientific conferences. Then, too, Howard Troxler's surname—in the letter proper, though not on the envelope—was spelled “TOXLER.” Could the error have been in-

**THE KILLER'S HAND**  
The letter sent to Tom Brokaw from Trenton, above, left. Right, two anthrax-carrying envelopes.

the sender phrased it. One NBC aide was infected, and a man in Florida was dead.

On balance, the St. Petersburg letters looked to me to be the work of a scientist. The linguistic

evidence and choice of targets pointed to an offender interested in biodefense: 9/11, he seemed to be saying, could be the prologue to something worse—a sweeping epidemic of biological terrorism, for which our nation stood unprepared.

It soon came out, however, that the F.B.I. had recovered the wrong threatening letter. Laboratory analysis indicated that the white substance enclosed in the three St. Petersburg biothreats was nontoxic. Erin O'Connor must have been infected from another source. A fresh search of segregated NBC mail turned up a second letter, one with anthrax traces, likewise addressed to Tom Brokaw but written

than five experts in the United States with the capability to produce such material.

While East Coast postal workers expressed alarm, commanders at Fort Detrick objected to the term “weaponized.” The F.B.I. and USAMRIID convened for an emergency interagency conference call. They agreed upon the terms “professionally done” and “energetic.” Government spokespersons were instructed to use these words, not “weaponized,” to describe the anthrax contained in the New Jersey letters. On Wednesday, a somber Senator Daschle sponsored a news conference. At his side stood Fort Detrick’s commander, Major General John Parker, who called the Daschle powder “a garden variety” anthrax “sensitive to all antibiotics.”

Two weeks later, appearing before the Senate’s Governmental Affairs Committee, Parker testified that the terms “professionally done” and “energetic” were chosen “as more appropriate descriptions in lieu of any real familiarity with weaponized materials.” Parker seemed unaware that the army for the past decade has conducted extensive biodefense research on weaponized materials, both at USAMRIID and at the Dugway Proving Ground, and has even pushed to duplicate a hybrid anthrax produced by the old Soviet program. But by the time Parker explained his choice of words to the Senate committee, two Washington postal workers, Joseph Curseen Jr. and Thomas Morris Jr., who had credited reports that mail handlers were not at risk, had died, and several others were critically ill.

**SPORE SCARE**  
Clerks at a hospital in Wisconsin wear masks and gloves while sorting external mail, October 16, 2001.

marked September 18 and the Daschle letter October 9. Neither letter was stamped on September 11. This offender wanted the authorities to explore a connection between the anthrax attacks and 9/11. But when an offender gives you unnecessary information that tells you what to think, you probably want to think twice.

The return address on the Daschle letter supplied more extraneous information: “FRANKLIN PARK, NJ 08852.” From an online search I learned that there is a Franklin Park in New Jersey, 22 miles north of Trenton, where the letters were postmarked. But the Zip Code, 08852, corresponds to another New Jersey town, Monmouth Junction. The three communities run parallel to I-95. Clearly, the offender knew something about New Jersey, and with all of those dropped geographic clues, he surely knew that the authorities would look for him there. I had



a hunch he’d turn up somewhere else—though probably within driving distance.

The Daschle letter—which was identical to a letter sent to Senator Patrick Leahy that remained undiscovered until November 16, 2001—had this return address: “4TH GRADE, GREENDALE SCHOOL.” The fictional school address was designed to make the envelope look harmless, and fourth-graders in this country do indeed write letters to their elected representatives, often as a class project. Is that a piece of cultural information that would be known and referenced by an al-Qaeda cell?

Since there is no such school in New Jersey, I searched for Greendale schools elsewhere and found several, two of which, in Canada, had made headlines the year before, one for an arson fire and the other for a case of child molestation. A third Greendale School, in Maryland, had made news in 1973 in connection with forced desegregation. I made a note of it. It’s not uncommon for the writers of criminal threats to draw on their own experience and reading.

On Tuesday, October 23, I appeared on

ABC’s *Good Morning America* to offer a few observations. Were we supposed to believe that this “professionally made” anthrax powder was packaged and mailed by someone who thought penicillin would be the antibiotic of choice, and who didn’t even know how to spell it? That “penacilin” was the offender’s way of saying, “Look, I don’t know much about antibiotics. I don’t even know how to spell ‘penicillin.’ So don’t start thinking that I’m an American scientist. I’m just a semi-literate foreign fanatic.”

Five days earlier, Johanna Huden, an assistant for the *New York Post* editorial page, was diagnosed with cutaneous anthrax. Searching a bag of segregated mail at the *Post*’s editorial office in Manhattan, F.B.I. agents discovered a letter identical to the New Jersey Brokaw letter. The powder tested positive. That same week in New York, a staffer at CBS and the infant son of an ABC News producer were diagnosed with cutaneous infections, but no contaminated letters were recovered.

A Florida tabloid, ABC, CBS, NBC, the *Post*, the U.S. Senate. Well-taped envelopes with a note inside warning the recipient to seek medical treatment because Muslim bioterrorists were on the loose. None of this added up to an al-Qaeda operation, but neither did it look like the work of a random serial killer. Somebody was trying

to deliver a message—a message that kept getting lost in the shuffle.

I tried to imagine the culprit’s point of view, based on my hypothesis that an American scientist might be responsible:

September 11: America is under attack. John Doe, American biowarrior, knows that if the enemy escalates from airplanes to anthrax we’re in trouble. There is too little spent on biodefense, and the F.D.A. has halted production of the BioPort anthrax vaccine. It might take a dose of the real thing to put the nation on high alert and straighten out our government’s priorities. Taped envelope seals will prevent the powder from escaping before the letters reach their destination. And the enclosed message will ensure that all recipients are given the antibiotic Cipro in time to prevent fatalities. America’s leading biowarriors—including, perhaps, John Doe himself—will receive the kind of recognition and respect they have long deserved.

Within days of the 9/11 attack, the F.B.I. announces that several of the hijackers had been based in Delray Beach, Florida. Wast-

ROB ORCUTT

ing no time, John Doe takes his cue: the nation's first anthrax attack will take place in Palm Beach County. The authorities will associate the anthrax attack with that Delray terror cell. An Internet search supplies John Doe with an apt target: American Media Inc., a publisher of supermarket tabloids. When the letter arrives, the police will be called, and the powder tested. When they discover it is the real thing, biodefense will become the nation's top concern.

Out goes the first Florida letter, to A.M.I. Oddly, nothing happens. To John Doe, it seems as if his anthrax letter has been discarded without being opened. Meanwhile, the F.B.I. has learned that some of the remaining hijackers were based in New Jersey. John Doe prepares a fresh salvo. His targets this time will include NBC and the *New York Post*, possibly ABC and CBS. On September 18, from New Jersey, John Doe mails a new batch of anthrax letters, this time with a more explicit message: "DEATH TO AMERICA. DEATH TO ISRAEL. ALLAH IS GREAT." Surely, one of those letters will be opened.

John Doe watches the news from September 18 through October 1. Still nothing. Then, on October 4, comes the grim news that a photo editor at American Media Inc. in Boca Raton has been diagnosed with inhalational anthrax. So the letter was opened after all, and not credited. It's too late now to save the victim.

On October 5, Bob Stevens dies. John Doe has now killed a man, and the nation has not heard the wake-up call because the authorities think Stevens, an outdoorsman, may have gotten the disease "naturally." John Doe waits a few more days, hoping that one of his September 18 letters will be opened. Not one scores a hit.

The offender is now in the uncomfortable position of having to warn the nation not only about the al-Qaeda threat but also about his own unnoticed handiwork. On October 9, he mails letters to two liberal U.S. senators, adding about a gram of his best material to each envelope, his deadliest payload yet. This time, the whole nation will sit up straight. The two senators will be put on Cipro, and no one else will get hurt.

On October 12, John Doe's NBC letter of September 18 is discovered. Finally, all Americans will understand our vulnerability to biological terrorism. Unfortunately, the post-office sorting machines were a little too rough on the envelopes. A lot more people than John Doe ever intended are about to get sick.

**O**n October 31, 2001, Fort Detrick's commander was on Capitol Hill speaking to a congressional committee about "energetic" anthrax hours after Kathy Nguyen, 61, a South Bronx hospital worker, died from inhalational

anthrax. Swabs were taken from her home, her workplace, and her mailbox, but not a single spore was discovered.

I sent an e-mail to a friend in the F.B.I.'s New York field office. Forensics are not my department, I wrote, but has the Amerithrax Task Force assigned to the investigation taken swabs from garbage Dumpsters? If Nguyen dropped her trash into a Dumpster that already contained anthrax discarded by the offender, or, possibly, an anthrax-laced letter discarded by ABC, CBS, NBC, or the *Post*, then might those spores have spread into the air in sufficient quantity to be inhaled?

My source wrote back to say that "they think Nguyen got a real snout full of anthrax." The task force hoped that this latest fatality would lead them straight to the killer. Perhaps there was a person or location that could account for her exposure to airborne anthrax. "They are still looking for that secret place," my source wrote. In the end, though, Kathy Nguyen's death was written off as an insoluble mystery.

In November, some of the West's top biowarriors converged on Swindon, England, for an advanced training course for the United Nations Monitoring, Verification, and Inspection Commission. One of the big names on hand for the conference was Steven J. Hatfill, a former USAMRIID virologist and a protégé of Bill Patrick's. Those who completed the course and were certified would have a chance to join the search for Saddam's bioweapons in Iraq. While the 12-day course was under way, someone sent another biothreat letter, postmarked in November in London, to Senator Daschle. When the powder proved nontoxic, the letter was filed away and escaped further scrutiny.

**N**inety-four-year-old Otilie Lundgren of Oxford, Connecticut, succumbed to anthrax on November 21, making her the fifth fatality. The infection was believed to have come from a cross-contaminated letter. If you have a compromised immune system, it takes only a few spores for *B. anthracis* to begin its silent work inside your body. Lundgren had simply been unlucky. An estimated 85 million pieces of mail were processed by the Washington, D.C., and New Jersey postal facilities while the Daschle and Leahy letters were in the system; it's surprising how few of us got sick.

By the time the F.B.I. showed up in Connecticut to investigate the Lundgren case, the press was hungry for news, but the Amerithrax Task Force was saying little about its search for the killer. After an F.B.I. agent mentioned something about "the Camel Club," Dave Altamari and Jack

Dolan of the *Hartford Courant* searched online legal archives for the phrase. They found a lawsuit, not yet resolved, involving Dr. Ayaad Assaad, an Arab-American scientist who worked at USAMRIID until he was laid off in 1997. Dolan and Altimari gave Assaad's attorney a call and got an earful.

An American citizen since 1981, the Egyptian-born Assaad, 54, is grateful to his adopted country and proud of the ricin vaccine that he developed during his eight years as a civilian research scientist for the U.S. Army. But after Assaad transferred to USAMRIID, in 1989, he claimed in his lawsuit, several white, American-born pathologists founded "the Camel Club," whose purpose was to harass and humiliate him.

Assaad says he experienced continued harassment until his unexpected layoff in March 1997. Given 60 days to vacate, Assaad packed up on May 9, 1997, said goodbye to his colleagues, and headed for the

Assaad and his attorney, Rosemary McDermott, arrived at the Washington, D.C., field office at 10 A.M. They were met by Agents Lylegian and Mark Buie, who explained that an anonymous letter had been mailed to the "Town of Quantico Police," identifying Assaad as a fanatic with the will and means to launch a bioterror attack on the United States. Buie read the one-page, single-spaced, computer-generated 212-word letter aloud. Assaad, who holds a Ph.D. in physiology from Iowa State University in Ames and is married to a Nebraskan, was shocked by the letter's depiction of him as a potential terrorist.

Agent Buie asked what the letter writer might have meant by "further terrorist activity." "Put it this way," McDermott said, "Dr. Assaad is suing the army for discrimination and wrongful dismissal. Some people are pretty upset with him about that." Buie

thought his ordeal was over. Now, four years later, he stood accused as a traitor to his country, a corrupter of his sons, a dangerous psychopath, a bioterrorist.

It was now December 2001, yet Dolan and Altimari's *Hartford Courant* story was the first I had heard of the Quantico letter. S.S.A. Fitzgerald had not heard of it, either. In fact, there were quite a few critical documents that Fitzgerald had not yet seen. What, I wondered, has the anthrax task force been doing?

Hoping that the Quantico letter might lead, if not to the killer, at least to a suspect, I offered to examine the document. My photocopy arrived by FedEx not from the task force but from F.B.I. headquarters in Washington. Searching through documents by some 40 USAMRIID employees, I found writings by a female officer that looked like a perfect match. I wrote a detailed report on the evidence, but the anthrax task force declined to follow through: the Quantico letter had already been declared a hoax and zero-filed as part of the 9/11 investigation.

When Assaad's attorney sought, under the Freedom of Information Act, to obtain a copy, the Justice Department denied her request: releasing the document "could reasonably be expected to constitute an unwarranted invasion of the personal privacy of third parties" and "disclose the identities of confidential sources."

Six months after the first deadly powder-bearing letter was mailed, five months after my initial call from the F.B.I., I still had only the four anthrax letters and envelopes, the three biothreats mailed nearly simultaneously from St. Petersburg, and the Quantico letter. The F.B.I. hadn't identified a suspect and had only the anthrax itself by which to search for the offender. Barring further incidents, we would have to look for other extant writings by the anthrax killer. But where does one even begin looking?

Because the New Jersey and Florida letters seemed related and possibly collaborative, I searched for stories of past so-called hoaxes—and uncovered a trail of seemingly related biothreat incidents, several of which exhibited language and writing strategies similar to those of the New Jersey and Florida documents. The earliest incident occurred in April 1997. Signing himself "The Counter Holocaust Lobbyists of Hillel"—phraseology borrowed from the Holocaust denier Ernst

**HOME COOKING**

For a 1998 article in *Insight* magazine, Steven J. Hatfill shows how a terrorist could concoct plague in a kitchen.



**Searching Hatfill's refrigerator, agents found a canister of B.t., Iraq's favored anthrax simulant.**

door. He says he was stopped by USAMRIID guards who, with a superior's help, rummaged through his belongings in a vain search for stolen army property. (The U.S. Army denies that Assaad was discriminated against or wrongfully dismissed. The case is currently in appeals court.)

New USAMRIID hires that year, following Assaad's departure, included Steven J. Hatfill, a recruit from the National Institutes of Health. Hatfill was a concept man with a detailed vision for building mobile germ labs. Assaad, meanwhile, took a job with the Environmental Protection Agency, where he now works as a toxicologist testing pesticides.

Assaad told Dolan and Altimari that he was at home in Frederick, Maryland, on October 2, 2001, when he received a call from Agent Gregory Lylegian of the F.B.I., summoning him to a meeting the next morning. It was the same day American Media's Bob Stevens entered J.F.K. Medical Center in Atlantis, Florida.

and Lylegian had no reason to think that a bioterror attack was imminent. The Quantico letter was postmarked September 21, a day after the Florida Brokaw letter and three days after the New Jersey Brokaw letter that contained the real thing, but those documents had not yet come to light.

Dr. Assaad wondered what he would do if the government revoked his citizenship or if he could no longer work at the Environmental Protection Agency. When Assaad left USAMRIID in 1997, he

Zündel—someone sent a petri dish to the Washington, D.C., headquarters of the Jewish organization B'nai B'rith. The dish, broken in the mail, contained *Bacillus cereus*, or B.c., an anthrax simulant used for biodefense research. A hazardous-materials team was called in. Whole city blocks were evacuated. But the writing was not examined, the document was zero-filed, and no arrest was made. Net cost to taxpayers: \$2 million.

It was while looking for information on the B'nai B'rith incident that I found a *Washington Times* interview with Steven Hatfill, then a virologist with the N.I.H., who was said to have “thought carefully about bioterrorism.” The *Times* paraphrased Dr. Hatfill’s explanation of the “four levels” of possible biological attack:

The first is the B'nai B'rith variety, in which no real organisms are used. (“Hello. This is Abdul. We have put anthrax in the food at Throckmorton Middle School.” In fact, Abdul hasn’t.) We empty public buildings for bomb threats, how about for anthrax threats? After all, sooner or later, one might be real.

The second level consists in the release of real bacteria . . . but without the intention of infecting many people. . . . Probably only a few people would get it, and perhaps none would die. . . .

The third level consists in trying to get a lot of people sick, and maybe dead. . . . Anthrax spores put into the ventilation system of a movie theater would do the trick. The result would be horrendous panic even if only 100 people got sick or died. . . .

The fourth level consists of a self-sustaining, unstoppable epidemic. . . .

How hard, really, would it be to carry out a bio-attack? Not very, Hatfill said. Culturing bacteria is easy and almost universally understood.

I searched the Internet for a Throckmorton school and found nothing of interest outside Throckmorton, Texas, except for the Throckmorton Plant Sciences Center at Kansas State University, where courses are taught on agricultural pathogens. Could there be a connection, I wondered, between the “Throckmorton Middle School” scenario and the anthrax killer’s “Greendale School”?

Searching further, I learned that the B'nai B'rith episode occurred a few months after mysterious gas incidents at Washington National Airport (now Reagan National) and Baltimore-Washington International Airport. On both occasions, passengers were overcome with noxious fumes not publicly identi-

fied by investigators. Ten months later, people again fell ill at Washington National and had to be hospitalized after reporting fumes. In January 1998, after the third airport incident in a year, *The Washington Times's* magazine, *Insight*, published a second interview with Hatfill, who said, “These types of incidents could be a form of testing for a possible future terrorist attack—perhaps next time using anthrax.”

This ominous commentary was accompanied by a photograph of Hatfill at home, in his kitchen, wearing garbage bags, gloves, and an army-supply gas mask, illustrating how a bioterrorist might cook up bubonic plague in a private laboratory and cause havoc using a homemade spray disseminator such as the one Hatfill had designed himself. All of which seemed, to me, an unusual hobby for a virologist then employed by the National Institutes of Health.

Then I found another interesting news item. Shortly after *Insight* published its ghoulish photograph of Hatfill in his home laboratory, a white male, wearing a gas mask, deposited a bottle outside the U.S. Treasury Building. An anonymous call was then placed alerting the U.S. Secret Service that it contained “liquid chemical-warfare agent.” The bottle, though

That the outbreak was “natural” is debatable. In 1992, Dr. Meryl Nass, an American physician, and Jeremy Brickhill, a Zimbabwean journalist, published separate reports supporting what was already suspected: that the Rhodesian anthrax epidemic was deliberate, a biowarfare attack on the black townships, probably carried out by Rhodesia’s notorious government-backed Selous Scouts militia.

In January 2002, while compiling documents by and about Hatfill, including his unclassified scientific publications, I found a brief autobiography. In it, Hatfill, though American, boasted of having served in the late 1970s with the Selous Scouts in Rhodesia. In that same brief bio, Dr. Hatfill indicated that he had taken his medical degree from the Godfrey Huggins School of Medicine in Harare, Rhodesia, which he attended from 1978 to '84. Next I searched the Internet for a Greendale School somewhere in Africa and discovered the Courteney Selous School, situated in the wealthy, white Harare suburb of Greendale, a mile from the medical school where Hatfill spent six years obtaining his M.D. while serving, by his own unconfirmed account, with the Selous Scouts.

Steven Hatfill was now looking to me like a suspect, or at least—as the F.B.I.

**GERM GARRISON**  
Below, the main entrance to Fort Detrick in the 1950s. Far right, an abandoned bioweapons lab inside the fort.



found, was not preserved—it was, after all, just a “hoax.”

In its interview with Hatfill, *Insight* reported that he had worked in Zimbabwe in the late 1970s when “an epidemic of anthrax from natural causes affected 10,000 people.” In fact, Hatfill had been in apartheid Rhodesia from 1978 to 1980 (the year it was renamed Zimbabwe), and witnessed the worst outbreak of anthrax ever recorded—in a part of Africa where anthrax was rarely encountered. During the civil war to topple the apartheid government, the southern Tribal Trust Lands were ravaged by an epidemic that caused 10,738 recorded human infections in about two years. Today, black Zimbabweans and their livestock are still becoming ill and dying from the biological fallout.

would denote him eight months later—“a person of interest.” When I lined up Hatfill’s known movements with the postmark locations of reported biothreats, those hoax anthrax attacks appeared to trail him like a vapor cloud. But in February 2002, shortly after I advanced his candidacy to my contact at F.B.I. headquarters, I was told that Mr. Hatfill had a good alibi. A month later, when I pressed the issue, I was told, “Look, Don, maybe you’re spending too much time on this.” Good people in the Department of Defense, C.I.A., and State Department, not to mention Bill Patrick, had vouched for Hatfill. I decided to give it a rest. But first, I faxed a comparative-handwriting sample to F.B.I. headquarters, with examples of Hatfill’s printing on the left and printing by the anthrax offender on CONTINUED ON PAGE 195

RIGHT: BY TIMOTHY JACOBSEN

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 190 the right. I am not a handwriting expert, so I supplied the document without comment. A week later, I got a thank-you call.

In 1999, Hatfill was fired by USAMRIID. He was then hired at Science Applications International Corporation (S.A.I.C.), a contractor for the Department of Defense and the C.I.A., but he departed S.A.I.C. in March 2002, a month after he took a polygraph concerning the anthrax matter that he says he passed. Hatfill at the time was building a mobile germ lab out of an old truck chassis, and after S.A.I.C. fired him he continued work on it using his own money. When the F.B.I. wanted to confiscate the mobile lab to test it for anthrax spores, the army resisted, moving the trailer to Fort Bragg, North Carolina, where it was used to train Special Forces in preparation for the war on Iraq. The classes were taught by Steve Hatfill and Bill Patrick.

In March 2002, as the F.B.I. continued to investigate, Hatfill moved on to a \$150,000-a-year job in Louisiana, funded by a grant from the Department of Justice. That same month, from Louisiana, came a fresh batch of hoax anthrax letters. L.S.U.'s Martin Hugh-Jones, a World Health Organization director, examined the powder they con-

tained and found it to be nontoxic. The letters were then put into a zero file without their language being examined by a trained professional.

On the night of March 12, Ayaad Assaad received a call from a person representing himself as a Louisiana F.B.I. agent. The caller demanded to know if Assaad had been told who wrote the Quantico letter. To prove his credentials, the caller rattled off personal information from as far back as Assaad's Egyptian high school—the Arabic name of which he pronounced correctly. Assaad believes he recognized the caller's source of information: he was likely reading from Assaad's confidential SF-171, a U.S.-government employment application form that had been on file at USAMRIID.

Frightened, Dr. Assaad hung up, then called me at home at 10 P.M. to tell me of the incident. I assured him the call was fraudulent. The F.B.I. does not conduct its business in that way.

There were, in my opinion, a few people whose recorded voices should be played back to Assaad to see if he recognized one of them as his anonymous caller. Though it is a felony to impersonate an F.B.I. agent, the task force decided not to investigate. According to Assaad, when he finally called the F.B.I., he was told to get caller ID.

In December 2001, Dr. Barbara Hatch Rosenberg, a noted bioweapons expert, delivered a paper contending that the perpetrator of the anthrax crimes was an American microbiologist whose training and possession of Ames-strain powder pointed to a government insider with experience in a U.S. military lab. In March 2002, she told the BBC that the anthrax deaths may have resulted from a secret project to examine the practicability of sending real anthrax through the mail—an experiment that misfired despite such precautions as taped envelope seals. That surprising hypothesis made Rosenberg a target for knee-jerk criticism, but competent sources within the bio-warfare establishment thought she might well be right.

In April, I met Rosenberg for lunch at an Indian restaurant in Brewster, New York, and compared notes. We found that our evidence had led us in the same direction, though by different routes and for different reasons.

The weeks dragged on. Prodded publicly by Rosenberg and privately by myself, the F.B.I.'s anthrax task force nevertheless seemed stubbornly unwilling to consider the evidence pointing toward a military insider or to examine the Quantico letter or those few "hoax" biothreats

that I believed, and still believe, may shed light on the anthrax murders. The additional documents that I had been expecting from the F.B.I. never arrived. S.S.A. Fitzgerald, the F.B.I.'s top in-house text analyst, asked to examine the same set of documents and received the same answer: no. I'm not an insider, nor an old hand. I have worked with the F.B.I. for only six years, on no more than 20 investigations. But never have I encountered such reluctance to examine potentially critical documents.

Meanwhile, friends of Fort Detrick were leaking to the press new pieces of disinformation indicating that the mailed anthrax probably came from Iraq. The leaks included false allegations that the Daschle anthrax included additives distinctive to the Iraqi arms program and that it had been dried using an atomizer spray dryer sold by Denmark to Iraq.

**H**er patience exhausted, Dr. Rosenberg met with the Senate Judiciary Committee staff on June 18, 2002, and laid out the evidence, such as it was, hers and mine. Van Harp, head of the Amerithrax Task Force, sat in on the briefing. The senators were attentive. So, too, evidently, was Harp: exactly one week after Rosenberg's meeting with the Judiciary Committee staff, the F.B.I. searched Hatfill's residence. A bureau spokesman described it to *The Washington Times* as a "voluntary search" without a warrant, "requested" by Dr. Hatfill to clear his name.

Suddenly I was being flooded with documents from reporters and concerned scientists: letters, e-mails, curricula vitae, handwriting samples, and original fiction by Steve Hatfill. I learned from one document that Hatfill had audited a Super Terrorism seminar in Washington, D.C., on April 24, 1997, the day of the B'nai B'rith incident. The next day, in a letter to the seminar's organizer, Edgar Brenner, he wrote that he was "tremendously interested in becoming more involved in this area" and noted that the petri-dish scare, so soon after the seminar, showed that "this topic is vital to the security of the United States." Hatfill's original fiction included a cut-and-paste forgery of a diploma for a Ph.D. from Rhodes University, which he used to obtain his jobs at the N.I.H., USAMRIID, and S.A.I.C.

No less interesting to me, as a professor of English literature, was Hatfill's unpublished novel, *Emergence*, which I examined in Washington at the U.S. Copyright Office. In the book, an Iraqi virologist launches a

bioterror attack on behalf of an unnamed sponsor, using an identity acquired from the Irish Republican Army and a homemade sprayer like the one Steven J. Hatfill demonstrated for *The Washington Times*. A fictional scientist named Steven J. Roberts comes to the rescue, tracing the outbreak to Iraq. The Strangelovean novel ends with America nuking Baghdad. As the warheads fall, the pilot remarks, "Beautiful . . . just beautiful. Welcome to Fuck City, Raghheads! Let's get the hell out of Dodge."

I was reminded of Bill Patrick's words in his talk at Maxwell Air Force Base: "The beauty of biological warfare, good people, is that you can pick an agent with a short period of incubation, or a moderate period of incubation, or a long period. And this, I think, would be very attractive to terrorists, because they can do their dirty work and get out of Dodge City, and you won't know that you're infected till they're long gone."

Hatfill's novel, however, has a surprise ending. In a three-page epilogue, the nar-

**Hatfill had been in apartheid Rhodesia and witnessed the worst outbreak of anthrax ever recorded.**

rator, a Russian mobster, reveals that his own organization, not Iraq, is responsible for the bioterror attack:

The reaction was as great as we had hoped for—the entire focus of the American F.B.I. has now shifted towards combating chemical/biological terrorism and this is allowing us to formulate the unprecedented expansion of our organization . . .

Biowarfare fiction was no mere lark for Steven Hatfill. It was his specialty. His responsibilities at USAMRIID included the writing of bioterror scenarios, at least one of which actually happened. Hatfill envisioned someone spreading a pathogen throughout several floors of a public office building. It would take only one reported illness, he predicted, "to shut down the entire building, especially if the bug had been sprayed on several floors. Then the call comes: 'Let our man loose, or we'll do a school.'" In August 1998, in Wichita, Kansas, 40 miles southeast of Southwestern College, Hatfill's alma mater, powder was spread throughout several floors of the Finney State Office Building. Then came "the call," in the form of a letter from a team of Christian Identity extremists and a group calling

itself Brothers for Freedom of Americans.

A few days later, Hatfill and Bill Patrick arrived in San Diego for the Worldwide Conference on Antiterrorism, sponsored by the U.S. Department of Defense. I asked my F.B.I. contact for the Wichita documents. Again, my requests were denied.

**T**he ink was hardly dry on *Emergence* when the government hired Hatfill, now working for S.A.I.C., to commission a paper from Bill Patrick focusing on how to respond to a biological terror event.

I have read Patrick's 1999 report "Risk Assessment." Though it's a classified document, it contains little that he hasn't said before elsewhere. I did, however, find in it something that surprised me: Patrick describes a hypothetical incident in which an attacker uses the U.S. mail service to deliver a business envelope containing no more than 2.5 grams of aerosolized anthrax, refined to a trillion spores per gram, in particles smaller than five microns. Patrick explains that 2.5 grams is the amount that can be placed into a standard envelope without detection. "More powder makes the envelope bulge and draws attention."

As prophecies go, that one's right on the money. The "DEATH TO AMERICA" letters sent two years later to Senators Daschle and Leahy contained about a gram of aerosolized anthrax, particle size one to three microns, refined to a trillion spores per gram. Bill Patrick plus the Dugway scientists make up Richard Spertzel's short list of four U.S. experts who know how to make such a fine dry powder. The anthrax killer, whoever he may be, represents a fifth expert with Patrick's bench skills. But until the Daschle powder appeared, every quoted expert I had seen except Patrick said it couldn't be done at all.

After rumors broke that Bill Patrick, in a classified paper, had foreseen a bioterror attack using the mail service, a transcript of his paper was leaked to the press. The leaked version represents Patrick's original text for S.A.I.C., typos and all, but with one critical omission: a footnote in which Patrick claims that the U.S. has refined "weaponized" powder to a trillion spores per gram has disappeared.

**B**y midsummer 2002, the F.B.I. and even Attorney General John Ashcroft were obliged to call Steve Hatfill a "person of interest," despite die-hard assurances from other government sources that he wasn't. That August,

the F.B.I. returned to Hatfill's Maryland apartment. Searching his refrigerator, agents found a canister of *Bacillus thuringiensis*, or B.t.—a mostly harmless pesticide widely used on caterpillars—which USAMRIID adopted for study in 1995, after UNSCOM discovered that B.t. was Iraq's favored anthrax simulant.

On August 25, in a second dramatic press conference, Hatfill, having shaved his mustache of 20 years, protested his persecution. This was the first I had seen of my suspect. He was five feet eleven and 210 pounds, with pale-blue eyes and a downturned mouth. He would not mind being investigated, he said, except that Attorney General Ashcroft “has broken the Ninth Commandment: ‘Thou shalt not bear false witness.’” With these words, Hatfill's voice cracked and his eyes welled up with tears. His emotional display won over many hearts, even among the usually cynical Washington press corps.

**T**he American press seems to enjoy dumping on the F.B.I. For the first nine months of the investigation, it was said that the F.B.I. was spinning its wheels. Ever since, it's been said that the F.B.I. has ruined a man's life—that Steve Hatfill is a second Richard Jewell, the long-suffering suspect in the Centennial

Olympic Park bombing. In May, one F.B.I. team trailed Hatfill so closely that its S.U.V. ran over his foot. Then the Washington police ticketed him for “walking to create a hazard.”

I know something about the Centennial Olympic Park serial bomber, because I helped—using linguistic evidence gleaned from the Army of God letters—to direct investigative attention on to Eric Robert Rudolph. And it is my opinion, based on the documents I have examined, that Hatfill is no Richard Jewell. The F.B.I.'s early Centennial Olympic Park-bombing suspect was said to fit a behavior profile of domestic bombers, but I found nothing in Jewell's use of language to implicate him as a terrorist. As for Hatfill, it was the F.B.I.'s best team of trained bloodhounds, not an offender profile nor my text analysis, that finally persuaded the Amerithrax Task Force in July 2002 to associate Hatfill with the anthrax letters and put him under 24-hour surveillance. The bureau's description of him as a “person of interest” is neither inaccurate nor unfair. (Through his lawyer, Hatfill maintained his innocence and declined to comment for this article.)

One thing I've learned about the F.B.I. in my years as a civilian consultant is that

the bureau is a compartmentalized house of secrets. Each field office and task force guards its information and documents like a treasure trove, and no one office, not even F.B.I. headquarters, has direct access to the whole picture. But the F.B.I. is an open book compared with our bio-warfare establishment. The Pentagon has a long history of clandestine experimentation on human guinea pigs that bears looking into. In 1952, for example, the army conducted open-air tests at Fort McClellan, Alabama, with bioweapons simulants that, though bacterial, were supposedly harmless. When local respiratory illness skyrocketed and dozens of civilians died, the army quietly discontinued use of the problem simulant and carried on with another.

Then there's the 1965 simulated attack on the New York City subway. On June 8 of that year, under Bill Patrick's direction, the subway was targeted with the anthrax simulant B.g. Lightbulbs, each containing 87 trillion spores, were dropped onto the tracks. Trains then sucked the clouds of live bacteria into the subway system. C.I.A. and military scientists, bearing fake ID's, were on location to count the spores. More than a million riders were exposed to B.g. that day; many inhaled more than a million spores per

minute. Patrick, when telling this story, still chuckles about how “we clobbered the Lexington line with B.g.” What he doesn’t say is that, during a similar test in San Francisco in 1950, one person died from B.g. complications and many others fell ill. The cause of the fatality was not discovered until 1977, when the U.S. Army, in Senate subcommittee hearings, finally disclosed its mock biological attack on San Francisco. (“We clobbered downtown San Francisco with *Bacillus globigii*,” Bill Patrick told his Maxwell Air Force Base audience in February 1999. “This was very successful.”) No one knows how many riders may have become sick from the 1965 New York–subway test. The experiment was kept secret for 20 years. By then, the statute of limitations for lawsuits was long past and contemporary medical records were hard to come by.

It’s also a matter of rec-

**PERSON OF INTEREST**

Steven J. Hatfill, below, at his August 2002 news conference and, right, in South Africa in 1990.



ord that in 1965 military scientists gassed Washington National Airport and a Greyhound bus terminal, using B.g. Most Americans would like to think that our government doesn’t do that kind of thing anymore. I’d like to report, for example, that our military had nothing to do with those three gas incidents at Baltimore–Washington and Washington National airports in 1997. Though the F.B.I. won’t confirm it, I’ve been told at least one of those three events involved the dissemination not of B.g. but of B.t., the same substance the F.B.I. discovered in Hatfill’s refrigerator in August 2002.

It is not my job to indict or to try my own suspect for the anthrax murders. And even if the F.B.I. should find hard evidence linking Hatfill to a crime, he will remain innocent until proved guilty. But all Americans have a right to know more about the system that allowed Steven Hatfill to become one of

the nation’s leading bioterror experts. Here is a fellow with a fake Ph.D. who posed for *The Washington Times* as a bioterrorist with a homemade plague disseminator, and who boasted as recently as last year of having served with the apartheid government’s notorious Selous Scouts during the Rhodesian anthrax epidemic. I have three different editions of his curriculum vitae, each one a tissue of lies. How did such a rascal come to be instructing the C.I.A., F.B.I., Defense Intelligence Agency, army, navy, Marines, U.S. marshals, and State Department on such matters as the handling of deadly pathogens and of bioterror incidents? How did he happen to acquire, to quote from his résumé, a “working knowledge of the former U.S. and foreign BW [biowarfare] programs, wet and dry BW agents, large-scale production of bacterial, rickettsial, and viral BW pathogens and toxins, stabilizers and other additives, former

BG simulant production methods, open air testing and vulnerability trials, single and 2 fluid nozzle dissemination, [and] bomblet design”? How did he obtain clearance to operate in top military labs on exotic viral pathogens, such as Ebola, and on Level 3 pathogens such as bubonic plague and anthrax?

In August 2000, Hatfill trained forces at MacDill Air Force Base, in Tampa, using a makeshift bioterror “kitchen” lab that he built himself out of scavenged parts, as well as biosafety cabinets taken from USAMRIID. The borrowed cabinets, suitable for turning germs into weapons, are still missing and are said to have been destroyed. Hatfill, a certified scuba diver, once spoke of how to use a pond in the Frederick Municipal Forest—a few miles from his former residence in Maryland—to dispose of toxins. On that information, the F.B.I. searched Whiskey Springs Pond and found a homemade biosafety cabinet. The pond, when later drained, dis-

closed a rusty bicycle and a street sign but no new evidence.

This summer, *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, and the Associated Press ran stories on Hatfill’s activities as a designer of simulated bioterror labs. None mentioned that Hatfill sprayed his trainees with samples of aerosolized B.g. When questioned about these activities, Hatfill, in apparent contradiction of his 2002 résumé, denied having knowledge of how to refine a dry bacterial powder to the level achieved by army scientists.

The most curious piece of fieldwork noted on Steven Hatfill’s most recent C.V. is that of “open air testing and vulnerability trials.” In a 2001 paper, “Biological Warfare Scenarios,” Bill Patrick called the 1965 simulated attack on the New York subway “one of the most important vulnerability studies” of the 70 he conducted. In 1969, when the army’s biowarfare program was officially terminated, Steven Hatfill was still in fifth grade. By 1998, Hatfill was Patrick’s sidekick in what one colleague has described as a “Batman and Robin” team. But it is from USAMRIID that Hatfill claims to have acquired his working knowledge of army-sponsored “vulnerability” trials.

Several of America’s bioweaponers have said, for the record, that the anthrax attack has an upside. The killings have forced long-awaited F.D.A. approval of the Bioport anthrax vaccine facility and prompted increased federal spending on biodefense—by \$6 billion in 2003 alone. But the anthrax offender also diverted law-enforcement resources when we needed them most and wreaked havoc on the U.S. Postal Service. He has shown the world how to disrupt the American economy with minimal expense, and how to kill with minimal risk of being caught.

Now that it’s been done once, it seems likely to happen again. Bill Patrick—whose expertise, in the wrong hands, may be deadly even though he is not—has advised our military to be prepared for something far worse: “People say to me, ‘BW’s not effective’ . . . Ladies and gentlemen, I’m here to tell you, you look at atomic energy, you look at chemical method of infection—nothing, I mean nothing, produces what biological warfare does when you do your planning, and you have the right agent and the right dissemination-and-delivery system. Any questions?” □

LEFT, BY RICK BOWMER